

SHIRE OF WOODANILLING

PART 1:

ATTACHMENT BOOKLET FOR ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, 17 March 2026 at 5.00pm

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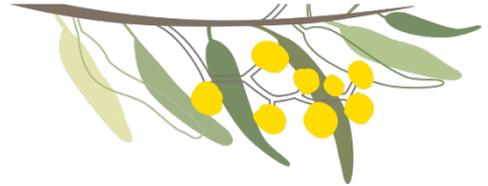
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SHIRE OF WOODANILLING



ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL Unconfirmed Minutes 17 February 2026

Disclaimer

The recommendations contained in the Minutes are subject to confirmation by Council. The Shire of Woodanilling warns that anyone who has an application lodged with Council must obtain and should only rely on written confirmation of the outcomes of the application following the Council meeting, and any conditions attaching to the decision made by the Council in respect of the application. No responsibility whatsoever is implied or accepted by the Shire of Woodanilling for any act, omission or statement or intimation occurring during a Council Meeting.

Agendas and Minutes are available on the Shire website www.woodanilling.wa.gov.au

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ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL

UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

1. DECLARATION OF OPENING/ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS

The Presiding Member declared the meeting open at 5.00pm.

1.1. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST AFFECTING IMPARTIALITY

Division 6 Subdivision 1 of the Local Government Act 1995 requires Council Members and Employees to declare any direct or indirect financial interest or general interest in any matter listed in this Agenda.

The Act also requires the nature of the interest to be disclosed in writing before the meeting or immediately before the matter be discussed.

NB: A Council member who makes a disclosure must not preside or participate in, or be present during, any discussion or decision making procedure relating to the declared matter unless the procedures set out in Sections 5.68 or 5.69 of the Act have been complied with.

DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST AFFECTING IMPARTIALITY

Disclosures of Interest Affecting Impartiality are required to be declared and recorded in the minutes of a meeting. Councillors who declare such an interest are still permitted to remain in the meeting and to participate in the discussion and voting on the particular matter. This does not lessen the obligation of declaring financial interests etc. covered under the Local Government Act.

To help with complying with the requirements of declaring Interests Affecting Impartiality the following statement is recommended to be announced by the person declaring such an interest and to be produced in the minutes.

"I (give circumstances of the interest being declared, eg: have a long standing personal friendship with the proponent). As a consequence there may be a perception that my impartiality on this matter may be affected. I declare that I will consider this matter on its merits and vote accordingly".

2. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE/APOLOGIES/LEAVE OF ABSENCE (PREVIOUSLY APPROVED)

Cr HR Thomson OAM	Shire President
Cr S Vermeulen	Deputy Shire President
Cr R Marshall	
Cr I Garstone	
Cr K Stephens	
Cr M Trimming	
Officers:	
Anika Serer	Chief Executive Officer
Ciara Whitmore	Customer Service Officer
Judy Stewart	Executive Manager Corporate Services
Leave of Absence:	
Nil.	
Apologies:	
Nil.	
Presenters/Observers:	
Hannah McLean-Stefan	Environmental Project Officer, Wagin Woodanilling Landcare Zone
Annabel Paulley	Secretary, Wagin Woodanilling Landcare Zone

3. RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS PUBLIC QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE

Nil.

4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Nil.

5. PETITIONS/DEPUTATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

5.1. PRESENTATION – WWLZ PLANNED PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

Hannah McLean-Stefan, Environmental Project Officer, Wagin Woodanilling Landcare Zone, provided a presentation to Council regarding current and planned projects and initiatives. The presentation included an overview of:

- Current grant-funded revegetation and fencing programs
- Community engagement and environmental initiatives
- Future funding opportunities and project planning

Councillors asked questions regarding project delivery and future opportunities, to which responses were provided. Council thanked Ms McLean-Stefan for her presentation.

Annabel Pauley and Hannah McLean-Stefan left the meeting at 5.21pm.

6. APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

An application for Leave of Absence was received from Cr Garstone for the April 2026 Ordinary Council Meeting.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION – 6.1. APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE (OCM 493/02/2026)

Moved: Cr Vermeulen

Seconded: Cr Stephens

That Council grant Cr Garstone a Leave of Absence for the April 2026 Ordinary Council Meeting.

CARRIED 6/0

For: Cr Thomson, Cr Vermeulen, Cr Stephens, Cr Marshall, Cr Garstone, Cr Trimming

Against: Nil

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY SHIRE PRESIDENT AND/OR DEPUTY PRESIDENT WITHOUT DISCUSSION

Nil.

8. CONFIRMATION OF COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

8.1. ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD 16 DECEMBER 2025

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held 16 December 2025 be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings without amendment.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION – 8.1. ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD 16 DECEMBER 2025 (OCM 494/02/2026)

Moved: Cr Garstone

Seconded: Cr Vermeulen

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held 16 December 2025 be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings without amendment.

CARRIED 6/0

For: Cr Thomson, Cr Vermeulen, Cr Stephens, Cr Marshall, Cr Garstone, Cr Trimming

Against: Nil

9. CONFIRMATION OF OTHER MEETING MINUTES

9.1. 4WDL VROC MEETING HELD 25 NOVEMBER 2025

That the Minutes of the 4WDL VROC Meeting held 25 November 2025 be received by Council.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION – 9.1. 4WDL VROC MEETING HELD 25 NOVEMBER 2025 (OCM 495/02/2026)

Moved: Cr Marshall

Seconded: Cr Vermeulen

That the Minutes of the 4WDL VROC Meeting held 25 November 2025 be received by Council.

CARRIED 6/0

For: Cr Thomson, Cr Vermeulen, Cr Stephens, Cr Marshall, Cr Garstone, Cr Trimming

Against: Nil

9.2. WALGA STATE COUNCIL MEETING HELD 3 DECEMBER 2025

That the Minutes of the WALGA State Council Meeting held 3 December 2025 be received by Council.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION – 9.2. WALGA STATE COUNCIL MEETING HELD 3 DECEMBER 2025 (OCM 496/02/2026)

Moved: Cr Garstone

Seconded: Cr Stephens

That the Minutes of the WALGA State Council Meeting held 3 December 2025 be received by Council.

CARRIED 6/0

For: Cr Thomson, Cr Vermeulen, Cr Stephens, Cr Marshall, Cr Garstone, Cr Trimming

Against: Nil

10. REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Nil.

11. REGULATORY SERVICES

Nil.

12. INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

Nil.

13. CORPORATE SERVICES

13.1. LIST OF ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – 31 DECEMBER 2025

File Reference	ADM0066
Date of Report	04 February 2026
Responsible Officer	Anika Serer, Chief Executive Officer
Author of Report	Brooke Dellacqua, Senior Finance Officer
Disclosure of any Interest	No Officer involved in the preparation of this report has an interest to declare in accordance with the provisions of the <i>Local Government Act 1995</i> .
Voting Requirement	Simple Majority
Attachments	Attachment 13.1.1 – List of Accounts for Payment – 31 December 2025

BRIEF SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present to Council the list of accounts paid, for the month ending 31 December 2025, as required under the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*.

BACKGROUND/COMMENT

In accordance with *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*, Clause 13 (1) schedules of all payments made through Council's bank accounts are presented to Council for inspection.

Council has delegated, to the Chief Executive Officer, the exercise of its power to make payments from the Shire's Municipal and Trust funds. In accordance with Regulation 13 of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*, a list of accounts paid is to be provided to Council, where such delegation is made.

The following table summarises the payments for the period by payment type, with full details of the accounts paid contained within **Attachment 13.1.1**.

Payments up to 31 December 2025

Payment Type	Account Type	Amount \$
Automatic Payment Deductions (Direct Debits & BPay.	Municipal	\$19,964.80
Cheque Payments	Municipal	\$0.00
EFT Payments #8092 to #8148	Municipal	\$240,630.87
Sub Total	Municipal	\$260,595.67
Payments	Trust	\$0.00
Payments	Reserve	\$0.00
Totals		\$260,595.67

STATUTORY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Regulation 13 of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* states:

13. Payments from municipal fund or trust fund by CEO, CEO's duties as to etc.

- (1) *If the local government has delegated to the CEO the exercise of its power to make payments from the municipal fund or the trust fund, a list of accounts paid by the CEO is to be prepared each month showing for each account paid since the last such list was prepared —*
- (a) *the payee's name; and*
 - (b) *the amount of the payment; and*
 - (c) *the date of the payment; and*

- (d) *sufficient information to identify the transaction.*
- (2) *A list of accounts for approval to be paid is to be prepared each month showing —*
- (a) *for each account which requires council authorisation in that month —*
- (i) *the payee’s name; and*
- (ii) *the amount of the payment; and*
- (iii) *sufficient information to identify the transaction;*
- and*
- (b) *the date of the meeting of the council to which the list is to be presented.*
- (3) *A list prepared under subregulation (1) or (2) is to be —*
- (a) *presented to the council at the next ordinary meeting of the council after the list is prepared; and*
- (b) *recorded in the minutes of that meeting.*

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The Chief Executive Officer, under relevant delegation, is authorised to arrange purchase of specific items in the budget, which do not require calling tenders, providing that it is within the approved and adopted budget.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications that have been identified as a result of this report or recommendation.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

PILLAR 3: CIVIC LEADERSHIP

Goal 8: Accountable and compliant governance

8.1 Maintain compliance with the *Local Government Act 1995* and associated regulations

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

There are no community engagement implications that have been identified as a result of this report or recommendation.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The risk in relation to this matter is assessed as “Medium” on the basis that if Council does not accept the payments. The risk identified would be failure to fulfil statutory regulations or compliance requirements. Shire Officers provide a full detailed listing of payments made in the timely manner.

Consequence	Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Extreme
Likelihood					
Almost Certain	Medium	High	High	Severe	Severe
Likely	Low	Medium	High	High	Severe
Possible	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
Rare	Low	Low	Low	Low	Medium

Risk Rating	Action
LOW	Monitor for continuous improvement.
MEDIUM	Comply with risk reduction measures to keep risk as low as reasonably practical.
HIGH	Review risk reduction and take additional measures to ensure risk is as low as reasonably achievable.
SEVERE	Unacceptable. Risk reduction measures must be implemented before proceeding.

VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Simple Majority

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council accepts the list of accounts and details of the credit card amounts, totalling \$260,595.67 paid under delegated authority in accordance with Regulation 13(1) of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* for the period ended 31 December 2025, as contained within **Attachment 13.1.1.**

COUNCIL RESOLUTION – 13.1. LIST OF ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – 31 DECEMBER 2025 (OCM 497/02/2026)

Moved: Cr Marshall

Seconded: Cr Stephens

That Council accepts the list of accounts and details of the credit card amounts, totalling \$260,595.67 paid under delegated authority in accordance with Regulation 13(1) of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* for the period ended 31 December 2025, as contained within **Attachment 13.1.1.**

CARRIED 6/0

For: Cr Thomson, Cr Vermeulen, Cr Stephens, Cr Marshall, Cr Garstone, Cr Trimming

Against: Nil

13.2. LIST OF ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – 31 JANUARY 2026

File Reference	ADM0066
Date of Report	05 February 2026
Responsible Officer	Anika Serer, Chief Executive Officer
Author of Report	Brooke Dellacqua, Senior Finance Officer
Disclosure of any Interest	No Officer involved in the preparation of this report has an interest to declare in accordance with the provisions of the <i>Local Government Act 1995</i> .
Voting Requirement	Simple Majority
Attachments	Attachment 13.2.1 – List of Accounts for Payment – 31 January 2026

BRIEF SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present to Council the list of accounts paid, for the month ending 31 January 2026, as required under the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*.

BACKGROUND/COMMENT

In accordance with *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*, Clause 13 (1) schedules of all payments made through Council's bank accounts are presented to Council for inspection.

Council has delegated, to the Chief Executive Officer, the exercise of its power to make payments from the Shire's Municipal and Trust funds. In accordance with Regulation 13 of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*, a list of accounts paid is to be provided to Council, where such delegation is made.

The following table summarises the payments for the period by payment type, with full details of the accounts paid contained within **Attachment 13.2.1**.

Payments up to 31 January 2026

Payment Type	Account Type	Amount \$
Automatic Payment Deductions (Direct Debits & BPay.	Municipal	\$23,341.52
Cheque Payments	Municipal	\$0.00
EFT Payments #8092 to #8148	Municipal	\$61,470.78
Sub Total	Municipal	\$84,785.30
Payments	Trust	\$0.00
Payments	Reserve	\$0.00
Totals		\$84,785.30

STATUTORY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Regulation 13 of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* states:

13. Payments from municipal fund or trust fund by CEO, CEO's duties as to etc.

- (1) *If the local government has delegated to the CEO the exercise of its power to make payments from the municipal fund or the trust fund, a list of accounts paid by the CEO is to be prepared each month showing for each account paid since the last such list was prepared –*
- (a) *the payee's name; and*
 - (b) *the amount of the payment; and*
 - (c) *the date of the payment; and*
 - (d) *sufficient information to identify the transaction.*

- (2) *A list of accounts for approval to be paid is to be prepared each month showing —*
- (a) *for each account which requires council authorisation in that month —*
 - (i) *the payee’s name; and*
 - (ii) *the amount of the payment; and*
 - (iii) *sufficient information to identify the transaction;*
 - and*
 - (b) *the date of the meeting of the council to which the list is to be presented.*
- (3) *A list prepared under subregulation (1) or (2) is to be —*
- (a) *presented to the council at the next ordinary meeting of the council after the list is prepared; and*
 - (b) *recorded in the minutes of that meeting.*

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The Chief Executive Officer, under relevant delegation, is authorised to arrange purchase of specific items in the budget, which do not require calling tenders, providing that it is within the approved and adopted budget.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications that have been identified as a result of this report or recommendation.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

PILLAR 3: CIVIC LEADERSHIP

Goal 8: Accountable and compliant governance

8.1 Maintain compliance with the Local Government Act 1995 and associated regulations

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

There are no community engagement implications that have been identified as a result of this report or recommendation.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The risk in relation to this matter is assessed as “Medium” on the basis that if Council does not accept the payments. The risk identified would be failure to fulfil statutory regulations or compliance requirements. Shire Officer’s provide a full detailed listing of payments made in the timely manner.

Consequence	Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Extreme
Likelihood					
Almost Certain	Medium	High	High	Severe	Severe
Likely	Low	Medium	High	High	Severe
Possible	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
Rare	Low	Low	Low	Low	Medium

Risk Rating	Action
LOW	Monitor for continuous improvement.
MEDIUM	Comply with risk reduction measures to keep risk as low as reasonably practical.
HIGH	Review risk reduction and take additional measures to ensure risk is as low as reasonably achievable.
SEVERE	Unacceptable. Risk reduction measures must be implemented before proceeding.

VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Simple Majority

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council accepts the list of accounts and details of the credit card amounts, totalling \$84,785.30 paid under delegated authority in accordance with Regulation 13(1) of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* for the period ended 31 January 2026, as contained within **Attachment 13.2.1.**

COUNCIL RESOLUTION – 13.2. LIST OF ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – 31 JANUARY 2026 (OCM 498/02/2026)

Moved: Cr Marshall

Seconded: Cr Stephens

That Council accepts the list of accounts and details of the credit card amounts, totalling \$84,785.30 paid under delegated authority in accordance with Regulation 13(1) of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* for the period ended 31 January 2026, as contained within **Attachment 13.2.1.**

CARRIED 6/0

For: Cr Thomson, Cr Vermeulen, Cr Stephens, Cr Marshall, Cr Garstone, Cr Trimming

Against: Nil

13.3. MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS FOR THE PERIODS ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2025 AND 31 JANUARY 2026
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File Reference	ADM0066
Date of Report	11 February 2026
Responsible Officer	Anika Serer, Chief Executive Officer
Author of Report	DL Consulting
Disclosure of any Interest	No Officer involved in the preparation of this report has an interest to declare in accordance with the provisions of the <i>Local Government Act 1995</i> .
Voting Requirement	Simple Majority
Attachments	Attachment 13.3.1 – Monthly Financial Report 31 December 2025 Attachment 13.3.2 – Monthly Financial Report 31 January 2026

BRIEF SUMMARY

Due to there being no Ordinary Council Meeting in January 2026, the Monthly Financial Reports for the periods ending 31 December 2025 and 31 January 2026 are presented for Council's consideration.

BACKGROUND/COMMENT

In accordance with regulation 34 of the *Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*, the Shire is to prepare a monthly Statement of Financial Activity for approval by Council. The Monthly Financial Reports have been prepared in accordance with statutory requirements.

The Statement of Financial Activity as at 31 January 2026 shows a closing surplus of \$1,212,634.

STATUTORY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Section 6.4 of the *Local Government Act 1995* requires a Local Government to prepare an annual financial statement for the preceding year and other financial reports as they prescribed.

Regulation 34 (1) of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* as amended requires the Local Government to prepare monthly financial statements and report on actual performance against what was set out in the annual budget.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There is no Council Policy relevant to this item.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Budget will be regularly monitored on at least a monthly basis, by the Chief Executive Officer and Financial Consultant/Accountant. Responsible Officers are also required to review their particular line items for anomalies each month, with a major review required by law, between 1 February and 28 March of each year pursuant to the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* (Regulation 33A).

Any material variances that have an impact on the outcome of the budgeted closing surplus/deficit position are detailed in the Monthly Financial Reports contained within **Attachment 13.3.1** and **Attachment 13.3.2**.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS**PILLAR 3: CIVIC LEADERSHIP****Goal 8: Accountable and compliant governance**

8.1 Maintain compliance with the Local Government Act 1995 and associated regulations

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

Reporting Officers receive monthly updates to track expenditure and income and to be aware of their work commitments versus budget allocations.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The risk in relation to this matter is assessed as “Low” on the basis that if Council does not receive the Monthly Financial Reports for the month reported leading to the Shire not meeting legislative requirements on financial reporting. The risk identified would be failure to fulfil statutory regulations or compliance requirements.

Consequence	Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Extreme
Likelihood					
Almost Certain	Medium	High	High	Severe	Severe
Likely	Low	Medium	High	High	Severe
Possible	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
Rare	Low	Low	Low	Low	Medium

Risk Rating	Action
LOW	Monitor for continuous improvement.
MEDIUM	Comply with risk reduction measures to keep risk as low as reasonably practical.
HIGH	Review risk reduction and take additional measures to ensure risk is as low as reasonably achievable.
SEVERE	Unacceptable. Risk reduction measures must be implemented before proceeding.

VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Simple Majority

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive the Monthly Financial Reports for the periods of 31 December 2025 and 31 January 2026, in accordance with section 6.4 of the *Local Government Act 1995* and Regulation 34 of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1995* as presented in **Attachment 13.3.1** and **Attachment 13.3.2**.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION – 13.3 MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS FOR THE PERIODS ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2025 AND 31 JANUARY 2026 (OCM 499/02/2026)

Moved: Cr Vermeulen

Seconded: Cr Garstone

That Council receive the Monthly Financial Reports for the periods of 31 December 2025 and 31 January 2026, in accordance with section 6.4 of the *Local Government Act 1995* and Regulation 34 of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1995* as presented in **Attachment 13.3.1** and **Attachment 13.3.2**.

CARRIED 6/0

For: Cr Thomson, Cr Vermeulen, Cr Stephens, Cr Marshall, Cr Garstone, Cr Trimming

Against: Nil

14. COMMUNITY SERVICES

Nil.

15. OFFICE OF CEO

15.1. GREAT SOUTHERN VROC EXECUTIVE OFFICER POSITION

File Reference	ADM0403
Date of Report	11 February 2026
Responsible Officer	Anika Serer, Chief Executive Officer
Author of Report	Anika Serer, Chief Executive Officer
Disclosure of any Interest	No Officer involved in the preparation of this report has an interest to declare in accordance with the provisions of the <i>Local Government Act 1995</i> .
Voting Requirement	Simple Majority
Attachments	

BRIEF SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider a funding model from Great Southern VROC to fund the continuation of the GSVROC Executive Officer position, which currently expires on 30 May 2026.

BACKGROUND

- The Great Southern VROC Memorandum of Understanding (2025–2029) provides for the appointment of an Executive Officer to support delivery of the VROC’s strategic objectives, including administration, meeting coordination, project delivery, stakeholder engagement and financial management.
- The Executive Officer position is currently funded through drought resilience funding and supports delivery of the Inland Great Southern Drought Resilience Plan, in addition to broader GSVROC priorities.
- The Executive Officer is engaged through the Host Local Government (Shire of Katanning) and is responsible for project implementation and reporting, secretariat support, financial administration, stakeholder engagement and grant coordination.
- Funding for the Executive Officer role was originally due to conclude in October 2025. As the position did not commence until September 2025, an extension was sought and approved. The South West Development Commission has confirmed that the funding expenditure period has been extended to 30 May 2026.
- A decision is now required regarding continuation of the Executive Officer role and funding arrangements beyond this date to avoid disruption to GSVROC operations.

At the GSVROC Executive meeting on 2nd February 2026 the GSVROC CEOs:

1. *Noted and accepted the revised Band Contribution funding model, including the corrected calculations.*
2. *Agreed to recommend to the GSVROC Ordinary Meeting on 9 February 2026 to continue with the Executive Officer position and that the preferred funding model for the GSVROC Executive Officer position be based on the Great Southern Treasures model.*
3. *Agreed that the host Shire is responsible for meeting catering costs.*
4. *Determined that funding for additional GSVROC project work will be considered and approved on a project-by-project basis.*

COMMENT

The GSVROC CEOs have agreed in principle to support continuation of the Executive Officer position, subject to confirmation of the funding approach and related arrangements by the Great Southern VROC. CEOs considered several funding options and generally supported adoption of a model aligned with the Great Southern Treasures subscription framework as the preferred approach.

Funding Model Options

To continue the Executive Officer position beyond the current drought funding period, the following funding models were considered:

Option	Description	Benefits	Risks
A: Equal Share Model	Each member Council contributes an equal amount toward the annual operating cost.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Simple and transparent. - Easy to administer and budget. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - May not reflect differences in Council size or capacity. - Smaller Councils may perceive contributions as disproportionate.
B: Banded Contribution Model	Contributions are based on Council classification e.g. Band 3 vs Band 4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognizes varying financial capacity. - Aligns with existing banding frameworks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requires agreement on banding and contribution levels. - Potential for debate on fairness.
C: Population-Based Formula	Contributions calculated proportionally based on each Council's population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reflects service demand and regional representation. - Scales contributions fairly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requires accurate and updated population data. - May disadvantage larger Councils.
D: Hybrid Model (Base + Variable)	A fixed base contribution for all Councils plus a variable component based on population or banding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Balances equity and simplicity. - Provides predictable minimum funding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More complex to administer. - Requires consensus on formula.

Financial Implications

Indicative cost calculations for the Executive Officer services total \$53,414.56 per annum, based on current service arrangements.

Executive Officer Services		
EO Hourly Rate	\$	85.00
Annual Hours		572
Total	\$	48,620.00
Office Expenses Allowance per month	\$	70.00
Months		12
Total Office Expenses	\$	840.00
Attend GSVROC Meetings		
Travel @ .85c per km	<i>KMs Return</i>	\$ 0.88
Katanning (Feb 26)	590	\$ 519.20
Nyabing (May 26)	550	\$ 484.00
Kojonup (August 26)	672	\$ 591.36
Mt Barker (Nov 26)	900	\$ 792.00
	Subtotal	\$ 2,386.56
2 x CEO Meetings (TBD)	<i>KMs Return</i>	\$ 0.88
Nyabing (TBD)	550	\$ 484.00
Nyabing (TBD)	550	\$ 484.00
	Subtotal	\$ 968.00
Total Kms Costs	\$	3,354.56
Accommodation and Sustenance		
Kojonup (August 26)	\$ 300.00	<i>approx</i>
Mt Barker (Nov 26)	\$ 300.00	<i>approx</i>
Total Accom	\$	600.00
Total Annual Executive Officer Costs	\$	53,414.56
Monthly Costs	\$	4,451.21

Note:

- Costs do not include additional work beyond the Executive Officer functions outlined in Item 7 of the Services Contract.
- Any additional work must be authorised by the principal in advance and will be charged at \$145 per hour.
- Hourly rates will be reviewed annually on 1 July and increased by CPI.

The South West Development Commission approved funding of \$43,795 from the GSDC PIP Funding Budget to support appointment of an Executive Officer for drought implementation activities. While originally due to conclude in October 2025, this funding period has now been extended and will conclude on 30 May 2026.

Continuation of the Executive Officer position beyond this date will require annual contributions from Member Councils. Comparative contribution tables are provided below for consideration, including an indicative contribution model aligned with the Great Southern Treasures subscription framework (adjusted proportionally).

Indicative Contribution Comparison

Shire	Equal Share	LG Band	Population	%	Payment	Fixed Base	Pop Base	Total	
PL	\$6,676.82	3	\$12,463.40	5,669	35.12%	\$18,761.29	\$2,000	\$13,141.46	\$15,141.46
KA	\$6,676.82	3	\$12,463.40	4,057	25.14%	\$13,426.45	\$2,000	\$9,404.64	\$11,404.64
KO	\$6,676.82	3	\$12,463.40	1,985	12.30%	\$6,569.26	\$2,000	\$4,601.48	\$6,601.48
GN	\$6,676.82	4	\$3,204.87	1,215	7.53%	\$4,020.98	\$2,000	\$2,816.52	\$4,816.52
BHT	\$6,676.82	4	\$3,204.87	1,144	7.09%	\$3,786.01	\$2,000	\$2,651.94	\$4,651.94
CB	\$6,676.82	4	\$3,204.87	1,098	6.80%	\$3,633.78	\$2,000	\$2,545.30	\$4,545.30
KT	\$6,676.82	4	\$3,204.87	524	3.25%	\$1,734.15	\$2,000	\$1,214.70	\$3,214.70
WO	\$6,676.82	4	\$3,204.87	448	2.78%	\$1,482.63	\$2,000	\$1,038.52	\$3,038.52
	\$53,414.56	29	\$53,414.56	16,140	100.00%	\$53,414.56	\$16,000	\$37,414.56	\$53,414.56

Shire	Fixed Base	Band Base	Total	Fixed Base	Rate Revenue	Total	GS Treasures Tier	Total
PL	\$2,000	\$8,730.06	\$10,730.06	\$2,000	\$9,157.55	\$11,157.55	3	\$9,453.90
KA	\$2,000	\$8,730.06	\$10,730.06	\$2,000	\$5,819.87	\$7,819.87	3	\$9,453.90
KO	\$2,000	\$8,730.06	\$10,730.06	\$2,000	\$5,733.45	\$7,733.45	3	\$9,453.90
GN	\$2,000	\$2,244.87	\$4,244.87	\$2,000	\$5,668.59	\$7,668.59	2	\$6,145.04
BHT	\$2,000	\$2,244.87	\$4,244.87	\$2,000	\$3,376.78	\$5,376.78	2	\$6,145.04
CB	\$2,000	\$2,244.87	\$4,244.87	\$2,000	\$3,532.75	\$5,532.75	2	\$6,145.04
KT	\$2,000	\$2,244.87	\$4,244.87	\$2,000	\$2,843.40	\$4,843.40	1	\$3,308.87
WO	\$2,000	\$2,244.87	\$4,244.87	\$2,000	\$1,282.16	\$3,282.16	1	\$3,308.87
	\$16,000	\$37,414.56	\$53,414.56	\$16,000	\$37,414.56	\$53,414.56		\$53,414.56

Meeting Catering Costs

GSVROC CEOs agreed that catering continue to be covered by the hosting Council.

STATUTORY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Shire of Woodanilling entered a 4-year MOU with the Shires of Broomehill-Tambellup, Cranbrook, Gnowangerup, Katanning, Kent, Kojonup and Plantagenet in May 2025 to form the Great Southern Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils (GS VROC). At the time of signing the MOU it was indicated that financial contributions in the vicinity of \$8,000 per annum may be required to fund the executive officer position in the future, however that was provided as an estimate at the time with no formal decision required.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There is no policy associated with this item.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The various funding models indicate a contribution from the Shire of Woodanilling ranging from \$1,482.63 (model 2 – population based) up to a maximum of \$6,676.82 (model 1 – equal share). For the 2025/26 budget this would require one month (June) funding ranging from \$125 to \$560, and the full amount would need to be included in the development of the 2026/27 budget. Model 7 (based on the Great Southern Treasures contribution model), which indicates a contribution of \$3,308.87 from the Shire, is the recommended model however it is noted that all Councils need to seek their own approvals and may endorse an alternative. It is recommended the CEO is authorised to approve whichever funding contribution receives a majority from the VROC Councils to ensure a decision can be made in a timely manner.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

Great Southern VROC enables the 8 Local Governments to work in partnership and leverage their collective strength to deliver a range of strategic opportunities and initiatives throughout the region. The Strategic Plan focuses on 3 pillars of Economic Viability (of our communities), Operational Efficiencies and

Climate Resilience, which complement and support the objectives of the Shire's Strategic Community Plan and Corporate Business Plan.

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

Consultation has been undertaken firstly with the Chief Executive Officers of GSVROC, and this item was tabled at the GSVROC meeting held on 9 February 2026 for referral to member Councils.

RISK MANAGEMENT

There is a minor reputational risk to the Shire if a financial contribution is not endorsed, as an indicative value was provided prior to entering the MOU. The contribution represents value to the Shire for the collective strength and outcomes of the GSVROC.

Consequenc Likelihood	Insignifican t	Minor	Moderate	Major	Extrem e
Almost	Medium	High	High	Severe	Severe
Likely	Low	Medium	High	High	Severe
Possible	Low	Mediu	Medium	High	High
Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	Mediu	High
Rare	Low	Low	Low	Low	Medium

Risk Rating	Action
LOW	Monitor for continuous improvement.
MEDIUM	Comply with risk reduction measures to keep risk as low as reasonably practical.
HIGH	Review risk reduction and take additional measures to ensure risk is as low as reasonably achievable.
SEVERE	Unacceptable. Risk reduction measures must be implemented before proceeding.

VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Simple Majority

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Endorses the continuation of the GSVROC Executive Officer position beyond the current funding period ending 30 May 2026;
2. Authorises the CEO to recommend the Great Southern Treasures Contribution Model to Great Southern VROC, and approves a funding arrangement ranging from \$1,500 (model 2 – population based) up to a maximum of \$6,700 (model 1 – equal share) for 2026/27 with a pro-rata contribution for the month of June, to be reviewed annually;
3. Confirms the host Council will continue to be responsible for meeting catering costs; and
4. Notes that any additional GSVROC project work outside the core Executive Officer functions will be considered and approved on a project-by-project basis.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION – 15.1. GREAT SOUTHERN VROC EXECUTIVE OFFICER POSITION (OCM 500/02/2026)

Moved: Cr Stephens

Seconded: Cr Vermeulen

That Council:

1. Endorses the continuation of the GSVROC Executive Officer position beyond the current funding period ending 30 May 2026;
2. Authorises the CEO to recommend the Great Southern Treasures Contribution Model to Great Southern VROC, and approves a funding arrangement ranging from \$1,500 (model 2 – population based) up to a maximum of \$6,700 (model 1 – equal share) for 2026/27 with a pro-rata contribution for the month of June, to be reviewed annually;
3. Confirms the host Council will continue to be responsible for meeting catering costs; and
4. Notes that any additional GSVROC project work outside the core Executive Officer functions will be considered and approved on a project-by-project basis.

CARRIED 6/0

For: Cr Thomson, Cr Vermeulen, Cr Stephens, Cr Marshall, Cr Garstone, Cr Trimming

Against: Nil

16. CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS

Nil.

17. ELECTED MEMBERS' MOTION OF WHICH PREVIOUS NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

Nil.

18. MOTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE BY PERMISSION OF THE COUNCIL

Nil.

19. CLOSURE OF MEETING

There being no further business the Shire President declared the meeting closed at 5.31pm.

Great Southern VROC

Broomehill-Tambellup | Cranbrook | Gnowangerup | Katanning
Kent | Kojonup | Plantagenet | Woodanilling

MINUTES

Great Southern VROC Ordinary Meeting

Monday 9th February 2026

Katanning Leisure & Function Centre

Located at 4 Pemble Street, Katanning



GREAT SOUTHERN VOLUNTEER REGION OF COUNCILS

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held at the
Katanning Leisure & Function Centre on
Monday 9th February 2026

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GREAT SOUTHERN VOLUNTEER REGION OF COUNCILS

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held at the
Katanning Leisure & Function Centre on
Monday 9th February 2026

1. OPENING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairperson, Kristy D'Aprile declared the meeting open and welcomed attendees at 10.05am.

2. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

Attendance

Cr Doug Barritt	Voting Member	Shire of Broomehill-Tambellup
Karen Callaghan	CEO	Shire of Broomehill-Tambellup
Cr Perin Mulcahy	Voting Member	Shire of Cranbrook
Cr Daisy Egerton-Warburton	Deputy Member	Shire of Cranbrook
Linda Gray	CEO	Shire of Cranbrook
Cr Kate O'Keeffe	Voting Member	Shire of Gnowangerup
Cr Robbie Minter OAM		Shire of Gnowangerup
David Nicholson	CEO	Shire of Gnowangerup
Cr Kristy D'Aprile	Voting Member	Shire of Katanning
Peter Klein	CEO	Shire of Katanning
Cr Kate Johnston	Voting Member	Shire of Kent
Christie Smith	CEO	Shire of Kent
Cr Michael Mathwin	Deputy Member	Shire of Kojonup
Grant Thompson	CEO	Shire of Kojonup
Cr Len Handasyde	Voting Member	Shire of Plantagenet
Julian Murphy	CEO	Shire of Plantagenet
Cr Sally Vermeulen	Voting Member	Shire of Woodanilling
Anika Serer	CEO	Shire of Woodanilling
Darren Mollenoyux	Executive Officer	Great Southern VROC

Apologies

<i>Cr Roger Bilney</i>	<i>Voting Member</i>	<i>Shire of Kojonup</i>
<i>Cr Sara Robinson</i>	<i>Deputy Member</i>	<i>Shire of Broomehill-Tambellup</i>
<i>Cr Kahlia Stephens</i>	<i>Deputy Member</i>	<i>Shire of Woodanilling</i>

Guests

3. PRESENTATIONS

3.1 Great Southern Treasures – 11.00am

Dr Lenore Lyons – Chair, Australia's South West Regional Tourism Organisation
Catrin Pickworth – CEO, Australia's South West Regional Tourism Organisation
Sophie Zalokar - Great Southern Tourism Manager (Great Southern Treasures)

There was a presentation on Great Southern Treasures, the Bloom Festival, and the Australia's South West Regional Tourism Organisation, providing an overview of Great Southern Treasure's activities and achievements.

4. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

- 4.1 Minutes of the Great Southern VROC Meeting held on the 3rd November 2025 in Gnowangerup, provided at **Attachment 4**.

RECOMMENDATION AND DECISION

Moved: Cr Len Handasyde

Seconded: Cr Kate O'Keeffe

That the Minutes of the Great Southern VROC Meeting held on the 3rd November 2025 are received as a true and correct record of proceedings.

Carried
Result 8/0

- 4.2 Minutes of the Great Southern VROC Executive Meetings held on the 2nd December 2025 and 2nd February 2026 via Microsoft Teams, provided at **Attachment 4**.

RECOMMENDATION AND DECISION

Moved: Cr Kate Johnston

Seconded: Cr Kate O'Keeffe

That the Minutes of the Great Southern VROC Executive Meetings held on the 2nd December 2025 and 2nd February 2026 be received.

Carried
Result 8/0

5. ACTION REPORTS

Great Southern VROC Meeting - Action Report

A copy of the Great Southern VROC Meeting Action Report is presented for information at **Attachment 5.1**.

RECOMMENDATION AND DECISION

Moved: Cr Kate Johnston

Seconded: Cr Doug Barritt

That the Report on Meeting Actions as at 4th February 2026 be noted.

Carried
Result 8/0

Great Southern VROC Strategic Action Plan 2025-2029 – Status Report

A copy of the Great Southern VROC Strategic Action Plan - Status Report is presented for information at **Attachment 5.2**.

RECOMMENDATION AND DECISION

Moved: Cr Kate O'Keeffe

Seconded: Cr Doug Barritt

That the Strategic Action Plan - Status Report as at 4th February 2026 be noted.

Carried
Result 8/0

6. MATTERS FOR DECISION

6.1 Great Southern Treasures – Future Participation

REPORTING OFFICER:	Darren Mollenoyux, GSVROC Executive Officer
DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST:	Nil
DATE:	3 rd February 2026
ATTACHMENT NUMBER:	6.1a GST – 24/25 Annual Report 6.1b GST – Service Level Agreement 2023-26 6.1c GST – KPI Reporting Dashboard 2024-25 6.1d Bloom Festival Attendance Research
CONSULTATION	GSVROC CEOs Sophie Zalokar, Great Southern Treasures

SUMMARY

GSVROC members are asked to determine a collective position on the renewal of the Great Southern Treasures (GST) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the period 2026–2029.

Following the GST presentation to the Great Southern VROC on 3 November 2025, and subsequent CEO discussions held on 2 December 2025 and 2 February 2026, member Councils have provided updated positions, with several indicating reduced or discontinued participation.

The Great Southern VROC is now required to consider these positions, along with the regional, operational and financial implications, and determine whether to proceed with a new MOU and on what terms.

BACKGROUND

At the GSVROC CEOs Strategic Planning Workshop held on 2 October 2025, the impending expiry of the GST MOU was identified for future consideration.

On 3 November 2025, Sophie Zalokar delivered a presentation to the Great Southern VROC outlining GST's activities, organisational performance, and outcomes associated with the Bloom Festival. Discussion by delegates highlighted the following matters:

- Varying levels of perceived local economic benefit
- Volunteer reliance concerns (Shire of Kent)
- Questions regarding value for contribution (Shire of Katanning)
- Potential re-engagement interest (Shire of Plantagenet), contingent on member support
- Recognition that the value of GST depends on each Shire's level of engagement

The meeting resolved to seek further information and to schedule additional CEO-level discussions to support development of a coordinated regional position.

On 2 December 2025, CEOs reviewed preliminary Council feedback, economic benefit information and GST performance documentation. Member views remained mixed, with some Shires indicating non-participation, others conditional support, and some supporting renewal only if all members recommitted.

On 2 February 2026, CEOs provided updated Council positions regarding participation and financial contribution under the proposed Draft GST MOU 2026–2029. The meeting agreed to the following next steps:

1. CEOs provided their respective Shire positions regarding participation and financial commitment to the renewal of the Great Southern Treasures Draft MOU 2026 - 2029.
2. The collective regional impact is a reduction in membership contributions of \$20,000.
3. Discussions are to be held with Australia's South West regarding the implications of the reduced membership and the potential to review the scope and level of service.
4. Australia's South West will provide a presentation at the February GSVROC meeting.
5. Updated positions and relevant information are to be presented to the Great Southern VROC meeting scheduled for 9 February 2026.

Member Council's positions on financial commitment to GST MOU Renewal

SHIRE	POSITION
Shire of Broomehill-Tambellup	Supportive of MOU renewal if all Shires financially recommit
Shire of Cranbrook	Supportive of MOU renewal if all Shires financially recommit
Shire of Gnowangerup	Supportive of MOU renewal if all Shires financially recommit
Shire of Katanning	Likely to remain as a member
Shire of Kent	Not remaining as a member
Shire of Kojonup	Supportive of MOU renewal if all Shires financially recommit
Shire of Plantagenet	Not currently a member and likely remain status quo
Shire of Woodanilling	Supportive of MOU renewal if no significant financial commit
Shire of Jerramungup	Not remaining as a member

COMMENT

The GSVROC Executive Officer has coordinated a presentation in liaison with Sophie Zalokar of Great Southern Treasures. The Chief Executive Officer of Australia's South West will present at the Great Southern VROC meeting on 9 February 2026 to provide member Councils with an overview of GST, its regional benefits, and the implications of the proposed MOU.

The meeting is requested to consider the presentation, along with the collective impact of individual Council positions, including implications for regional collaboration, financial sustainability and program delivery.

STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT

Nil

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The collective regional impact of indicated member withdrawals by Kent & Jerramungup represents a reduction in membership contributions of \$20,000.

Section 12 of the existing MOU provides for the following annual subscription levels (exclusive of gst):

- Tier 1 Member Councils (population under 1,000): \$7,000 per annum
- Tier 2 Member Councils (population 1,000–1,900): \$13,000 per annum
- Tier 3 Member Councils (population 1,901+): \$20,000 per annum

Subscription levels are subject to review at the conclusion of the MOU term.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

This matter relates to regional collaboration, tourism development, and the efficient use of collective local government investment to achieve shared regional outcomes.

VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Simple Majority

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That the Great Southern VROC

1. Note the presentation from of Australia's South West on Great Southern Treasures at the February 2026 meeting;
2. Note the positions provided by each member Council regarding participation in the Great Southern Treasures MOU 2026–2029;
3. Engage with Australia's South West to assess the implications of reduced membership and consider any necessary adjustments to the scope and level of service, taking into account the indicated withdrawal of the Shires of Kent and Jerramungup; and
4. Determine a collective position on renewal of the Great Southern Treasures MOU for the period 2026–2029.

The recommendation varied enable the members of GST to have further discussions with Australia South West as to implications in reduced membership.

DECISION

Moved: Cr Michael Mathwin

Seconded: Cr Doug Barritt

That the Great Southern VROC

- 1. Note the presentation from of Australia's South West on Great Southern Treasures at the meeting on the 9th February 2026;**
- 2. Note the positions provided by each member Council regarding participation in the Great Southern Treasures MOU 2026–2029;**
- 3. Engage with Australia's South West to assess the implications of reduced membership and consider any necessary adjustments to the scope and level of service, taking into account the indicated withdrawal of the Shires of Kent and Jerramungup; and**

Carried

For:6

Against:0

The Shires of Plantagenet and Kent abstained from the vote due to not being involved

6.2 Great Southern VROC Executive Officer Position

REPORTING OFFICER:	Peter Klein, Lead GSVROC CEO
DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST:	Darren Mollenoyux, Current Executive Officer – 150Square
DATE:	3 rd February 2026
ATTACHMENT NUMBER:	6.2a – GSDC – Letter of Funding Agreement 6.2b – Executive Officer Services Contract
CONSULTATION	Peter Klein, GSVROC Host CEO Darren Mollenoyux, Associate at 150Square Ali Gardener, South West Development Commission GSVROC CEOs

Darren Mollenoyux left the room at 10.20am, due to a disclosure of interest

SUMMARY

This item seeks to confirm the continuation of the GSVROC Executive Officer position, including endorsement of the preferred funding model and associated arrangements beyond the current funding period.

BACKGROUND

- The Great Southern VROC Memorandum of Understanding (2025–2029) provides for the appointment of an Executive Officer to support delivery of the VROC’s strategic objectives, including administration, meeting coordination, project delivery, stakeholder engagement and financial management.
- The Executive Officer position is currently funded through drought resilience funding and supports delivery of the Inland Great Southern Drought Resilience Plan, in addition to broader GSVROC priorities.
- The Executive Officer is engaged through the Host Local Government (Shire of Katanning) and is responsible for project implementation and reporting, secretariat support, financial administration, stakeholder engagement and grant coordination.
- Funding for the Executive Officer role was originally due to conclude in October 2025. As the position did not commence until September 2025, an extension was sought and approved. The South West Development Commission has confirmed that the funding expenditure period has been extended to 30 May 2026.
- A decision is now required regarding continuation of the Executive Officer role and funding arrangements beyond this date to avoid disruption to GSVROC operations.

At the GSVROC Executive meeting on the 2nd February 2026 *the GSVROC CEOs:*

1. *Noted and accepted the revised Band Contribution funding model, including the corrected calculations.*
2. *Agreed to recommend to the GSVROC Ordinary Meeting on 9 February 2026 to continue with the Executive Officer position and that the preferred funding model for the GSVROC Executive Officer position be based on the Great Southern Treasures model.*
3. *Agreed that the host Shire is responsible for meeting catering costs.*
4. *Determined that funding for additional GSVROC project work will be considered and approved on a project-by-project basis.*

COMMENT

The GSVROC CEOs have agreed in principle to support continuation of the Executive Officer position, subject to confirmation of the funding approach and related arrangements by the Great Southern VROC. CEOs considered several funding options and supported adoption of a model aligned with the Great Southern Treasures subscription framework as the preferred approach.

Funding Model Options

To continue the Executive Officer position beyond the current drought funding period, the following funding models were considered:

Option	Description	Benefits	Risks
A: Equal Share Model	Each member Council contributes an equal amount toward the annual operating cost.	- Simple and transparent. - Easy to administer and budget.	- May not reflect differences in Council size or capacity. - Smaller Councils may perceive contributions as disproportionate.
B: Banded Contribution Model	Contributions are based on Council classification e.g. Band 3 vs Band 4.	- Recognizes varying financial capacity. - Aligns with existing banding frameworks.	- Requires agreement on banding and contribution levels. - Potential for debate on fairness.
C: Population-Based Formula	Contributions calculated proportionally based on each Council's population.	- Reflects service demand and regional representation. - Scales contributions fairly.	- Requires accurate and updated population data. - May disadvantage larger Councils.
D: Hybrid Model (Base + Variable)	A fixed base contribution for all Councils plus a variable component based on population or banding.	- Balances equity and simplicity. - Provides predictable minimum funding.	- More complex to administer. - Requires consensus on formula.

STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT

Great Southern VROC MOU 2025 - 2029

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Indicative cost calculations for the Executive Officer services total \$53,414.56 per annum, based on current service arrangements.

Executive Officer Services		
EO Hourly Rate	\$	85.00
Annual Hours		572
Total	\$	48,620.00
Office Expenses Allowance per month	\$	70.00
Months		12
Total Office Expenses	\$	840.00
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Monthly Costs	\$	4,451.21

Note:

- Costs do not include additional work beyond the Executive Officer functions outlined in Item 7 of the Services Contract.
- Any additional work must be authorised by the principal in advance and will be charged at \$145 per hour.
- Hourly rates will be reviewed annually on 1 July and increased by CPI.

The South West Development Commission approved funding of \$43,795 from the GSDC PIP Funding Budget to support appointment of an Executive Officer for drought implementation activities. While originally due to conclude in October 2025, this funding period has now been extended and will conclude on 30 May 2026.

Continuation of the Executive Officer position beyond this date will require annual contributions from Member Councils. Comparative contribution tables are provided below for consideration, including an indicative contribution model aligned with the Great Southern Treasures subscription framework (adjusted proportionally).

Indicative Contribution Comparison

Shire	Equal Share	LG Band	Population	%	Payment	Fixed Base	Pop Base	Total	
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KO	\$6,676.82	3	\$12,463.40	1,985	12.30%	\$6,569.26	\$2,000	\$4,601.48	\$6,601.48
GN	\$6,676.82	4	\$3,204.87	1,215	7.53%	\$4,020.98	\$2,000	\$2,816.52	\$4,816.52
BHT	\$6,676.82	4	\$3,204.87	1,144	7.09%	\$3,786.01	\$2,000	\$2,651.94	\$4,651.94
CB	\$6,676.82	4	\$3,204.87	1,098	6.80%	\$3,633.78	\$2,000	\$2,545.30	\$4,545.30
KT	\$6,676.82	4	\$3,204.87	524	3.25%	\$1,734.15	\$2,000	\$1,214.70	\$3,214.70
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Shire	Fixed Base	Band Base	Total	Fixed Base	Rate Revenue	Total	GS Treasures Tier	Total
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KA	\$2,000	\$8,730.06	\$10,730.06	\$2,000	\$5,819.87	\$7,819.87	3	\$9,453.90
KO	\$2,000	\$8,730.06	\$10,730.06	\$2,000	\$5,733.45	\$7,733.45	3	\$9,453.90
GN	\$2,000	\$2,244.87	\$4,244.87	\$2,000	\$5,668.59	\$7,668.59	2	\$6,145.04
BHT	\$2,000	\$2,244.87	\$4,244.87	\$2,000	\$3,376.78	\$5,376.78	2	\$6,145.04
CB	\$2,000	\$2,244.87	\$4,244.87	\$2,000	\$3,532.75	\$5,532.75	2	\$6,145.04
KT	\$2,000	\$2,244.87	\$4,244.87	\$2,000	\$2,843.40	\$4,843.40	1	\$3,308.87
WO	\$2,000	\$2,244.87	\$4,244.87	\$2,000	\$1,282.16	\$3,282.16	1	\$3,308.87
	\$16,000	\$37,414.56	\$53,414.56	\$16,000	\$37,414.56	\$53,414.56		\$53,414.56

Meeting Catering Costs

GSVROC CEOs agreed that catering continue to be covered by the hosting Council.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Great Southern VROC Strategic Plan 2025-2029

Supports regional collaboration, strategic project delivery, and advocacy as outlined in the Great Southern VROC Strategic Plan.

VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Simple Majority

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That the Great Southern VROC

1. Endorse the continuation of the GSVROC Executive Officer position beyond the current funding period ending 30 May 2026;
2. Determine the preferred duration of the continued engagement of the Executive Officer position and agree on the approach for procuring or appointing Executive Officer services for that period;
3. Approve the Great Southern Treasures funding model as the preferred approach for Member Council contributions toward the ongoing Executive Officer costs;
4. Confirm the host Council will continue to be responsible for meeting catering costs; and
5. Note that any additional GSVROC project work outside the core Executive Officer functions will be considered and approved on a project-by-project basis.

MOTION**Moved: Cr Len Handasyde****Seconded: Cr Kate O’Keeffe****That the Great Southern VROC**

1. *Endorse the continuation of the GSVROC Executive Officer position beyond the current funding period ending 30 May 2026;*
2. *Determine the preferred duration of the continued engagement of the Executive Officer position and agree on the approach for procuring or appointing Executive Officer services for that period;*
3. *Approve the Great Southern Treasures funding model as the preferred approach for Member Council contributions toward the ongoing Executive Officer costs;*
4. *Confirm the host Council will continue to be responsible for meeting catering costs; and*
5. *Note that any additional GSVROC project work outside the core Executive Officer functions will be considered and approved on a project-by-project basis.*

Motion Lapsed

The recommendation was varied to remove point 3 to enable members to confirm their commitment in principle to contracting an Executive Officer, however defers the funding decision until after member councils have had the opportunity to determine their preferred funding approach at their Council meetings.

Subsequently point 2 of the recommendation was also removed until decision from all member Councils.

DECISION**Moved: Cr Len Handasyde****Seconded: Cr Kate O’Keeffe****That the Great Southern VROC**

1. **Endorse the continuation of the GSVROC Executive Officer position beyond the current funding period ending 30 May 2026;**
2. **Confirm the host Council will continue to be responsible for meeting catering costs; and**
3. **Note that any additional GSVROC project work outside the core Executive Officer functions will be considered and approved on a project-by-project basis.**

Carried**For: 6****Shires of Plantagenet and Kent - Against: 2**

Darren Mollenoyux returned to the meeting at 10.40am.

6.3 Emergency Management Act Consolidation

REPORTING OFFICER:	Peter Klien, CEO Shire of Katanning
DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST:	Nil
DATE:	3 rd February 2026
ATTACHMENT NUMBER:	Nil
CONSULTATION	Sam Kennedy – Senior Policy Advisor WALGA GSVROC CEOs Darren Mollenoyux – GSVROC Executive Officer

SUMMARY

The State Government's objective to consolidate Western Australia's *Emergency Management Acts* will see the modernisation and simplification of this legislation and secondarily, the drafting process creates a unique opportunity to address the inequities identified by local governments contained within the current legislative framework.

Progress with drafting the consolidated exposure bill has stalled and brings into question the State Government's commitment to the timely consolidation of these acts and to the efficiencies and improvements this will deliver.

This paper seeks support for reprioritising emergency management act reform and to ensuring the voice of local government strongly influences reform outcomes.

BACKGROUND

In 2019, State Cabinet approved and issued instructions to the Parliamentary Counsel's Office, to draft an exposure bill to consolidate the following three emergency management acts;

- i) *Fire & Emergency Services Act 1998*,
- ii) *Fire Brigades Act 1942*, and
- iii) *Bush Fires Act 1954*

The following process was endorsed to deliver this outcome;



DFES was subsequently allocated the responsibility to manage & drive this process.

In August 2023, in response to a question from the Hon. Martin Aldridge, the Minister for Emergency Services Stephen Dawson replied that the exposure draft bill will be released for stakeholder consideration in early 2024. The exposure draft bill is now two years late.

DFES has provided the following recent update on their progress;

- Work on the development of an Emergency Services Exposure Draft Bill is ongoing.
- A dedicated team of six DFES officers are reviewing and refining the legislative proposal to consolidate the emergency management arrangements.
- The drafting process is legally technical, time-intensive and the practical considerations are complex. DFES is investing time and effort to produce new legislation that is fit-for-purpose for the many stakeholders involved in emergency management.
- Once finalised, the Exposure Draft Bill will be released for public comment. Until then, targeted consultation may be undertaken by DFES on discrete matters.

The item was presented and endorsed at the February 2026 Great Southern VROC Executive meeting.

COMMENT

The State Government has failed to adequately consider the consequential responsibilities of local government CEOs and officers for bush fire brigade volunteers during both the design and implementation of the existing emergency management acts and the *WHS Act 2020*.

Western Australian is the only jurisdiction in Australia where local governments hold responsibility for bush fire response, brigade administration, training and compliance. We are the only jurisdiction where the CEO and Officers are the PCBU for registered BFB and spontaneous volunteers and nowhere else in Australia are local government CEO's and Officers liable for industrial manslaughter in respect to the performance of this cohort of "workers".

The ability of local government CEOs and Officers to meet their duties of care to these workers is compromised by emergency realities and operational complexity, insufficient resourcing, lack of state guidance on how local governments should meet their PCBU responsibilities and the fact that bush fire response is inherently hazardous.

Other challenges identified by local governments in respect to existing arrangements include;

- The failure of the Local Government Grant Scheme (LGGS) contributions to local governments to keep pace with increased compliance cost.
- Insufficient transparency associated with the distribution by DFES of Emergency Service Levies collected and remitted by local governments.
- Under resourcing of bush fire and emergency management preparations.
- The challenge of full compliance with *WHS Act* obligations and the management of spontaneous volunteers.
- Inability to transfer WHS duties to volunteers when DFES assumes operational control.

WALGA has established advocacy position "8.10 Management of Bush Fire Brigades" and this position states, amongst other things, as follows;

The State Government, through the Consolidated *Emergency Services Act* and/or other mechanism's must:

- a) Establish a clear framework to enable the transfer of Bush Fire Brigades to the State Government if a Local Government decides to do so; and
- b) Consult on the process, timeline, and implications for transfer of responsibility for Bush Fire Brigades through the establishment of a working group comprising representatives of Local Government, Bush Fire Brigades, the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC) and the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES).

STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT

Various provisions contained within the *Bush Fires Act 1954* and corresponding regulations.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Improve local government risk management and operational efficiency.

VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Simple Majority

RECOMMENDATION AND DECISION

Moved: Cr Michael Mathwin

Seconded: Cr Kate O'Keeffe

That the Great Southern VROC endorse the following advocacy position;

- a) That the State Government urgently prioritise and expedite the consolidation of the State's emergency management legislation to address the escalating operational and risk issues arising from the current outdated framework.
- b) That the consolidated acts establish a clear framework to enable the transfer of Bush Fire Brigades to the State Government if a Local Government decides to do so; and
- c) That local governments at the WALGA zone level be consulted prior to release of the exposure draft bill.

Carried
For: 8
Against: 0

6.4 Street Lighting Advocacy

REPORTING OFFICER:	Darren Mollenoyux, GSVROC Executive Officer
DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST:	Nil
DATE:	5 th February 2026
ATTACHMENT NUMBER:	Provided under separate cover
CONSULTATION	GSVROC CEOs

SUMMARY

This item presents preliminary information gathered from member Councils regarding street lighting costs and the transition to LED lighting. The Great Southern VROC is requested to consider the information provided and determine a coordinated regional advocacy approach to support LED street lighting upgrades, including alignment with WALGA's advocacy position.

BACKGROUND

At the December 2025 GSVROC Executive Meeting, it was agreed that a consolidated advocacy position be developed to progress a coordinated regional transition to LED street lighting across the VROC.

To support this work, CEOs were requested to provide:

- street lighting costs for the previous three financial years; and
- the number or percentage of streetlights already converted to LED within their towns.

The Executive Officer has undertaken preliminary collation of the information received to date to assist in assessing financial impacts and informing a regional advocacy position.

WALGA has advised that Western Power is currently undertaking a review of its Public Lighting Asset Management Strategy. On 24 November 2025, WALGA advised that local governments are encouraged to participate in the review process to ensure the strategy is fit-for-purpose and aligned with local government objectives. WALGA further advised that a survey was distributed to CEOs within the Western Power service area in late November 2025, with responses due by 19 December 2025, to be followed by workshops in early 2026.

At the GSVROC Executive Meeting held on 2 February 2026, CEOs discussed the feedback received from member Shires regarding street lighting, noting that some information was still outstanding. The meeting agreed that the Executive Officer finalise collation of all available information and prepare a consolidated summary for consideration.

It was further agreed that the compiled findings be presented to the Great Southern VROC meeting on 9 February 2026 to support determination of a regional advocacy position for LED street lighting upgrades, including consideration of alignment with WALGA's direction.

COMMENT

This item provides the Great Southern VROC with an opportunity to:

- review the preliminary street lighting data collated from member Councils;
- determine a proposed approach for a consolidated regional advocacy position to Western Power; and
- confirm next steps, including timing and scope of engagement with Western Power and alignment with WALGA's Public Lighting Asset Management Strategy review.

Detailed financial data and supporting tables will be circulated prior to the meeting. The tables highlight the cost differences between non-LED and LED street lighting and the potential financial benefits of LED conversion.

The below tables highlight the cost difference between Non LED and LED street lighting.

Description (non-LED)	Cost / Lamp / Day
80W Mercury Vapour - M	\$0.44
125W Mercury Vapour - C	\$0.68
150W High Pressure Sodium - M	\$0.59
250W High Pressure Sodium - C	\$0.96
70W Metal Halide - C	\$0.79
150W Metal Halide - C	\$1.04
250W Metal Halide - C	\$1.24
42W CFL SE - C	\$0.49
80W Mercury Vapour - C	\$0.53
150W High Pressure Sodium - C	\$0.76

Description (LED)	Cost / Lamp / Day
16W LED - C	\$0.30
28W LED - C	\$0.33
42W LED - C	\$0.37
43W LED - C	\$0.37
70W LED - C	\$0.44
165W LED - C	\$0.71
18W LED - C	\$0.30
36W LED RG - C	\$0.35
53W LED RG - C	\$0.39
80W LED RF - C	\$0.47
20W LED RG - C	\$0.31
170W LED RF - C	\$0.72

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications for the Great Southern VROC arising from this item at this stage.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Great Southern VROC Strategic Plan 2025 - 2029

Goal: Utilise solar energy to reduce the operational costs of public facilities, including pools, sports lighting, buildings, and homes, while contributing to climate resilience.

2.3.1 Advocate for street lighting to be upgraded to LED.

VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Simple Majority

RECOMMENDATION AND DECISION

Moved: Cr Michael Mathwin

Seconded: Cr Doug Barritt

That the Great Southern VROC:

1. Note the preliminary street lighting data provided by member Councils;
2. Agree in principle with the development of a consolidated regional advocacy position supporting a more rapid transition to LED street lighting; and
3. Agree that appropriate Great Southern VROC representatives attend the WALGA workshops scheduled for February 2026, once dates are confirmed, to inform future consideration of a potential consolidated regional position.

Carried
For: 8
Against: 0

7 MATTERS FOR INFORMATION OR UPDATE

7.1 GSDC and Inland Drought Projects Updates

REPORTING OFFICER:	Darren Mollenoyux, GSVROC Executive Officer
DATE:	4 th February 2026
DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST:	Nil
ATTACHMENT NUMBER:	Nil
CONSULTATION	GSVROC CEOs Ali Gardener, Senior Project Officer – GSDC

BACKGROUND

Several projects are currently being undertaken by the Great Southern Development Commission (GSDC) that are relevant to GSVROC member Shires and aligned with components of the GSVROC Strategic Action Plan 2025–2029.

These projects include:

- Water for Future Project
- Infrastructure Audit
- Housing Strategy Project

COMMENT

This item provides an opportunity for members to receive updates and provide feedback on the progress of GSDC projects relevant to the region.

On the 15th January 2026 the Great Southern VROC Executive Officer had a meeting with Ali Gardiner from GSDC to discuss updates on projects and activities aligned with the Great Southern Drought Resilience Plan projects.

- **Water for Future Project**

The Water for Future Project is developing non-potable water strategies for each Inland Great Southern LGA, including audits of current and future water supply and demand, identification of gaps, and prioritisation of projects to enhance water security and drought resilience.

Update:

- Urbaqua have completed their comprehensive review and gap analysis, comprising of a water audit and water demand modelling for each Shire.
- Urbaqua has completed their local engagement and strategy development activities via workshops with all 8 Inland Shires in December 2025.
- Urbaqua is now collating all information and drafting the water strategies for each Shire.
- The contract with Urbaqua is highly likely to be extended to allow Urbaqua adequate time to develop quality, fit-for-purpose water plans and allow time for Shire and GSDC review.

- **Infrastructure Audit Project**

The Infrastructure Audit project will evaluate existing infrastructure across the Inland Great Southern region to support emerging industries and economic diversification.

Update:

- A Request for Quotation (RFQ) has been released to the market to engage a suitably qualified consultant to undertake the audit, with submissions closing on 31 January 2026, with contract execution originally anticipated by mid-February 2026.
- The evaluation was undertaken on 4 February 2026. The GSVROC Executive Officer was requested to participate on the assessment panel, alongside Lee Sounness and Ali Gardener
- One quotation was received. Following assessment, the panel determined that the proposed fee significantly exceeded the budget. The scope of works is now being reviewed to determine appropriate next steps.

- **Inland Great Southern Grants**

Following the finalisation of the Inland Great Southern Drought Resilience Grant Program in November 2025, the following organisations have been successful in securing funding for their drought resilience projects:

- **Gilliamii Centre – ‘Resilient Country, Connected Communities: Planning for Landscape Renewal in the Inland Great Southern’**

The Gillamii Centre will hold one (1) community education event at Tambellup Community Crop to engage landholders and community members in planning for revegetation and landscape restoration, and increase understanding of the role revegetation plays in managing erosion, improving biodiversity, and restoring ecosystem health—essential elements of long-term climate resilience.

- **Gnowangerup Aboriginal Corporation – ‘Enhancing the Capacity and Connectivity of the Gnowangerup Noongar Centre’**

The Gnowangerup Aboriginal Corporation will build drought resilience capacity in the region through kitchen refurbishments at the Gnowangerup Noongar Centre, providing a functioning operations base for the Ngowanjerindj Rangers. This project will increase the community’s capacity to understand, plan and manage for drought by providing a gathering space to host communal meals, cultural events and support programs that bring people together during times of stress and enable the sharing of traditional ecological knowledge and building mutual support networks

- **Southern Dirt – ‘Summer-Proofing Our Gardens: Community Workshops for Drought Resilience’**

Southern Dirt will deliver 2-3 community workshops in the Shire of Kojonup and 1 community workshop in the Shire of Broomehill-Tambellup to local communities with the tools and practical knowledge to maintain productive and sustainable gardens during challenging climate conditions, enabling better water management, reduce heat stress on gardens and to maintain productive spaces during dry periods, the project enhances local adaptation to climate extremes.

• **Housing Strategy Project**

The GSDC Housing Strategy is developing an implementation and business plan to guide local government housing initiatives and support future grant submissions.

Update:

Grant Thompson advised that the working group had progressed the project to market for the engagement of consultants to develop the strategy, with submissions closing in January 2026. The working group is now reviewing the submissions and reconsidering the scope in light of the high value of the quotes received.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Great Southern VROC Strategic Plan 2025 - 2029

1.2 **Participate in the GSDC Housing Study**

Goal: Understanding the status of infrastructure with the Inland Great Southern region and the ability for that infrastructure to service emerging industries is critical to supporting future diversification, which helps build resilience to economic shocks such as drought.

1.2.1 Undertake an analysis and business case to develop Great Southern Housing Strategy.

3.2 **Water Management**

Goal: Enhance the supply and use of non-potable water to ensure sustainability and reduce reliance on potable water resources.

3.2.1 Identify gaps in the supply of non-potable water and recommendations for addressing these gaps (e.g., recycled wastewater, stormwater harvesting).

1.3 **Participate in the GSDC Infrastructure Audit**

Goal: Understanding the status of infrastructure with the Inland Great Southern region and the ability for that infrastructure to service emerging industries is critical to supporting future diversification, which helps build resilience to economic shocks such as drought.

1.3.1 Undertake Infrastructure Audit (the Audit) and opportunity/constraint assessment for the area covered by the Inland Great Southern RDR Plan.

- the audit which will underpin the drafting of future shire or regional economic development plan/s and guide future infrastructure investment strategies.

RECOMMENDATION AND DECISION

Moved: Cr Kate Johnston

Seconded: Cr Perin Mulcahy

That GSVROC receive the updates on the Water for Future, Infrastructure Audit and Housing Strategy projects and provide feedback on their progress.

**Carried
For: 8
Against: 0**

8 GENERAL BUSINESS

8.1 Inquiry into Local Government Funding and Fiscal Sustainability

At the December 2025 CEO Meeting, it was agreed that the Great Southern VROC would prepare a joint regional submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport Inquiry into Local Government Funding and Fiscal Sustainability.

[Inquiry into Local Government Funding and Fiscal Sustainability – Parliament of Australia](#)

During January 2026 the GSVROC Executive Officer prepared a draft joint Great Southern VROC submission to the inquiry, reflecting shared regional challenges and priorities relevant to the Inquiry's Terms of Reference.

The submission reflects on WALGAs submission, whilst focuses on broad regional issues including funding adequacy and indexation, infrastructure backlogs, cost-shifting, GP services, housing, workforce attraction and retention challenges.

Due to the deadline for submissions being the 3rd February 2026, the GSVROC CEOs endorsed the GSVROC joint submission for the Inquiry into Local Government Funding and Fiscal Sustainability to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport, at the Executive Meeting on the 2nd February 2026.

Attachments:

- 8.1 GSVROC Joint Submission to the Federal Governments Inquiry into Local Government Funding and Fiscal Sustainability

10 NEXT MEETING SCHEDULE

The schedule of GSVROC Ordinary Meetings Schedule is as follows:

Monday 4th May 2026 10.00am - Shire of Kent

Monday 3rd August 2026 10.00am - Shire of Kojonup

Monday 2nd November 2026 10.00am - Shire of Plantagenet

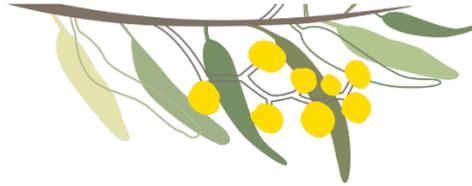
The next Great Southern VROC meeting will be held on Monday 4th May 2026 at the Shire of Kent, commencing at 10.00am

11 CLOSURE

The Chair, Cr Kirsty D'Aprile thanked delegates for their attendance and declared the meeting closed at 12.17pm.



SHIRE OF WOODANILLING



ANNUAL ELECTORS MEETING Amended Minutes 10 February 2026

Disclaimer

The recommendations contained in the Minutes are subject to confirmation by Council. The Shire of Woodanilling warns that anyone who has an application lodged with Council must obtain and should only rely on written confirmation of the outcomes of the application following the Council meeting, and any conditions attaching to the decision made by the Council in respect of the application. No responsibility whatsoever is implied or accepted by the Shire of Woodanilling for any act, omission or statement or intimation occurring during a Council Meeting.

Agendas and Minutes are available on the Shire website www.woodanilling.wa.gov.au

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Ray Kowald

Annabel Paulley (7.06pm)

APOLOGIES

Nil

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

That the minutes of the 2023/2024 Annual Electors Meeting held on Tuesday 11 February 2025 as attached be confirmed to be a true and correct record.

ITEM 3.1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES – 2023/2024 ANNUAL ELECTORS MEETING

Moved: Lesley Trimming

Seconded: Dale Douglas

That the minutes of the 2023/2024 Annual Electors Meeting held on Tuesday 11 February 2025 as attached be confirmed to be a true and correct record.

CARRIED 10/0

4. OFFICER'S REPORT

4.1. ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 30 JUNE 2025

File Reference	ADM0017
Responsible Officer	Anika Serer, Chief Executive Officer
Author of Report	Anika Serer, Chief Executive Officer
Disclosure of any Interest	No Officer involved in the preparation of this report has an interest to declare in accordance with the provisions of the <i>Local Government Act 1995</i> .
Attachments	Attachment 4.1.1 - Shire of Woodanilling Annual Report 2024/2025

In accordance with S5.27 of the *Local Government Act 1995* a general meeting of electors is to be held once every financial year, not more than 56 days after the local government has accepted the annual report.

Regulation 15 of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996* specifies that the matters to be discussed at the general electors meeting are, firstly, the contents of the Annual Report for the previous financial year and then any other general business.

At its meeting held 16 December 2025 Council resolved to accept the Annual Report for the financial year ending 30 June 2025, inclusive of the Audited Financial Report 2024/2025.

Council resolved to hold the Annual Meeting of Electors on Tuesday 10 February 2026 commencing at 7pm in the Council Chambers.

Annabel Pauley entered the meeting at 7.06pm.

4.1. SHIRE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The Shire President will ask for a mover and seconder to receive the Shire President's report. A mover and seconder can be from the public, and all are asked to vote.

ITEM 4.1. SHIRE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Moved: Ray Baxter

Seconded: Colette Annice

That the Shire President's Report for the year ending 30/06/2025 be received.

CARRIED 14/0

4.1. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

The Shire President will ask for a mover and seconder to receive the Chief Executive Officer's report. A mover and seconder can be from the public, and all are asked to vote.

The CEO provided an overview of key activities during the reporting period, including:

- Commencement in May 2025 and acknowledgement of former CEO Paul Hanlon and Acting CEO Mark Hook.
- Delivery of capital works including upgrades to Robinson Road West and Oxley Road, resheeting and maintenance works on Leggoe, Gorn and Burt Roads, and ongoing road maintenance programs.
- Completion of Stage 1 of the Centenary Park upgrades and progress on Stage 2.
- Community events including the Bloom Art Exhibition and Australia Day celebrations.
- Acknowledgement of outgoing and incoming Councillors following the October elections.
- Appointment of the Executive Manager Corporate Services and continued focus on governance and compliance.
- Upcoming infrastructure works and development of a non-potable water strategy.
- Appreciation to staff, Council and community volunteers for their contributions.

ITEM 4.1. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT**Moved: Marj Winstanley****Seconded: Damian Shackley**

That the Chief Executive Officer's Report for the year ended 30/06/2025 be received.

CARRIED 14/0**4.1. AUDITOR'S REPORT**

The Shire President will ask for a mover and seconder to receive the Auditor's report. A mover and seconder can be from the public, and all are asked to vote.

ITEM 4.1. AUDITOR'S REPORT**Moved: Lesley Trimming****Seconded: Mike Vermeulen**

That the Auditor's Report for the year ending 30/06/2025 be received.

CARRIED 14/0**4.1. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR 2024/2025**

The Shire President will ask for a mover and seconder to receive the 2024/2025 Annual Financial Statement as shown in the Shire of Woodanilling 2024/2025 Annual Report. A mover and seconder can be from the public, and all are asked to vote.

ITEM 4.1. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR 2024/2025**Moved: Dale Douglas****Seconded: Mike Vermeulen**

That the Financial Statements for the year ending 30/06/2025 be received.

CARRIED 8/0

4 GENERAL BUSINESS

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Questions from members of the public were directed to the Presiding Member in accordance with the procedure outlined prior to the commencement of the meeting.

4.1 ANNABEL PAULLEY

Annabel Paulley requested clarification regarding the Shire's current financial position, noting the Annual Report did not clearly outline the overall financial standing.

Cr Thomson advised the current budget is balanced and the Shire holds approximately \$700,000 in reserves, including plant and long service leave provisions. He stated the Shire is not in financial difficulty but must continue to manage finances carefully, particularly following rate increases of 10% over the past two years.

In response to a question regarding debt, Cr Thomson confirmed the Shire currently holds no debt.

Annabel asked whether further annual rate increases of 10% were anticipated. Cr Thomson advised this has not been determined and Council must balance competitiveness, community expectations and financial sustainability.

Annabel queried the revenue generated from the recent 10% rate increase and its allocation. Cr Thomson advised approximately \$100,000 was raised and placed into general revenue.

The CEO advised the additional revenue contributes to a range of operational areas including wages, overheads and road-related expenditure.

Annabel asked whether the Shire was progressing efforts to return responsibility for Robinson Road West to Main Roads WA and requested an update on current progress.

The Shire President advised that the Shire is preparing a business case supported by traffic data to demonstrate regional and heavy vehicle usage. It was noted that Main Roads WA is not obligated to accept transfer of the road and discussions are ongoing.

4.2 MAL BAXTER

Mal Baxter asked whether the adopted budget to June 2026 was publicly available.

The Presiding Member advised the budget is available on the Shire website and monthly financial reports within Council agendas provide ongoing financial updates. The CEO offered to provide a copy upon request.

4.3 PAULINE EDGCUMBE

Pauline Edgcumbe raised several matters:

Waste and Recycling/Landfill

Pauline noted previous concerns regarding recycling and wind-blown rubbish had been addressed and requested this be publicly communicated in the Woodanilling Wongi. She also asked about the remaining lifespan of the landfill facility. The question was taken on notice.

Health Services and Transport

Pauline raised concerns regarding access to health services and requested consideration of transport options to Katanning. The question was taken on notice.

Water Use and Oval Irrigation

Pauline expressed concern regarding year-round watering of the oval and the condition of memorial lawns. The Presiding Member advised the oval water supply is sourced from the dam and noted efforts are being made to reduce reliance on purchased water. Concerns regarding memorial lawns were acknowledged.

Weather-Sensing Irrigation

Cathi Bessell-Browne supported Pauline's comments and requested Council investigate weather-sensing irrigation technology to improve water efficiency. The Presiding Member acknowledged this as a potential improvement.

Baptist Church Grounds

Pauline asked about the Shire's commitment to maintenance at the Baptist Church. The CEO advised the Shire undertakes basic maintenance up to a capped amount, with additional works the responsibility of the Church. Further opportunities may be explored with the Bloom Festival group. The matter was noted.

Pauline raised a question regarding the allocation of funding toward town and community services, expressing concern that a significant portion of expenditure appears directed toward roads. She asked how much of the Shire's finances are allocated to the town and community, and whether this information could be presented in a more transparent and easier-to-understand format.

The Chief Executive Officer confirmed that monthly financial statements are publicly available and advised that no funds have been redirected from their intended purposes. The question was taken on notice.

4.4 CATHI BESSELL-BROWNE

"What is happening with complaints about dangerous overgrown conditions at crossroads, road maintenance, and missing road signage which have been reported to the Shire for over six years? What is happening to complaints and where are they going?"

The matter was taken on notice.

Cathi, on behalf of Brooke Moulden, queried why the Shire was not formally participating in meetings relating to Ausgold social impact assessments, noting potential impacts to the Woodanilling community.

The Shire President advised that while the Shire is not formally represented, it is aware of the matters and maintains communication through relevant channels.

4.5 BRIGITTE BURG

Brigitte Burg, attending her first Electors Meeting, asked whether financial documents could be made more accessible to the public.

The Presiding Member advised financial information is publicly available and paper copies may be requested from the Shire office. The CEO noted options could be explored to provide simplified summaries to assist community understanding.

MOTIONS**4.6 INDEPENDENT FORENSIC AUDIT – NOTICE OF MOTION**

A proposed motion submitted by elector Cathi Bessell-Browne for consideration at the Annual Electors Meeting.

ITEM 4.6. INDEPENDENT FORENSIC AUDIT – NOTICE OF MOTION

Moved: Cathi Bessell-Browne

Seconded: Annabel Paulley

That Council consider immediately requesting an independent forensic audit to assess past, current and future capacity of the Shire of Woodanilling to meet its statutory, regulatory and governance obligations to inform continuous improvement, financial sustainability and community confidence.

The scope of the audit should include, but not be limited to, an assessment of:

1. Alignment between community expectations, the level of services currently provided, and the Shire's financial and operational capacity, including benchmarking service levels against comparable local governments to ensure the community receives reasonable and sustainable value in return for rates and charges.
2. Capacity, transparency and governance arrangements to play an active and appropriate role in community safety planning and risk mitigation, particularly in the context of recent local events and community experiences suggesting a growing criminal element and potential risks to child safety.
3. Capacity to enforce local planning and development requirements in a consistent and transparent manner, including compliance relating to unauthorised occupation, accommodation, land use and amenity impacts.
4. Capacity to sustainably fund, maintain or transfer responsibility for assets and infrastructure, including consideration of the long-term viability of maintaining Robinson Road West versus transfer to Main Roads WA, particularly in light of the recent tragic fatality involving this road.
5. Capacity to engage with community, including public availability of accurate and timely agendas, minutes, audio recordings, registers of interests, councillor training registers, and other statutory information, and a review of Council's Community Engagement Charter to identify if it reflects regulatory requirements and best practice.
6. Council's delegations, policies and governance frameworks to ensure they have been reviewed regularly and align with contemporary best practice and legislative intent.
7. Council's compliance with interest declaration requirements, including the intent of Local Government Regulations and Best Practice Guidelines for conflicts of interest to be managed during forums and workshops, and when representing the Shire to external bodies.
8. Governance or resourcing gaps that may affect Council's ability to manage emerging risks and community concerns in a timely and lawful way.

And that the findings of the Audit be reported publicly and used to guide future decision-making, policy development and resourcing priorities including:

1. A review of the Shire's Strategic Community and Corporate Business Plan to ensure it is supported by evidence-based assumptions, includes 'Community First' in its values, recognises challenges and community needs, and is focussed on measurable outcomes and deliverables to improve liveability.
2. A review of Annual Report format and content to ensure inclusion of clear deliverables and outcomes with performance measures to demonstrate continuous improvement and progress towards increased liveability within the Shire.
3. Inform the development and implementation of Council's Long Term Financial Plan.
4. Inform development and implementation of the Shire's Public Health Plan.
5. Inform reviews of Council's Community Safety Plan, Workforce Plan and Disability Access and Inclusion Plan.

DISCUSSION

The Mover, Cathi Bessell-Browne spoke to the motion:

“This motion is fundamentally about people. About the safety, wellbeing and future of this community, particularly children and vulnerable residents. Good governance is not an abstract concept; it directly affects whether risks are identified, whether services are delivered lawfully and sustainably, and whether the community can trust its local government to act in its best interests.

This motion is not about assigning blame to individuals. It is about acknowledging that there appears to have been a systemic governance failure that has persisted over a long period of time - across multiple Councils and several CEOs. The longevity and breadth of the issues strongly suggest structural failure rather than personal fault.

There is clear, observable evidence that core governance, transparency and compliance systems are not functioning as required. Council and committee agendas, minutes, audio recordings and attachments are not consistently available to the public online. Key statutory registers, including financial interests, councillor training and tenders, appear to be inaccurate or absent online. Audit Committee minutes are missing, recent Council meeting recordings have not been released, and it seems to be several years since Council’s Community Development or Transport and Plant Committees met.

At the same time, many of the foundational plans that underpin lawful decision-making, service delivery and financial sustainability are significantly out of date.

Strategic and Corporate Business Plans continue to be adopted and implemented in the absence of current supporting frameworks: the ICT, Workforce and Asset Management Plans do not appear to have been reviewed since 2013, the Long-Term Financial Plan since 2016, and the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan since 2017. Council delegations do not appear to have been reviewed annually, nor policies systematically reviewed, several local laws appear overdue for statutory review, and the Shire has not adopted a compliant Community Engagement Charter.

As a result, decisions are being made without all the contemporary, evidence-based frameworks to support compliance, risk management, or value for money.

Importantly, available health and wellbeing data indicates the community is not doing well. Mental health outcomes are significantly poorer than those of surrounding shires, and other indicators, including higher rates of serious illness, suggest long-standing challenges to community wellbeing. While Council is proposing to develop an in-house Public Health Plan, that alone does not address these concerns. Without an independent assessment of governance, resourcing and capacity, there is a real risk that planning occurs without the systems or capability required to deliver meaningful change.

The consequences of governance gaps are no longer theoretical. The community is experiencing emerging safety concerns, including incidents raising child safety risk, and the tragic fatality on Robinson Road West highlights the risks associated with infrastructure that the Shire may not have the capacity to sustainably maintain. It already appears that Council may not currently have sufficient financial or operational capacity to consistently enforce its planning, building and compliance laws. An independent forensic audit is essential because independence matters.

Oversight by someone external to the Shire and community is critical to ensure objectivity, impartiality and credibility, and to avoid decisions being influenced by emotion, personal relationships, or local history. Independence protects Councillors, staff and the community by ensuring findings are evidence-based, defensible and focused on systems rather than personalities.

If Council does not have the financial or operational capacity to fund independent assurance, then it has a responsibility to self-report to the WA Local Government Inspector and request an independent monitor. This pathway exists specifically for situations where capacity is constrained. Inaction is not a neutral option. Doing nothing also carries legal, financial and reputational risk - often at a much higher cost.

This motion is about transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement. It seeks to restore community confidence, ensure legal compliance, and provide a clear, evidence-based foundation for future decision-making so the Shire can be safe, sustainable, and genuinely community-focused into the future.”

5 CLOSURE OF MEETING

There being no further business the Shire President declared the meeting closed at 8:13pm.

Great Southern Country Zone Minutes

Friday, 20 February 2026

Hosted by the Shire of Plantagenet
Plantagenet District Hall, Memorial
Road, Mount Barker

Contact WALGA Zone Secretariat:

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PRIORITISATION FRAMEWORK

How to use the Framework:

- If the majority of the factors are towards the left column, the issue is a high priority.
- If the majority of the factors are towards the middle, the issue requires action, but is not a high priority.
- If the majority of the factors are towards the right column, the issue is a low priority.

Impact on Local Government Sector Impact on Local Government sector without intervention	High	Medium	Low
Reach Number of member Local Governments affected	Sector-wide	Significant (multiple regions, Zones, or bands)	Few
Influence Capacity to influence decision makers	High	Medium	Low
Principles Alignment to core principles such as autonomy, funding, general competence	Strong	Partial	Peripheral
Clarity Policy change needed is clear and well-defined	Clear	Partial	Unclear
Decision-maker support Level of support among decision-makers (political and administrative)	High	Medium	Low
Public support Level of support among the public or other stakeholders	High	Medium	Low
Positive consequences for WALGA Prospect of positive consequences for WALGA. E.g. enhanced standing among members or leverage for other issues.	High	Medium	Low
Negative consequences for WALGA Prospect of negative consequences for WALGA for not undertaking the advocacy effort. E.g. diminished standing among members or other stakeholders.	High	Medium	Low
Partnerships Potential for partnerships with other stakeholders	Yes (3+)	Possibly (1-2)	No (0)

1 OPENING, ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

1.1 OPENING

The Chair opened the meeting at 10:02am.

1.2 ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS

City of Albany

Deputy Mayor Cr Paul Terry
CEO Andrew Sharpe (non-voting)

Shire of Broomehill-Tambellup

Cr Sara Robinson
Cr Connie Witham (observer)
CEO Karen Callaghan (non-voting)

Shire of Cranbrook

President Cr Perin Mulcahy
CEO Linda Gray (non-voting)

Shire of Denmark

President Cr Aaron Wiggins
Cr Janine Phillips

Shire of Gnowangerup

Deputy President Cr Rebecca O'Meehan
Cr Peter Callaghan (Deputy Delegate)
CEO David Nicholson (non-voting)

Shire of Jerramungup

President Cr Nathan Brown

Shire of Katanning

President Cr Kristy D'Aprile
Cr Ian Hanna
CEO Peter Klein (non-voting)

Shire of Kent

President Cr Kate Johnston
Cr Scott Crosby (**Chair**)
CEO Christie Smith (non-voting)

Shire of Kojonup

Cr Michael Mathwin
CEO Grant Thompson (non-voting)

Shire of Plantagenet

Deputy Delegate/s

President, Cr Len Handasyde (**Deputy Chair**)
Cr Joshua Leibeck
Cr Ken Clements (observer)
Cr Marie O'Dea (observer)
CEO Julian Murphy (non-voting)

Shire of Ravensthorpe

President, Cr Rachel Gibson

Shire of Woodanilling

CEO Anika Serer (non-voting)

AGENCIES

Members of Parliament

Mr Rick Wilson MP, Federal Member for O'Connor
Mr Scott Leary MLA, Member for Albany

WALGA

Ms Lyn Fogg, Zone Executive Officer
 Mr Max Bushell, Senior Policy Advisor, Road
 Safety and Infrastructure

1.3 APOLOGIES

City of Albany	Cr Craig McKinley Mayor Greg Stocks Cr Thomas Brough
Shire of Broomehill-Tambellup	President Cr Doug Barritt
Shire of Cranbrook	Cr Daisy Egerton-Warburton
Shire of Denmark	CEO David King (non-voting)
Shire of Gnowangerup	President Cr Kate O’Keeffe
Shire of Jerramungup	Cr Paul Barrett CEO Martin Cuthbert (non-voting)
Shire of Katanning	Cr John Goodheart
Shire of Kojonup	President, Cr Roger Bilney
Shire of Ravensthorpe	Cr Bill Auburn Interim CEO Paul Anderson (non-voting)
Shire of Woodanilling	President Cr Russel Thomson Cr Sally Vermeulen
Members of Parliament	Hon Reece Whitby MLA; Minister for Police; Road Safety; Tourism; Great Southern Mr Bevan Eatts, MLA Member for Warren- Blackwood
Great Southern Development Commission	Natasha Monks, Chief Executive Officer
Regional Development Australia – Great Southern WA Inc	Mr Simon Lyas, Director, Regional Development
Roadwise	Ms Michelle Blackhurst, Regional Road Safety Adviser

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We, the Great Southern Country Zone of WALGA acknowledge the continuing connection of Aboriginal people to Country, culture, and community. We embrace the vast cultural diversity throughout Western Australia, including the Noongar People as the Traditional Custodians of this land, and pay our respects to Elders past and present. WALGA is committed to supporting

the efforts of WA Local Governments to foster respectful partnerships and strengthen relationships with local Aboriginal communities.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Zone Delegates must declare to the Chair any potential conflict of interest they have in a matter before the Zone as soon as they become aware of it. Zone Delegates and deputies may be directly or indirectly associated with some recommendations of the Zone and State Council. If you are affected by these recommendations, please excuse yourself from the meeting and do not participate in deliberations.

Nil.

4 DEPUTATIONS / GUEST SPEAKERS

President Cr Handasyde welcomed the delegates to the Shire of Plantagenet.

4.1 MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Members of Federal and State Government, representing the Zone Member Local Government Districts, are invited to provide a brief update on matters relevant to Zone Members.

Mr Rick Wilson MP, Federal Member for O'Connor, spoke on the following:

- Representing 49 Local Governments in the seat of O'Connor, appreciates the opportunity to speak with 12 Local Governments in this Zone.
- GP Services – Local Government advocacy
- Medicare underspend in regional locations / comparison with metropolitan spend
- Telecommunications tower infrastructure – Telstra will not be investing further. Pivoting to low orbit satellite technology.
- LGs may contact Rick's office to organise meetings during ALGA

Mr Scott Leary MLA, Member for Albany

- Appreciated opportunities to attend the Zone.
- Asked Local Governments to contact his office with any concerns – information necessary to assist Opposition in advocating for better outcomes.

5 AGENCY REPORTS

5.1 GREAT SOUTHERN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (GSDC)

Nil.

5.2 REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUSTRALIA GREAT SOUTHERN WA INC (RDA-GS)

Nil.

5.3 GREAT SOUTHERN REGIONAL ROADS GROUP

Report by Cr Len Handasyde, Shire of Plantagenet

Main Roads WA has requested information of all Local Governments in the Great Southern to ascertain the level of work being undertaken on the projects in the various sections of the funding models. They indicate that so far there are no red flags for all funds to be acquitted on time and we will see how that goes. It has never been achieved in all the years I have been on Council.

There is really only one message. If a project is in trouble for whatever reason, speak up early and those funds might be able to be used elsewhere in the region. This might be in the form of extending a project or bringing a project forward.

I look forward to the April meeting of the GSRRG to see how it has all gone this year.

Hopefully we will begin to see an improvement. We should also remember that next year the new rules passed at the November meeting kick-in and those February assessments will be crucial to the outcome later in the year.

Noted

5.4 DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, INDUSTRY REGULATION AND SAFETY (DLGIRS)

Attachment No. 1 [DLGSC Update – February 2026](#)

Noted

5.5 WALGA ROADWISE

Report by Michelle Blackhurst, RoadWise Road Safety Advisor

Nil

6 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Len Handasyde
 Seconded: President Cr Kate Johnston

That the Minutes of the Great Southern Country Zone meeting held on 21 November 2025 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

CARRIED

6.1 Business Arising from the Minutes

Nil

6.2 ZONE RESOLUTIONS AND ACTION ITEMS STATUS REPORTS

6.2.1 Zone Status Report

By Lyn Fogg, Zone Executive Officer

Attachment No. 2 [Zone Status Report February 2026](#)

The Status Report provides an update on Zone resolutions referred to WALGA State Council. Status Items identified as 'Completed' will be removed following this meeting. Zone Members are asked to review responses.

6.2.2 Zone Action Items Report

By Lyn Fogg, Zone Executive Officer

Attachment No. 3 [Zone Action Items Report February 2026](#)

The Action Items Report provides an update on Zone resolution for action by Zone members or the Zone Executive Officer. Action Items identified as 'Completed' in this Report will be removed following this meeting. Zone members are asked to review responses.

Moved: Deputy President Cr Rebecca O'Meehan

Seconded: President Cr Kristy D'Aprile

RESOLUTION (Items 6.2.1 and 6.2.2 combined)

That the Great Southern Country Zone NOTES the:

1. Status Report for February 2026, as detailed in Attachment No.3, and
2. Action Items Report for February 2026, as detailed in Attachment No.4.

CARRIED

7 ZONE BUSINESS

7.1 ZONE REPORTS

7.1.1 Zone Financial Report

By Mr Richard May, WALGA Finance Manager

Table 1: Statement of Income and Expenditure – period ended 31 December 2025

Great Southern Country Zone			
Statement of Income and Expenditure as at Dec 2025			
	Note	Actual	Budget
		\$	\$
Income			
Subscriptions	1	6000	6000
Other			
Total Income		6000	6000
Expenses			

Bank Fees		60	150
Meeting Costs (Catering)	2	1823	4000
Historic ATO Payment			
Total Expenses		1883	4150
Surplus/(Deficit)		4118	1850

Notes

1. Subscription fee of \$500 per Zone Member excluding GST, invoices have been sent to members in September and all received and transferred to GSCZ Bank Account
2. Aug 2025 Zone meeting catering (\$1,331.81), Nov 2025 Zone meeting catering (\$572.73) and adjustment on GST on purchase to be recovered from ATO (\$82.00)

Table 2: Balance Sheet presenting the Zone's financial position as at 30 December 2025

Great Southern Country Zone Balance Sheet as at 31 Dec 2025		
Account	Note	Amount
Assets		
Bank		11,637
Debtors		
Total Assets		\$ 11,637
Liabilities		
Creditors		-
GST Payable	-	190
Unused Project Funds		-
Total Liabilities	-	190
Net Assets		\$ 11,828
Equity		
Members Funds B/F		7,710
Current year earnings		4,118
Total Equity		\$ 11,828

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Len Handasyde
 Seconded: Cr Kate Johnston

That the Great Southern Country Zone receives the Zone Financial Report for February 2026.

CARRIED

7.1.2 Zone Chairperson's Report

Cr Scott Crosby, Zone Chairperson

Cr Crosby encouraged Zone Members to attend ALGA as it provides a lobby opportunity direct to Government.

Noted

7.2 ZONE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

7.2.1 Zone 2026/27 Strategic Priorities – Workshop*

*This item was reordered in the agenda and undertaken as a workshop following Item 11 Other Business.

BACKGROUND

At the November Zone meeting, the Secretariat requested Zone members to identify their Local Government's top 3 strategic priorities to inform the Zone's planning for the next 2-year period, which may include:

- Topics on which the Zone wishes to invite presentations from State Government agencies or other entities; and
- Topics on which the Zone wishes to prioritise advocacy on behalf of the Great Southern Country Zone members.

Zone Member Priorities

City of Albany	
Housing and critical Infrastructure (Sewer)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction of Range Road to provide road access to expanding areas • Mercer Road Realignment to reduce residential access congestion • Utility Trunk connections to increase affordability of development • Strategic planning - preparation of the North Albany District structure plan and north McKail structure plan • Delivery of affordable lots for development at McAlpine Rise
Transport & Road Network	<p>Development of a long-term dedicated capital works program. Key Priorities for the Program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pavement Renewal: Replace aging surfaces to meet modern load and durability standards. • Capacity Upgrades: Widen and strengthen corridors to accommodate increased freight, larger vehicles, and passenger volumes. • Safety Enhancements: Improve intersections, shoulders, and roadside infrastructure to reduce crash risk. <p>Priority Sections/Projects Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to Albany Highway including a commitment for an annual program of passing lanes • South Coast Highway – Wellstead to Esperance • Albany Ring Road – Chester Pass/Menang intersection flyover
Sustainable Waste Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment into Innovative Solutions to be able to deal with waste streams locally either at a regional or local level

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Diverting Waste from Landfill</u>: Maximise resource recovery by increasing green waste, FOGO, and recycling diversion rates, reducing pressure on landfill sites. • <u>Developing Regional Processing Solutions</u>: Establish shared processing infrastructure for green waste, FOGO, and recyclables, ensuring local solutions for local waste streams. • <u>Reducing Environmental Impacts</u>: Cut greenhouse gas emissions and protect soil and water quality through better waste handling and resource recovery. • <u>Building Community Capacity</u>: Invest in education, innovation, and outreach to empower residents and businesses to participate actively in waste reduction. • <u>Enhancing Economic Opportunities</u>: Support the creation of regional jobs and new markets for recycled materials, mulch, and compost products. • <u>Future-Proofing Waste Infrastructure</u>: Plan and invest for long-term growth and technological change, ensuring that waste solutions remain resilient, adaptable, and compliant with regulatory requirements.
Shire of Broomehill-Tambellup	
<p>Compliance burden and leadership sustainability in small rural LGs</p>	<p>Small local governments are required to meet almost identical legislative, governance, audit, planning, financial management and work health and safety obligations as large metropolitan authorities, despite having a substantially smaller workforce and revenue base. Rather than reducing red tape, the cumulative compliance burden continues to grow and consumes a disproportionate share of executive and staff capacity.</p> <p>In small organisations, this diverts limited resources away from project delivery, community outcomes, and strategic leadership. It is also increasingly undermining the sector's ability to attract and retain capable senior staff and CEOs. High personal and organisational risk, constrained remuneration settings, and limited internal support create a role that is increasingly unattractive and unsustainable. This is a structural issue that requires reform at a system level, not incremental adjustments.</p> <p>Small rural local governments also face ongoing difficulty in maintaining a full complement of capable staff across the organisation. Limited local labour markets, housing availability, remuneration constraints and workload intensity often result in prolonged vacancies and reduced organisational resilience.</p>
<p>Cost shifting and responsibility transfer without funding or policy frameworks</p>	<p>Local governments are increasingly expected to absorb responsibilities that sit more appropriately with the state or federal government, often without clear legislative frameworks or adequate funding.</p> <p>This includes growing expectations around housing supply for state government workers, emergency management responsibilities, social and community pressures, and the local impacts of the energy transition. In particular, the state government's net-zero emission by 2050 commitment has not been matched with a clear and legislated planning framework for</p>

	<p>renewable energy, leaving local governments to manage land use conflict, community concern, and assessment risk without policy certainty.</p> <p>There is a clear need for earlier, coordinated, and genuine partnership between all tiers of government before priorities are implemented at the local level.</p>
Unsustainable funding model and growing grant dependency	<p>Local government has the smallest and least flexible revenue base of any tier of government, yet community expectations and service demands continue to increase. Rate growth is constrained, Financial Assistance Grants have not kept pace with cost growth, and councils are increasingly reliant on complex and resource-intensive grant programs to deliver essential infrastructure and services.</p> <p>For small shires, the administrative burden associated with grants is significant and often disproportionate to the funding received. This model increases financial risk, delays delivery, and in some cases, entrenches inequity between metropolitan and regional communities.</p>
Shire of Cranbrook	
Renewables	<p>Can be so divisive to a community.</p> <p>Land use - relates to plantations and the impact on the Shire's rate base and delivery of services (FPC)</p>
Local essential services	<p>Relates to liveability and the attraction and retention of population in our Shire. Example - lack of accountability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Western Power changing farms to the "modular grid" with little or no consultation • Medical / health care services
Roads	<p>Important for economic development and support of current businesses.</p> <p>Future development - improved accessibility will stabilise our rate base and grow industries like tourism.</p>
Shire of Denmark	
Funding for Infrastructure Growth	<p>Denmark anticipates rapid growth over the coming decade, which presents a significant challenge for infrastructure delivery in the current construction climate. While larger developing metro suburbs can effectively implement Developer Contribution Plans to assist, these plans are impractical and ineffective for small regional local governments like ours. As a result, we require additional external funding to meet the community's needs and support sustainable growth.</p>
Sustainable Tourism Management	<p>Tourism is a cornerstone of the South Coast's economy. Managing tourism sustainably ensures the region's unique natural and cultural assets are preserved while local communities benefit equitably. Sustainable tourism management involves balancing visitor growth with environmental stewardship, infrastructure investment, and authentic local experiences. The Western Australian (WA) Government's tourism strategy, "Waves</p>

	2033,” aims to increase visitor spending in WA by 60%. This target will be achieved by increasing the average spend per visitor and boosting the number of domestic, intrastate, and international visitors. The Great Southern, a key tourism destination within WA, is already struggling with high visitor numbers, reaching the carrying capacity at several popular sites. The current mechanisms for generating revenue from tourism for Local Government are limited and ineffective. To support sustainable tourism growth, investment by the State or the development of new revenue models is essential.
Affordable Housing	The ongoing and much-discussed issue of housing affordability and availability remains a priority. This issue continues to be a significant challenge for our community, and addressing it is crucial for ensuring the well-being of our residents.
Shire of Gnowangerup	
Road Maintenance / Safety	Council is concerned about the poor condition of the Shire’s roads and feel in part this is due to the State prioritising metropolitan road work to the detriment of the regions. This is another example of cost shifting, where local government is having to bear costs that should be met by the State and is resulting in regional roads that are unsafe and causing damage to vehicles.
Waste Management – recycling / rehabilitation	The Shire has three waste facilities that have finite lives. The liability to rehabilitate each will be well beyond the financial capacity of a small local government. In addition, Council recognises the importance of recycling especially in relation to lithium batteries and see this as an opportunity to collaborate with the State and neighbouring Shires.
Releasing Land – Residential and Industrial	To help regional towns grow and alleviate the shortage of houses, Council believes the State needs to release more residential and industrial land. This will allow developers and / or future homeowners to build their own home, and businesses to be established. This will also help take some pressure off Perth metropolitan area and reduce urban sprawl.
Shire of Jerramungup	
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficient, safe and sustainable transport systems are crucial for connecting communities, facilitating growth, and supporting economic activity. • Focusing on safe state road networks, it is important to note that the Great Southern region has the oldest pavement in Western Australia, far exceeding its useful life. This aging infrastructure is unable to cope with the demands of freight tasks, which is a major concern. The mixing of freight with tourist traffic further exacerbates the issue, creating safety hazards and inefficiencies. • South Coast Highway, from Wellstead to Esperance, is a priority section for the Shire of Jerramungup, requiring pavement renewal, capacity upgrades and safety enhancements. • By addressing these challenges, the South Coast region can develop a transport system that not only connects communities but also supports economic growth and sustainability.

Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National data shows that people in rural and remote areas have poorer health outcomes than those in major cities. Access to primary care, and particularly GPs, is central to this disadvantage. Across Australia, people now see a GP about 6.2 times per year on average, but the number of GPs per head of population falls as remoteness increases. For some Shires, the GP subsidy funding commitments equate to up to 16% of their total rates revenue, making it one of the largest non-core expenditure items in their budget.
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The South Coast region is experiencing renewed interest as a desirable place to live, work and invest. This presents both opportunities and challenges: servicing population growth requires careful planning for affordable, diverse and sustainable housing, while protecting community character and natural beauty. Collaboration is central to attracting investment, unlocking land, and building liveable communities for all. The Shire of Jerramungup views increasing housing availability as a significant priority requiring partnerships with private and public sectors. Advocating with essential service providers to improve priority utility services in line with housing growth is also important.
Shire of Katanning	
Expanding power & water supply capability , especially to service industrial opportunities	
Development of industrial & residential land	
Delivery of worker housing and short stay accommodation	
Shire of Kent	
Firefighting and WHS Obligations	<p>Local governments are increasingly exposed to inappropriate WHS obligations in the bushfire space. Treating volunteer firefighters as “workers” under the WHS Act 2020 places an unreasonable duty of care on local government CEOs, many of whom are not trained emergency management professionals.</p> <p>This responsibility represents a significant and unpriced risk, particularly for small local governments (such as Band 4 authorities). These local governments are constrained by the salary caps determined by the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal and are therefore unable to remunerate CEOs at a level that reflects the scale of legal, personal, and operational risk being imposed.</p> <p>The result is a role where risk is materially disproportionate to remuneration and organisational capacity, creating a strong disincentive to CEO recruitment and retention in rural and regional local governments. This also diverts limited executive capacity away from core community service delivery.</p>

	There is an urgent need to reconsider the current classification of volunteer firefighters under the WHS framework and to provide clearer, practical support for CEOs and councils tasked with managing emergency response responsibilities.
Growing Pressures on LG – without the funding model to match	<p>Local governments are at the frontline of escalating pressures including housing shortages, workforce gaps, energy transition conflicts, disaster response and growing social issues. Despite having the smallest revenue base of any tier of government, local governments are increasingly expected to lead and absorb these challenges without additional funding or resources.</p> <p>The loss of flexible funding programs has left a major gap, and without appropriate funding pathways, rural communities are being left behind. Small towns are the backbone of regional Australia – once they decline, they do not return. Rural communities matter, and urgent action is needed.</p>
Red Tape, Governance Burden and the Future of LG Leadership	<p>Despite claims of reduced red tape, regulatory and compliance requirements on local governments continue to increase. At the same time, councils have been required to reduce the number of elected members, resulting in fewer councillors carrying greater workloads and responsibilities.</p> <p>This growing burden risks making elected office unattractive, particularly in small rural communities. Without reform, the sector will struggle to attract and retain capable candidates. Consideration must be given to reducing compliance duplication and exploring appropriate incentives or remuneration flexibility beyond current Salaries Tribunal constraints.</p>
Shire of Kojonup	
State & Federal Government cost shifting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary Medical Care costs; costs of compliance of new regulations and so-called reform. • Increases workload and local government/community cost so as to be compliant and provide basic services.
Funding of Infrastructure for growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headworks • Major community assets such as pools etc), • Need more untied Grants for large foundational capital infrastructure projects (similar to the LCRIP program).
DFES / Emergency Services Acts consolidation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bushfire Act is outdated and needs an update to be relevant in contemporary environment.
Shire of Plantagenet	
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding availability to progress large scale projects • Headworks costs impeding private development • Time taken for Western Power to cost and design any upgrade works
Economic / Industry Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headworks costs barrier to Industry development • Time taken for Western Power to cost and design any upgrade works
Community Asset Renewal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rapid increasing cost of construction has created a large funding gap.

Shire of Ravensthorpe	
Acting CEO transition – unable to provide in time for the agenda.	
Shire of Woodanilling	
Funding: fire and emergency management	Increased funding for fire and emergency management and resilience activities to reflect increasing cost
Mobile phone / communication blackspots	Mobile phone/communication since removal of 3G with significant blackspots throughout region
State/Federal funding of LG - insufficient	The increasing gap between State/Federal funding (e.g. FAGs) and the real cost of local government operations and business -seek reform of indexation method. FAGs are getting lower each year in real value whilst cost of maintenance, maintaining service levels are getting higher.
Bush Fire Brigades / WHS Act risks	The risk to CEOs being the PCBU for volunteer bush fire brigades and its consequences under the current WHS Act.

COMMENT

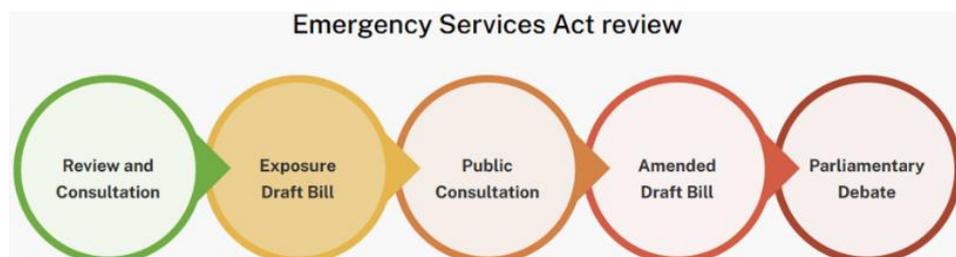
The Secretariat facilitated a workshop with Zone Members considering the range of priorities submitted. Workshop outcomes will be presented to the next GSCZ meeting.

Noted**7.3 MATTERS FOR ZONE NOTING AND DECISION****7.3.1 Emergency Management Act Consolidation***Shire of Katanning***BACKGROUND**

In 2019, State Cabinet approved and issued instructions to the Parliamentary Counsel's Office, to draft an exposure bill to consolidate the following three emergency management acts;

- i) *Fire & Emergency Services Act 1998*,
- ii) *Fire Brigades Act 1942*, and
- iii) *Bush Fires Act 1954*

The following process was endorsed to deliver this outcome;



DFES was subsequently allocated the responsibility to manage & drive this process.

In August 2023, in response to a question from the Hon. Martin Aldridge, the Minister for Emergency Services Stephen Dawson replied that the exposure draft bill will be released for stakeholder consideration in early 2024. The exposure draft bill is now two years late.

DFES has provided the following recent update on their progress;

- Work on the development of an Emergency Services Exposure Draft Bill is ongoing.
- A dedicated team of six DFES officers are reviewing and refining the legislative proposal to consolidate the emergency management arrangements.
- The drafting process is legally technical, time-intensive and the practical considerations are complex. DFES is investing time and effort to produce new legislation that is fit-for-purpose for the many stakeholders involved in emergency management.
- Once finalised, the Exposure Draft Bill will be released for public comment. Until then, targeted consultation may be undertaken by DFES on discrete matters.

The item was presented and endorsed at the February 2026 Great Southern VROC Executive meeting.

COMMENT

The State Government has failed to adequately consider the consequential responsibilities of local government CEOs and officers for bush fire brigade volunteers during both the design and implementation of the existing emergency management acts and the *WHS Act 2020*.

Western Australian is the only jurisdiction in Australia where local governments hold responsibility for bush fire response, brigade administration, training and compliance. We are the only jurisdiction where the CEO and Officers are the PCBU for registered BFB and spontaneous volunteers and nowhere else in Australia are local government CEO's and Officers liable for industrial manslaughter in respect to the performance of this cohort of "workers".

The ability of local government CEOs and Officers to meet their duties of care to these workers is compromised by emergency realities and operational complexity, insufficient resourcing, lack of state guidance on how local governments should meet their PCBU responsibilities and the fact that bush fire response is inherently hazardous.

Other challenges identified by local governments in respect to existing arrangements include;

- The failure of the Local Government Grant Scheme (LGGs) contributions to local governments to keep pace with increased compliance cost.
- Insufficient transparency associated with the distribution by DFES of Emergency Service Levies collected and remitted by local governments.
- Under resourcing of bush fire and emergency management preparations.
- The challenge of full compliance with *WHS Act* obligations and the management of spontaneous volunteers.
- Inability to transfer WHS duties to volunteers when DFES assumes operational control.

WALGA has established advocacy position "8.10 Management of Bush Fire Brigades" and this position states, amongst other things, as follows;

The State Government, through the Consolidated *Emergency Services Act* and/or other mechanism's must:

- a) Establish a clear framework to enable the transfer of Bush Fire Brigades to the State Government if a Local Government decides to do so; and
- b) Consult on the process, timeline, and implications for transfer of responsibility for Bush Fire Brigades through the establishment of a working group comprising representatives of Local Government, Bush Fire Brigades, the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC) and the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES).

WALGA SECRETARIAT COMMENT

The matters raised in this item are broadly consistent with WALGA's advocacy positions, including: 8.4 Consolidated Emergency Services Act; and 8.10 Management of Bush Fire Brigades. Together, these advocacy positions call for a contemporary consolidated legislative framework, clear definition of stakeholder roles and responsibilities, ongoing sector engagement in the co-design of the Act and Regulations, and funding support for any new responsibilities imposed on Local Governments.

The issues highlighted about the work health and safety obligations placed on Local Government CEOs and officers, the lack of a modern legislative framework, and the operational risks created by the current system also reflect the concerns raised in WALGA's recent submission to the Statutory Review of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2020*. These issues further reinforce how urgent and important it is to replace the outdated *Bush Fires Act 1954*, which no longer reflects contemporary emergency management requirements or the realities faced by Local Governments.

RESOLUTION

Moved: President Cr Kristy D'Aprile

Seconded: President Cr Kate Johnston

That the Great Southern Country Zone requests WALGA, as a matter of urgency request that:

- 1. the State Government reprioritise and expedite the consolidation of the State's emergency management legislation to address the escalating operational and risk issues arising from the current outdated framework;**
- 2. the consolidated acts establish a clear framework to enable the transfer of Bush Fire Brigades to the State Government if a Local Government decides to do so; and**
- 3. Local Governments at the WALGA zone level be consulted prior to release of the exposure draft bill.**

CARRIED

ZONE COMMENTS

- Zone members noted high level of concern that CEO's can be personally responsible for liabilities arising from Bush Fire Brigade operations.
- Zone members noted concerns that if DFES is responsible for Bush Fire Brigade management, compliance requirements will escalate and may impair volunteer member attraction and retention.
- Variable views expressed regarding future legislative arrangements and whether all Brigades should be under DFES or there should be flexibility to enable each LG to choose if Brigades are handed over to DFES.
- Restrictions on who can be a spontaneous volunteer and how Brigades are activated may be beneficial.

Zone Members AGREED it would be beneficial to invite the WALGA Emergency Management Policy Team to present at a future Zone meeting.

7.3.2 Call for OAG Performance Audit of Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements WA

Murchison Country Zone

BACKGROUND

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

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

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

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

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

COMMENT

A performance audit will often result in more red tape and more defined rules for any process. With respect to DRFWA this can only be seen as a positive for the primary reasons that there is no legislation to refer to and an asymmetrical imbalance exists between what DFES Officers expect and what local governments or other agencies understand they must provide.

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

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

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

- Are the communities of Western Australia being supported in a timely manner after they have been impacted by a natural disaster?
- Is agreed funding, that is the responsibility of the State Government, reaching affected communities?
- With respect to the scale of different types disasters and different sized communities are the processes of Recovery and Resilience efficient and fit for purpose?

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

Murchison Country Zone Resolved:

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

WALGA SECRETARIAT COMMENT

This Item was included on the State Council November 2025 Revised Agenda (Agenda Item 12 Additional Zone Resolutions) for State Council's consideration, where it was referred to the Policy Portfolio for consideration and appropriate action.

The WALGA Infrastructure Policy Team considered the matter and has resolved:

WALGA advocate to the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) to conduct a Performance Audit of the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements Western Australia (DRFA WA)

The WALGA Infrastructure team is actioning this resolution, with an item to be provided to a future State Council Agenda, enabling the Zone's further consideration at that time.

Noted

7.3.3 Request to Present at Zone Meeting

HC Construction Services

WALGA was approached by HC Construction Services Pty Ltd requesting an opportunity to attend various Country Zone meetings to provide a deputation on how to navigate through the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangement (DRFA).

HC Construction Services is a WA based company specialising in project management, consultancy and construction delivery. HC is a WALGA Preferred Supplier and has worked with several Local Governments to manage disaster relief funding claims. This includes by way of road condition video using their internally developed RF Vid Assist system.

The proposed presentation would include some tips, dos and don'ts, advice on pre disaster evidence requirements, and lessons learnt on three or four case studies where applicants have encountered problems. The presentation would also include information on how Local Governments can prepare a funding application, so they receive the maximum funding available in the event of a natural disaster.

Kolbany Yanginy – Local Government Reconciliation Resource.

WALGA and Reconciliation WA are offering a presentations to Zones on the new [Kolbang Yanginy website](#), a collaborative project between Reconciliation WA, WALGA, at State Agencies with support from Lotterywest.

The online platform is designed to support Local Governments across Western Australia to build strong relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. Focusing on key themes like reconciliation, partnerships and placemaking, Kolbang Yanginy provides advice, resources, case studies and an interactive map to build capability across Local Governments.

The website also provides information about legislative, regulatory and policy requirements with respect to Aboriginal heritage and native title, with links to further information from State Agencies.

RESOLUTION

Moved: President Cr Kate Johnston

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Cr Paul Terry

That the Great Southern Country Zone:

1. **does not support a deputation from HC Construction Services Pty Ltd at a future Zone meeting in 2026.**
2. **does not support a deputation from Reconciliation WA/WALGA at a future Zone meeting in 2026.**

CARRIED

7.3.4 2026 Local Government Honours Awards

By Kathy Robertson, WALGA Manager Association and Corporate Governance

The Honours Program recognises and celebrates the outstanding achievements and lasting contributions made by Elected Members and officers to their respective Local Government, the Local Government sector, WALGA and the wider community.

There are five awards in the 2026 Program:

1. Local Government Medal
2. Life Membership
3. Eminent Service Award
4. Merit Award
5. Young Achievers Award

All Local Government Elected Members and officers are eligible for nomination for each award.

Nominations are open now and will close at **5:00pm on Thursday, 2 April 2026**.

Further information about the 2026 Honours Program, including the nomination form and guidelines for preparing nominations, are available on the [WALGA website](#).

All awards will be presented later this year at the WALGA Local Government Awards event. More details about the event will be announced shortly.

For more information contact Habiba Farrag, State Council Governance Officer, on 9213 2050 or via email honours@walga.asn.au.

Noted

7.3.5 Disaster Ready Fund: Round 4 Anticipated to Open in March 2026

By Rachel Armstrong, Policy Manager Emergency Management

BACKGROUND

The Disaster Ready Fund (DRF) is the Australian Government's key funding program to support projects that reduce disaster risk and strengthen community resilience.

Round Four of the DRF is expected to open in March 2026 with approximately \$200 million available nationally. A strong focus on *construction-ready*, infrastructure-based mitigation projects with clear risk reduction benefits is expected. This is similar to Round 3 which prioritised infrastructure-based projects such as flood levees, cyclone shelters, warning systems. A list of Round 3 projects funded is available at [Disaster Ready Fund | NEMA](#)).

WALGA is providing early notice to Zones and member Local Governments to consideration of both individual and collaborative project opportunities, and pre-planning ahead of the formal announcement.

The DRF is administered by DFES, in Western Australia. Further information is available at [Disaster Resilience Grants - Department of Fire and Emergency Services](#) and by emailing DisasterResilienceGrants@dfes.wa.gov.au.

DRF Round 4 is likely to be released in March 2026, and encourage Local Governments to consider shared or individual disaster risk reduction projects

WALGA will advise the Sector when the DRF is formally announced.

Noted

7.3.6 Water Management Discussion Paper update

By Rebecca Brown, WALGA Policy Manager Environment and Waste

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- WALGA has developed a Water Management in Western Australia Discussion Paper exploring issues for Local Governments in managing water resources.
- To inform the Discussion Paper, WALGA undertook research and direct engagement with the sector and reviewed existing Water Advocacy Positions and feedback from WALGA Zones.
- Based on this consultation, the Discussion Paper identifies water security and water efficiency as key themes.
- Feedback on the Discussion Paper will inform the development of a new water management advocacy position.
- Zones and Local Governments are encouraged to provide comments to WALGA by 12 March 2026.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This item relates to [WALGA Advocacy Positions](#) 3.1.1 Service Delivery to Aboriginal Communities, 4.3 Clearing Permits and Water Licenses and Permits, 6.10 Public Open Space (POS) and 6.14 Planning for Water.

ATTACHMENT

- [Water Management in Western Australia Discussion Paper](#)

BACKGROUND

Local Governments contribute to the management of water through strategic planning, land management, development approvals, community behaviour change and, in some cases, direct water service provision. Local Governments' role in water service provision includes drainage, water use and re-use and aspects of wastewater and sewerage services. The challenges for future water management are escalating across Western Australia due to population growth, climate change and increased competition for limited water resources.

To inform the Discussion Paper WALGA reviewed its existing Water Advocacy Positions and motions, feedback from WALGA Zones and undertook research and direct consultation with the sector. Consultation included workshops with both metropolitan and non-metropolitan Local Governments, an online session with 40 officers focused on water security and efficiency and a regionally focused session with 30 Local Government representatives exploring the barriers to being waterwise in a regional setting. In addition, WALGA conducted 14 one-on-one interviews with officers from 22 metropolitan, regional and remote Local Governments to better understand key issues. Further insights were gained through meetings with officers from the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation and the Water Corporation, as well as internal discussions with WALGA.

COMMENT

From consultation and research WALGA has undertaken with Local Government, two key themes consistently emerged - water security and water efficiency.

Water security relates to the reliable availability, adequate quantity and acceptable quality of water needed to support human health, economic development and environmental amenity. Issues identified include:

- **Infrastructure:** Funding to repair and upgrade aging Local Government water infrastructure including irrigation, drainage and stormwater systems and to improve reliability of State-managed assets.
- **Alternative Sources:** Diversifying water supply through non-traditional sources such as recycled water, stormwater harvesting, or desalination to support community assets.
- **Licensing:** Reforming the current water licensing system, including equity, access and regulatory enforcement.
- **Access:** Addressing barriers to equitable water access, particularly for regional and remote communities.
- **Use:** Planning for water allocation and consumption across sectors.

Water efficiency is focused on reducing unnecessary water loss through better practices, technologies and infrastructure. Issues identified include:

- **Technology:** Adopting waterwise technologies to enhance water efficiency.
- **Water Literacy and behaviour change:** Increasing water literacy within Local Government and the community to support change management and adaptation within communities.
- **Water Sensitive Urban Design:** Improving understanding to encourage the adoption of efficient technologies and design standards to reduce water consumption across public and private infrastructure.

Local Governments across Western Australia are addressing water security and efficiency through various actions across strategic infrastructure planning, innovative water management practices and community awareness. A new Water Management Advocacy Position will ensure WALGA can effectively advocate on behalf of the sector in relation to this issue. The Discussion Paper includes options to address these issues and questions for the sector relating to each of the key areas.

Feedback on the Discussion Paper will inform the development of a new water management advocacy position. All Zones and Local Governments are encouraged to provide comments to WALGA by 12 March 2026.

Noted

7.3.7 Consultation on Draft Climate Change Advocacy Position

By Rebecca Brown, WALGA Policy Manager Environment and Waste

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- WALGA is undertaking consultation on a revised Climate Change Advocacy Position.
- This Draft was developed following initial consultation, consideration by State Council in March 2025 and feedback from the Environment Policy Team of State Council.
- Since WALGA's current Advocacy Position and Policy Statement were endorsed in 2018, there have been significant legislative, policy, technological and scientific changes.
- An updated climate change advocacy position, which complements other WALGA advocacy positions, will provide a sound basis for WALGA's advocacy.
- WALGA is seeking Council endorsed feedback by 1 May 2026.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This item is intended to replace WALGA's 2018 Climate Change [Advocacy Position](#) and [Policy Statement](#).

ATTACHMENT

The Consultation Paper is available [online](#).

BACKGROUND

Climate change, and related legislation, policy and action, have implications for many aspects of Local Governments' operations and services. More frequent and severe droughts, heatwaves, bushfires, extreme rainfall events and warming, rising sea levels are increasing the costs and complexity of delivering critical services, infrastructure and ensuring community wellbeing.

In 2018, State Council endorsed a [Climate Change Policy Statement](#) and advocacy position, following extensive sector consultation. Since this Advocacy Position was adopted there have been significant legislative, policy, technological and scientific changes, including:

- The national *Climate Change Act 2022* and the Western Australian Climate Change Bill 2023.
- The *Local Government Amendment Act 2023*, which expanded Western Australian Local Governments' general function to include planning for, and mitigating, the risks associated with climate change.
- The release of the Australian Government's [National Climate Risk Assessment](#) and [National Adaptation Plan](#) in 2025.
- Escalation of the transition to renewable energy, uptake of electric vehicles and energy efficiency standards under the National Construction Code.
- Climate science and projections ([international](#), [national](#) and [WA specific](#)) have also become clearer regarding the risks posed by climate change and the need for action to address the consequential impacts.

COMMENT

It is important that the WALGA climate change advocacy position is updated to reflect these changes and the consequent needs and priorities of Local Governments. An updated climate

change advocacy position, which complements other WALGA advocacy positions, will provide a sound basis for WALGA's advocacy.

Following initial consultation, consideration by State Council in March 2025 and feedback from the Environment Policy Team, WALGA has developed a revised, draft Climate Change Advocacy Position for Local Government feedback.

WALGA Environment and Waste Team members will be attending Zone meetings in April 2026 to support zone discussions on the draft Advocacy Position.

WALGA is seeking Council endorsed feedback on the draft Climate Change Advocacy Position by **COB Friday, 1 May 2026**. Feedback can be provided to environment@walga.asn.au.

Following consideration of this feedback a final draft advocacy position will be developed and provided to Zones and State Council for consideration, expected to be in July 2026.

Noted

7.3.8 Draft Renewable Energy Planning Code

By Kieran McGovern, WALGA Senior Policy Advisor, Planning

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- WALGA Advocacy Position 6.17 Renewable Energy Facilities calls for changes to the renewable energy State planning framework to ensure it is fit for purpose to guide the ongoing development of the sector.
- The State Government has released a draft Renewable Energy Planning Code and Guidelines with the aim of establishing a consistent assessment framework, clear development standards, and improved certainty around impacts such as noise, landscape, environmental considerations, and safety.
- The Code initially focuses on wind farms but is designed to expand to other renewable technologies, requiring detailed technical reporting and encouraging (but not regulating) community benefit-sharing agreements.
- Proposed regulatory amendments would align local planning schemes with the Code and classify renewable energy projects valued at \$20 million or more as mandatory significant development, shifting decision-making authority to the WAPC.
- WALGA strongly encourages consideration of the draft Code by Zones. Local Governments should make their own submissions on the draft Code by 10 April 2026 and provide feedback to WALGA to inform our submission on behalf of the sector by 27 February 2026. Council endorsed submissions are preferred.

ATTACHMENT

- [Draft Renewable Energy Planning Code and Guidelines](#)
- [Information Sheet – Proposed Amendments to Local Planning Scheme Regulations](#)
- [Information Sheet – Proposed Amendments to Significant Development Regulations](#)
- [WALGA summary of the draft Renewable Energy Planning Code](#)

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

WALGA's proposed advocacy approach is consistent with WALGA [Advocacy Positions](#):

- 6.1 Planning Principles and Reform
- 6.4 State Development Applications and Decision Making
- 6.16 Energy Transition Engagement and Community Benefit Framework
- 6.17 Renewable Energy Facilities
- 6.18 Priority Agriculture.

BACKGROUND

The growth in the number, size, and complexity of renewable energy facilities across Western Australia is expected to continue as energy generation and other traditional industries decarbonise their facilities and operations. As a result, the placement and management of renewable energy facilities have become contentious issues in local communities across Western Australia.

In September 2024, WALGA's State Council endorsed three advocacy positions to address concerns related to renewable energy. Advocacy Position 6.17 Renewable Energy Facilities noted that the existing Western Australian Planning Commission's (WAPC) Position Statement: Renewable energy facilities was inadequate to address these concerns, leading to inconsistent application and approvals of renewable energy facilities across the State.

The advocacy position calls for the existing Position Statement: Renewable Energy Facilities to be elevated to a State planning policy, to provide the highest level of planning policy control and ensure the state planning framework is fit for purpose to guide the ongoing development of the sector.

On 12 December 2025, the State Government released a draft Renewable Energy Planning Code (the Code) and associated Guidelines for public consultation. The Code has been prepared to provide guidance to industry, Local Government and communities by:

- introducing a consistent development assessment framework for renewable energy infrastructure across Western Australia.
- establishing clear development standards and application requirements.
- addresses potential land use and environmental impacts, such as noise and landscape considerations.

The initial focus of the Code is on wind farms, with flexibility to expand to other renewable energy developments, including solar farms and battery energy storage systems.

The draft Code covers key planning issues such as safety, noise, shadow flicker, landscape and visual impact, natural environment, natural hazards, aviation safety, electromagnetic interference, transport, construction, and decommissioning.

Under the proposed Code, development applications must include detailed technical reports, whilst community benefit-sharing agreements are encouraged, these agreements sit outside of the planning system.

To enable implementation of the Code, regulatory amendments are proposed to the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015* to support incorporation of the Code into local planning schemes through Model Provisions, introduce standard land-use definitions that will apply to all local planning schemes and guide assessment of new noise-sensitive development near existing or approved wind farms.

There are also proposed reforms to the *Planning and Development (Significant Development) Regulations 2024*, which will classify renewable energy development applications valued at \$20 million or more as mandatory significant development. These projects will be assessed and determined by the WAPC under the State Significant Development Pathway (under Part 11B of the *Planning and Development Act 2005*), and Local Governments role will be to provide commentary to the development application, but final decision-making authority will rest with the WAPC.

Consultation on the draft Code and Guidelines closes 10 April 2026.

COMMENT

WALGA's has advocated for changes to the renewable energy State planning framework to ensure orderly and proper planning of renewable energy facilities and therefore welcomes the release of the draft Renewable Energy Planning Code and Guidelines by the State Government for public comment. This draft Code represents a significant step toward establishing a consistent planning framework to guide the ongoing development of renewable energy facilities across WA – providing important clarity and guidance to WA Local Governments.

The proposed amendments to classify renewable energy projects over \$20 million as 'mandatory significant development' that must be determined by WAPC does not align with WALGA's Advocacy Position 6.4 State Development Applications and Decision Making, as it has the potential to erode Local Government decision making powers and community input. WALGA's position is that Part 11B should be abolished, or, if it is retained, the cost threshold should be raised to \$50 million.

WALGA considers it is essential that the requirement for community benefits be mandated. There are several options that should be examined as potential mechanisms to mandate community benefit-sharing agreements, including (but not limited to) amendments to existing planning or energy legislation or new, standalone legislation.

There is also a lack of guidance regarding appropriate land uses in particular zones, specifically protecting rural land for agricultural purposes, instead stating that wind farms are generally compatible with agricultural land uses. WALGA's position is that regulatory amendments are required to create a model zone through the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015* for land identified as high quality agricultural land (noting most of this land is located in the South West region) known as the 'Priority Agriculture'.

WALGA held two online information sessions on the Code alongside the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage on 5 and 9 February 2026 for Local Government officers and Elected Members respectively.

WALGA will prepare a submission to the State on behalf of the sector to ensure the draft Code delivers positive outcomes for Member Local Governments, communities and industry.

WALGA strongly encourages consideration of the draft Code by Zones. Local Governments should make their own submissions on the draft Code by 10 April 2026 and **provide feedback to WALGA to inform our submission on behalf of the sector by 27 February 2026**. Council endorsed submissions are preferred.

Submissions to WALGA via – planning@walga.asn.au

WALGA's submission will be provided to State Council by flying agenda to meet the submission deadline.

Noted

7.3.9 Elections Reform – WALGA Discussion Paper

By Lyn Fogg, Zone Executive Officer

The meeting was advised, WALGA had distributed to Mayors / Presidents and CEOs a Discussion Paper on the State Government's proposed Electoral Reform proposals:

- Four-year election cycle, full spill of all Council Member offices
- Compulsory voting.

Local Governments are encouraged to provide Council endorsed feedback to WALGA by 27 March 2026.

Feedback will inform a proposed sector wide advocacy position that will be provided for Zone review via the April State Council Agenda.

Noted

8 WALGA STATE COUNCIL BUSINESS

8.1 ZONE STATE COUNCIL MEMBER REPORT

Cr Scott Crosby, Zone State Councillor

Nil

8.2 STATE COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA – MATTERS FOR DECISION

9 WALGA STATE COUNCIL AGENDA

Zone Delegates are invited to read and consider the WALGA State Council Agenda, which has been provided as an attachment with this Agenda and can be found via the link [here](#).

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

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

9.1.1 Aviation Advocacy Positions

By Negar Nili, Policy Officer Transport and Roads

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Two new Advocacy Positions are proposed to strengthen WALGA's aviation advocacy framework and to inform WALGA's response to future inquiries and/or consultation relating to aviation.
- The aim of the new positions is to provide clearer and more contemporary guidance on:
 - the sustainability and ongoing viability of Local Government-owned regional airports; and
 - the affordability, reliability and accessibility of regional and remote air services for Western Australian communities.
- The proposed positions will assist WALGA to advocate more effectively on behalf of its Members by:

- clearly articulating the essential service role of aviation in regional, rural and remote Western Australia;
- strengthening WALGA's capacity to engage with State and Commonwealth governments on aviation policy and funding; and
- supporting Local Governments facing regulatory, financial and service-delivery challenges associated with regional aviation.
- The development of the proposed Advocacy Positions has been informed by engagement with a sample of Local Governments, which highlighted shared concerns regarding high regional airfares, service reliability, capacity constraints and the role of aviation in supporting health access, emergency response and regional economic development.
- WALGA currently has two existing aviation Advocacy Positions; however, feedback from Local Governments clarified that the inclusion of additional, targeted policy positions is essential to better reflect contemporary challenges and to strengthen support for Councils.
- The proposed positions build on existing WALGA policy and provide a stronger basis for:
 - sector advocacy;
 - engagement with State Council and Zones to seek feedback; and
 - informing WALGA's potential submission to the Productivity Commission Inquiry into Regional Airfares.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The current [WALGA Advocacy Positions](#) relating to Aviation are positions 5.9 Aviation and 5.9.1 Airfare Pricing in Regional Western Australia. The proposed new positions would be in addition to these existing positions.

5.9 Aviation

Position Statement *The Local Government sector supports the Department of Transport's State Aviation Strategy 2020, with more focus required on non-RPT airports to ensure it is representative of all of WA, more focus on general aviation development across WA and noting that the preferred ownership and governance of Local Governments is Council Controlled Organisations. The Local Government sector advocates for a clear position on the economic benefit of airports in regional areas to be included in the future state wide Airports State Planning Policy.*

5.9.1. Airfare Pricing in Regional Western Australia

Position Statement *The Local Government sector supports:*

1. *An evidence-based assessment commissioned by the State Government to determine the degree to which market structure and other factors influence the cost of providing air services on each route, the pricing structure offered and the actual prices paid.*
2. *The State Government providing oversight of airfares ensuring transparency, encouraging partnerships between Local Governments and airline carriers to grow the market and the provision of subsidies in some situations.*

BACKGROUND

Aviation plays a critical role in Western Australia, particularly for regional, rural, and remote communities, by providing essential connectivity for access to healthcare, education, employment, and social engagement. Reliable and affordable air services are also vital to regional economic development, workforce mobility, and community resilience, especially where alternative transport options are limited.

WALGA's advocacy on aviation is underpinned by its existing policy framework, which emphasises the need for safe, reliable, and cost-effective air services across regional and remote Western Australia. These policies highlight the critical role of aviation in enabling regional connectivity, supporting service delivery, and contributing to economic development, while recognising the operational and regulatory responsibilities faced by Local Government-managed airports.

WALGA has also contributed to State-level policy development including the State Aviation Strategy 2020. This strategy supports key initiatives including regulating certain routes to support a sustainable service, the Regional Airfare Zone Cap, Regional Airports Development Scheme and regulation of closed charters in some situations. It is anticipated that the Department of Transport and Major Infrastructure will review and refresh the State Aviation Strategy in 2026-27.

At the national level, WALGA engaged in consultation processes leading to the Green and White Papers on Regional Transport and Aviation, representing Local Government perspectives and regional needs.

Two recently initiated inquiries – the Productivity Commission Inquiry into the determinants of regional airfares and the Senate (Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee) Inquiry into the State of Australia's Aviation Sector and its ability to deliver reliable and affordable services to rural, regional and remote communities – provide important opportunities to review and improve policies supporting regional aviation. Both inquiries have overlapping focus areas, including affordability, government intervention, and impacts on regional communities.

To inform its responses to both inquiries, WALGA has engaged with a sample of Local Governments to understand their experiences, challenges, and priorities for regional air services. This engagement has clarified the needs of Local Governments and communities, forming the basis for developing two proposed new Advocacy Positions to support Members and advocate for improved connectivity, affordability, and service sustainability across regional Western Australia.

NEW ADVOCACY POSITIONS

Regional Airports

Position Statement *WALGA supports the sustainable operation of Local Government owned regional airports and advocates for proportionate regulatory frameworks, targeted funding, and operational guidance to ensure safe, efficient, and resilient airport infrastructure and services.*

Background Regional airports are vital for connectivity, economic development, tourism, health access, and emergency response in Western Australia. Local Governments operating regional airports face increasing regulatory and operational pressures, including aviation security requirements, compliance obligations, ageing infrastructure, and limited staffing capacity. Many Council-owned airports cover day-to-day operating costs but lack sufficient capital to fund major infrastructure renewal or security upgrades. Airports that support both community access and FIFO activity can face additional funding constraints despite their ongoing role in servicing regional communities. These challenges highlight the need for regulatory settings and funding arrangements that

reflect airport scale, risk profile, and regional operating conditions.

Regional and Remote Air Services

Position Statement *WALGA advocates for reliable, affordable, and equitable regional air services, calling for greater oversight of airline pricing practices, including transparent fare structures and equitable access to discounted and lower-cost fares, to mitigate the impacts of limited competition and dynamic pricing on regional residents, businesses, and essential travel. WALGA also promotes the continued viability of essential routes and recognises regional aviation as an essential service supporting community access, workforce mobility, and regional economic development.*

Background Regional communities rely on air services for essential travel, including access to health care, employment, education, and family connections, particularly where alternative transport options are limited. High airfares, limited availability of lower-cost seats, and opaque pricing structures reduce affordability for residents and businesses, even in markets with more than one airline. Regional air services are also vulnerable to sudden service reductions or route withdrawals, which can isolate communities and disrupt economic and social activity. These challenges underscore the importance of policy settings that support affordability, service continuity, and equitable access.

COMMENT

Engagement with a sample of Local Governments operating airports with Regular Passenger Transport (RPT) services highlighted operational, financial, and service delivery issues affecting both Council-owned airports and regional air services.

Key matters raised by Councils include:

- Airline pricing and equitable access: Complex, opaque, and highly variable fare structures; limited availability of lower-cost seats; competition does not always deliver affordable or equitable outcomes.
- Aviation security requirements: Standards designed for larger airports impose significant operational and financial burdens, with outdated equipment, regulatory ambiguities, and high upgrade costs creating compliance challenges.
- Funding and resource constraints: Many Councils operate airports with limited staff and capital; while day-to-day operating costs may be covered, major infrastructure renewal or expansion and security upgrades are often unfunded.
- Service continuity and reliability: Regional air services are fragile, with sudden route reductions or withdrawals impacting essential travel, community connectivity, and local economies.
- Coordination across governments and industry: Fragmented policy, regulatory, and funding arrangements limit Local Governments' ability to respond quickly to changes, highlighting the need for improved collaboration.
- Regional aviation as an essential service: Airports and air services underpin health access, emergency response, tourism, economic development, and social cohesion, demonstrating their broader value beyond transport alone.

Based on these issues and priorities identified through Local Government engagement, WALGA has developed the two proposed Advocacy Positions above on aviation – one focusing on regional airports and the other on regional and remote air services – to address the challenges of affordability, accessibility, operational sustainability, and service continuity for regional communities.

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council endorse two new Advocacy Positions on Aviation as follows:

1. **Regional Airports**
WALGA supports the sustainable operation of Local Government owned regional airports and advocates for proportionate regulatory frameworks, targeted funding, and operational guidance to ensure safe, efficient, and resilient airport infrastructure and services.
2. **Regional and Remote Air Services**
WALGA advocates for reliable, affordable, and equitable regional air services, calling for greater oversight of airline pricing practices, including transparent fare structures and equitable access to discounted and lower-cost fares, to mitigate the impacts of limited competition and dynamic pricing on regional residents, businesses, and essential travel. WALGA also promotes the continued viability of essential routes and recognises regional aviation as an essential service supporting community access, workforce mobility, and regional economic development.

RESOLUTION

Moved: President Cr Len Handasyde

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Cr Paul Terry

That the Great Southern Country Zone supports the WALGA recommendation for State Council Agenda item 9.1 as contained in the State Council Agenda and as provided above.

CARRIED

9.2 OTHER STATE COUNCIL AGENDA ITEMS

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

9.2.1 WALGA State President's Report

Attachment No. 4 [WALGA State President's Report](#)

Noted

10 EMERGING ISSUES/COLLABORATION

Nil

11 OTHER BUSINESS

Shire of Plantagenet

Standalone module grid power stations – According to the EPA, Western Power will be installing upwards of 1,000 modular grid units around the State. The Shire of Plantagenet has up to 12 units installed and raised significant concerns about bush fire risk mitigation and safety measures - Western Power not sufficiently resourcing adequate maintenance / mitigation works. The Shire noted there had been insufficient community engagement by Western Power. The Shire will bring an item to the next Zone meeting on this topic.

The Shire of Broomehill-Tambellup noted similar concerns with Western Power inspections, namely flagging overgrown vegetation.

Shire of Cranbrook

Forest Product Commission (FPC) rate exemption – The Shire of Cranbrook advised a significant change to the operations of the FPC through expansion of land holdings and claiming rate exemption status that FPC has not previously claimed, impacting rate revenue.

The Warren Blackwood Alliance of Councils met with the Minister on this issue, highlighting the following points.

- The cessation of rates was from this Financial Year; this money has been diverted to the WA Treasury, not to Local Governments. The Alliance is seeking \$350,000 in reimbursements.
- This coming budget will be affected by this rate gap. Medical and community services are likely the first things to be cut.
- Noted FPC has expended 1/3rd of its budget for acquisition of additional land for FPC purposes, which will escalate rate revenue loss to LGs and loss of prime agricultural land.
- A request has been sent to the FPC to better understand their long-term strategy, as the strategy to purchase land may be adversely affecting the ability of farmers to compete with the State Government to purchase land.

The Shire of Cranbrook will provide an item to the next Zone meeting, to seek a resolution for WALGA advocacy on this matter.

12 NEXT ZONE MEETING

The next meeting of the Great Southern Country Zone will be held on Friday, 24 April 2026 at the Shire of Broomehill-Tambellup commencing at 10:00am.

13 CLOSURE

There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 11:55am.

Attachment 1: Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety (DLGIRS) – February 2026

[Back to Item 5.4](#)



Department of Local Government,
Industry Regulation and Safety

Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety

Local Government Division Report

February 2026

Local Government Reforms

Local Government Inspector

- The Office of the Local Government Inspector (the Inspector) formally commenced operations from 1 January 2026.
- The Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety (LGIRS) has made regulations to support the functions and role of the Inspector.
- Parts 8A and 8B introduced by the *Local Government Amendment Act 2024* have been proclaimed to enable these regulations to take effect from 1 January 2026.
- The Local Government Inspector (Mr Tony Brown) has new powers to investigate and intervene to ensure compliance, focussing on early intervention so issues are identified and resolved before they escalate.
- The Inspector regulations deal with:
 - new requirements for complaints handling;
 - the appointment of monitors;
 - powers of authorised officers of the Inspector; and
 - offences under the *Local Government Act 1995* that may be infringeable.
- A number of consequential amendments have also been made to other regulations as a result of these changes.
- The Regulations Working Group (RWG) provided valuable feedback in the development of these regulations that support the operational requirements of the Inspector.
- LGIRS is developing a guide to assist local governments with understanding these changes and their compliance obligations.
- For further information visit the Department's website – [Inspector Regulations](#).

Audit, Risk and Improvement Committees (ARIC)

- LGIRS has made regulations to support the implementation of new requirements for Audit, Risk and Improvement Committees (ARICs).
- The RWG provided valuable feedback on draft consultation regulations.
- Section 87 of the *Local Government Amendment Act 2024 (WA)* has been commenced; local governments are now required to establish a committee of council to be the ARIC.
- The ARIC must have an independent chair and a deputy to the chair, to ensure a level of independence and provide impartial oversight.
- The functions of an ARIC include:
 - the review of reports related to compliance audits and systems reviews;
 - making recommendations to council on improvements where applicable;

- the review of actions a local government has taken to improve the effectiveness of its operations in accordance with its compliance obligations.

For further information, visit the Department's website – [Audit, Risk and Improvement Committees](#).

Other Reforms

- LGIRS will continue to work on developing regulations to implement other reform projects over the course of 2026, including regulations dealing with:
 - Communications Agreements;
 - Online Registers;
 - Standardised Meeting Procedures
 - Council Plans (IPR); and
 - Rates and Revenue Policy.

Reform updates

- LGIRS conducted a webinar on 17 December 2025 to explain the changes related to the commencement of the Inspector and the new requirements for ARICs.
- The webinar is available on the LGIRs website and contains an update on the status of other local government reforms – [Webinar 15:17 December 2025](#).
- The Regulations Working Group (RWG) will continue to assist with providing feedback on the various regulations reform projects.
- The IPR Working Group will continue to assist with developing regulations and supporting materials for council plans.
- Further updates on the status of local government reforms will be made ahead of implementation.
- The LG Act Reform team can be emailed directly at actreview@lgirs.wa.gov.au.

Model Financial Statements (MFS)

- The sector was invited to provide feedback on the 2024-25 model financial statements and guidance materials by Friday, 6 February 2026.
- Any feedback received will be considered for the 2025-26 revisions, due for release in April 2026.

Non-Financial Asset Valuation Guidelines

- The Non-Financial Asset Valuation Guidelines have been developed and are expected to be published imminently.
- Broad communication is planned to notify the sector of their availability, including directly with WALGA.

Local Government Grants Commission

Financial Assistance Grants funding

- The total funding allocation to WA local governments for 2025-26 is \$423,375,700 (consisting of \$261,451,711 in general purpose funding and \$161,923,989 in local road funding and special projects) compared to \$400,140,692 in 2024-25. This total includes

the advance payment provided in June 2025 to local governments.

- Local governments received their first and second quarterly payments of remaining 2025-26 funds in August and November 2025. Further payments will be made in mid-February and mid-May. The grant schedule is available on the Grants Commission website.
- The Grants Commission Information Return to collect 2024-25 financial data was sent to all local governments in November 2025 and made available on the Grants Commission website. Local governments were asked to complete the document and return it by email before 31 January 2025. If your local government is yet to submit its return, please contact the Grants Commission staff to arrange an extension.
- If local governments have any other questions regarding their grant allocation, the methodology or wish to make a submission regarding the process of allocation finds, they can be directed to grants.commission@lgirs.wa.gov.au

Local Government Advisory Board

- While it is still some time away, local governments are reminded that ward and representation changes and district boundary adjustments, must be received by 31 January 2027 if they want to ensure changes are in place for 2027 local government elections.
- It is important local governments factor in if there is a need for public consultation (which needs to occur prior to submission) when considering a proposal to the Board.
- The Board kindly requests that local governments provide proposals as early as possible to allow sufficient time for implementation.
- Documents outlining the requirements and processes are available on the Advisory Board's website, or alternatively you can email advisoryboard@lgirs.wa.gov.au for guidance.

Stop Puppy Farming

- Regulations were published on 27 November 2024 for the pet shop and dog supply approval reforms.
- On 26 May 2025, only pet shops that hold a pet shop approval can sell dogs and puppies that are sourced from holders of a dog supply approval.
- Further regulation changes are being developed in relation to implementing the Stop Puppy Farming reforms.
- Queries can be directed to the team at stoppuppyfarming@lgirs.wa.gov.au.

PetsWA

- The PetsWA project is in a reset phase and LGIRS is evaluating what has been delivered to date.
- LGIRS values the sector's contribution and would appreciate the opportunity to engage further as we chart our path forward.
- Local governments will need to continue existing pet registration programs and engagement with pet owners for annual registration and renewal processes.

Cat Containment

- Work is underway to progress the necessary cat containment amendments, with a Bill anticipated to be introduced into Parliament in 2026.
- Consultation on a draft Cat Containment Bill was undertaken in January 2026 with key stakeholders.
- LGIRS is scoping the cat act review, which will commence soon.

2025 Local Government Election Commitments

- The State Government has invested \$17 million in the local government portfolio across 135 community and infrastructure projects and programs through the 2025 election commitment program.
- Over 70 of these are for local governments. LGIRS is continuing to work with local governments on the drafting and execution of the financial assistance agreements, with over \$1 million in funds disbursed to date.

LGIRS Contacts

LG Support and Engagement Includes MyCouncil queries	lghotline@lgirs.wa.gov.au
Statutory Approvals (Differential rates, budget and audit extensions)	legislation@lgirs.wa.gov.au
LG Policy and Legislation	LGpolicy@lgirs.wa.gov.au
Stop Puppy Farming	stoppuppyfarming@lgirs.wa.gov.au
Grants Commission – Financial Assistance Grants	Grants.commission@lgirs.wa.gov.au
LG accounting or financial enquiries	LG.accounting@lgirs.wa.gov.au
LG Act Reform	actreview@lgirs.wa.gov.au
LG Advisory Board	advisoryboard@lgirs.wa.gov.au
Off-Road Vehicles	orv@lgirs.wa.gov.au

ATTACHMENT 3

Attachment 2: Zone Status Report – February 2026

[Back to Item 6.3.1](#)

Agenda Item	Zone Resolution	WALGA Response	Update	WALGA Contact
21 November 2025 Zone Agenda Item 8.3.3 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1960 – Review	That the WALGA State Council advocate for the State Government to comprehensively review the <i>Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1960</i> to achieve at least, the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. broaden the Act's scope and establish contemporary provisions addressing all modern interfaces between landowners, local governments and the public, 2. establish penalties to create a meaningful disincentive for landowner non-compliance with provisions of the Act, and 3. enable a local government to impose penalties against livestock owners who consistently allow their livestock to stray and create a nuisance, without the need to first create a local law or initiate a prosecution. 	This item will be referred to the Governance Policy Team for consideration. The Zone will be informed of the outcome.	February 2026	Kirsty Martin, Executive Manager Member Services kmartin@walga.asn.au 9213 2051
21 November 2025 Zone Agenda Item 8.3.4 Work Health and Safety Act 2020 – Statutory Review	That WALGA State Council advocate for the introduction of relevant amendments to the <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2020</i> so that Bush Fire Brigade volunteers are not deemed as a Local Government "Worker" (as defined in the WHS Act).	<p>The WALGA submission to the Statutory Review of the <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2020</i> was submitted to WorkSafe on 12 December 2025.</p> <p>The draft submission was endorsed by the Governance and People and Place Policy Teams at a joint meeting on 1 December 2025.</p> <p>The draft submission was endorsed by State Council by Flying Minute on 10 December 2025, RESOLUTION 256.FM/2025.</p> <p>The submission was submitted to WorkSafe on 12 December 2025.</p> <p>The comments provided by Great Southern VROC were considered in the final submission, however, as the majority of members endorsed the Submission, the recommendation proposed to remove bush fire brigade volunteers from the definition of "worker" under the Act was not adopted.</p> <p>WALGA does not have an advocacy position on amending the WHS Act 2020 to exclude Bush Fire Brigade volunteers from being considered Local Government "workers" under the Act. This would have implications for bushfire protections provided through LGIS and for the over 18,000 Local Government BFB volunteers across the State.</p>	February 2026	Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy nmatthews@walga.asn.au 9213 2039

ATTACHMENT 3

5 March 2025 State Council Agenda Item 8.1 Climate Change Advocacy Position	The Zone's motion to support the recommendation was defeated and the following comment was noted: <i>The majority of Zone Delegates noted their Local Governments did not have adopted positions on climate change and those delegates considered they did not have a basis by which they could support the proposed WALGA advocacy position.</i>	WA WALGA has been working on an updated Draft Advocacy Position for consideration by Local Government. The Draft Advocacy Position, and accompanying Background Paper, will be released for a 12-week period to provide feedback. COMPLETE	February 2026	Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy nmatthews@walga.asn.au 9213 2039
3 December 2025 State Council Agenda Item 8.2 2026 Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Remuneration Inquiry for Local Government Chief Executive Officers and Elected Members	That the Great Southern Country Zone supports the WALGA recommendation for State Council Agenda item 8.2 as contained in the State Council Agenda and as provided above <u>and request WALGA emphasise inequity in regional and remote allowances in its final submission.</u>	<p>SECRETARIAT COMMENT</p> <p>WALGA recognises that there is a perception amongst Members that the Regional/Isolation Allowance is applied inconsistently between Councils, creating confusion and uncertainty in the Local Government sector. The rationale for boundaries between eligible and ineligible Local Governments is unclear, as is the amount of the Allowance for neighbouring or otherwise very similar Local Governments. This has been emphasised in previous WALGA submissions, but can also be included in this submission. This would go towards supporting WALGA's calls for a full review of the Allowance.</p> <p>State Council Resolution</p> <p>That State Council endorse the submission to the 2026 Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Remuneration Inquiry for Local Government Chief Executive Officers and Elected Members, with the following additions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A new recommendation that the Regional/Isolation Allowance be reviewed in full, noting that the application of the Allowance is inequal and inconsistent. 2. A new recommendation that an appropriate fee be set for the deputy to the presiding member of Audit, Risk and Improvement Committees to attend meetings. 3. A new recommendation that the travel costs incurred while driving a privately owned or leased vehicle be calculated at the same rate contained in the <i>Public Service Award 1992</i> to bring it in parity with the public sector. 4. The percentage values in recommendations 1 and 2 of the submission be amended from 3% to 4%. 5. Include a work-value argument regarding Elected Member remuneration to strengthen the case for an increase to Elected Member fees and allowances and to refer the request to reclassify Elected Members as not volunteers to the relevant Policy Team. <p>RESOLUTION 073.5/2025</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED</p>	February 2026	Rachel Horton, Executive Manager Advocacy rhorton@walga.asn.au 9213 2038

Attachment 3: Zone Action Items – February 2026

[Back to Item 6.3.2](#)

Great Southern Country Zone – ACTION ITEMS				
ZONE MEETING DATE / ITEM	ZONE RESOLUTION	ZONE RESPONSE	STATUS	RESPONSIBLE PERSON
2025, 11 April Item 7.2.1 Zone Strategic Priorities	<p>The Great Southern Country Zone:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Advocates for the Minister for Great Southern to attend meetings of the Zone and if the Minister agrees to attend, then at the first meeting attended the Zone Secretariat is to coordinate with Zone members a presentation at that meeting on the Zone's Strategic Priorities for discussion with the Minister. Writes to responsible Ministers advocating for the Zone's Strategic Priorities. <p>NOTE: Secretariate to send GSCZ's Regional Education submission to the Minister for Education.</p>	<p>Action deferred until after Minister attends June Zone meeting.</p> <p>August 2025: Minister's office has remained in contact with the WALGA Secretariat and has been advised of the Zone's 2025 meeting schedule. The Secretariat will advise the Minister's office of the 2026 meeting schedule, once determined by the Zone.</p> <p>November 2026: Minister Whitby's office has advised that he will attend the June, August and November Zone meetings for 2026.</p>	Ongoing	Lyn Fogg, Zone Executive Officer

Attachment 4: WALGA President's Report – February 2026

[Back to Item 9.1.1](#)

President's Report

March 2026

Introduction

As I put pen to paper for my last report as WALGA President, I pause and reflect on what has been an exhaustive but incredibly rewarding four years in the role. It is an extraordinary privilege to represent the State's 139 Local Governments and one that I have never taken for granted. In preparing these reports, I have often reflected that they never adequately capture the scope and relentless nature of the role. However, the work has never bothered me given the opportunity to leverage outcomes that benefit our entire State – something that I have relished so much.

I'd like to thank every one of the Elected Members and Officers that I have engaged with – not just as your President but as WALGA Deputy President and State Councillor. You do amazing work, often under trying conditions and with very little recognition of your efforts. Know that I see this and appreciate everything you do. I will continue to champion Local Government and the importance of what you do well after I step away from this role. Local Government is often derided and the target of critics. For those of us who live and love the institution of Local Government, we know the importance of what we do, as do our communities. I look forward to seeing the sector continue to thrive as we face new and exciting challenges together.

Political Engagement

WALGA's political engagement activities have moderated in the past two months as Parliament rose for the year, with efforts focused on reviewing and refining the Association's strategic approach for 2026.

Since the last State Council meeting, WALGA has met with Hon Julie Freeman MLC to discuss key sector issues relevant to her portfolios of Road Safety and Arts and Culture.

Further meetings have been held with Hon Merredith Hammat MLA, Minister for Health and Mental Health, and Hon John Carey MLA, Minister for Planning; Lands; Housing and Works; and Health Infrastructure.

In response to the current political environment, WALGA has refreshed its political engagement strategies for 2026, prioritising the maintenance of strong relationships with key Ministers while also strengthening engagement with influential backbenchers and Opposition spokespeople.

A key priority for the first quarter of 2026 is to brief decision-makers on WALGA's State Budget Submission.

Federal Budget Submission

The Federal Assistant Treasurer has recently invited submissions for the 2026–27 Budget. Each year, ALGA prepares a national submission on behalf of the Local Government sector. WALGA has provided a complementary submission seeking commitments to address several priority issues of particular importance to Western Australian Local Governments, including:

- Additional ongoing, formula-based targeted funding streams for Local Governments to provide certainty and enable effective planning for community needs
- A Commonwealth funding contribution to match the Western Australian Government commitment to apply proven road safety countermeasures on 1,474km of regional roads, representing the prioritised sections of the proposed Regional Road Safety Program.
- A dedicated Coastal Hazard Adaptation program to support Local Governments in managing coastal risks.
- Funding support to address the gaps in the Long-Term Cycle Network
- Dedicated mitigation and resilience funding for councils across Australia build their capacity and capability to respond to emergencies in our communities.
- Support for rural and remote Local Governments in Western Australia to offset the costs of providing essential primary healthcare services until long-term funding and workforce solutions are established.

WALGA's submission has been provided to all WA Members of Federal Parliament to highlight these priority initiatives.

Media Engagement

As the authoritative voice for Western Australian Local Government, WALGA continues to engage proactively with the media to advocate on behalf of our Members to drive better outcomes for Local Governments and their communities.

Since the last report, I have undertaken a number of media interviews to promote WALGA's 2026-27 State Budget Submission. This has included an interview with ABC Radio's Geraldine Mellet on the Mornings Program highlighting WALGA's Emergency Management funding requests and 6PR's Russell Collett about important measures to boost and protect WA's tree canopy.

WALGA commentary has been featured in The Sunday Times on several occasions including calls for funding to grow WA's tree canopy and stop the spread of the Polyphagous Shot-Hole Borer, calls for an independent organisation to undertake a broad review of rating exemptions, and the important measures required to assist Local Governments deliver more active transport infrastructure, interventions, and supporting initiatives around schools.

Urban Greening Strategy

Following sustained WALGA advocacy it was pleasing that the State Government has finally released the long awaited Urban Greening Strategy for Perth and Peel. While the Strategy does not deliver on all of WALGA's priorities – notably effective measures to reduce tree loss on private land – it does align with WALGA's 30% by 2040 target. Much more will be required to reach this target and WALGA has been clear on the sector's continued commitment to increasing tree canopy in urban areas across the State.

WALGA Training

The 2026 WALGA Training Calendar is now available on the WALGA website, offering a comprehensive range of professional development opportunities for Elected Members and officers across the sector.

I particularly encourage Members to engage with the Council Member Essentials (CME) program, which all newly elected members are required to undertake in the first 12 months of being elected. For the first time since the training was introduced, those who were re-elected last year may also be required to complete the CME unless one of the exemptions in the Regulations applies.

The legislative amendments that came into effect on 1 January 2026 introduced a new requirement for Elected Members to provide a declaration to the CEO that they have either passed the CME assessments or were exempt from the requirement to do so within one month of the completion deadline. The CEO must now also notify the Local Government Inspector if an Elected Member fails to do so.

In closing

It is with both a sense of pride and a tinge of sadness that I sign off this report as my final one as your President. I am proud that I leave WALGA in a position where it is respected and valued by its members and stakeholders. This has been achieved by the outstanding leadership of our CEO, Nick Sloan, and the commitment of every single member of the WALGA team who endeavour at all times to support our members. The WALGA team truly is amazing.

I will never forget what a privilege it has been to serve you, and I will treasure the memories.

I wish to express my deepest gratitude to Deputy President, Paul Kelly for his unwavering support and to Nick Sloan for not only supporting me, but for his friendship.

For every kind word, smile and handshake offered to me during my tenure, I thank you, it has been welcomed and very much appreciated.



President Cr Karen Chappel AM JP
WALGA President

President's Contacts

The President's contacts since 3 December 2025 and scheduled before 4 March 2026 are as follows:

State and Commonwealth Government Relations

- National Emergency Management Ministers Meeting
- Hon Paul Papalia MLA, Minister for Emergency Services; Corrective Services'; Defence Industries; Veterans; Racing and Gaming
- Australian Government Black Spot – WA Consultative Panel Meeting
- Hon Meredith Hammat MLA, Minister for Health, Mental Health

Zone Meetings

- Northern Country Zone
- Kimberley Zone
- North Metropolitan Zone
- East Metropolitan Zone
- South West Country Zone

Local Government Relations

- **State Council Meetings**
 - State Council Meeting, 3 December
 - Strategic Forum, 3 December
 - Corporate Governance Charter Workshop
 - State Council Information Forum, 4 February
 - Local Government House Trust
 - Finance and Services Committee
- **ALGA**
 - Board meeting, 11 September
 - Board Strategic Planning Sessions, 11-12 February
- **LGIS**
 - Internal Audit Workshop
 - JLT Management Committee Meeting
 - Risk and Compliance Meeting
 - Board Meeting, 30 January
- The Role of Mayors and Presidents
- WALGA Wrap 2025
- Shire of Augusta Margaret River, President Julia Jean Rice and CEO, Andrea Selvey
- Lord Mayor's Distress Relief Fund Board Meeting and Annual General Meeting
- City of Joondalup Mayor Daniel Kingston and CEO, James Pearson
- A WALGA Cheers
- WALGA Certificate 3 Virtual Graduation

GREAT SOUTHERN SPORT AND RECREATION GROUP MINUTES

Thursday 26th February 2026

Kojonup Sporting Complex

Meeting opened: 10:50am **Chairperson:** Cr Kerryn Mickle**Attendance:**

Attendee:	Organisation:	Attendee:	Organisation:
Cr Kate Johnston	Shire of Kent	Warren Sheard	Shire of Plantagenet
Cr Peter Callaghan	Shire of Gnowangerup	Nicole Selesnew	Shire of Plantagenet
Rob Westerberg	Shire of Denmark	Penny Wells	Shire of Gnowangerup
Laura Middleton	Shire of Denmark	Stacey Smith	Shire of Kojonup
Jenny Cristenelli	Shire of Cranbrook	Cr Connie Witham	Shire of Broomehill Tambellup
Judith Want	City of Albany	Pam Hul	Shire of Broomehill Tambellup
Kirsty Flugge	Shire of Katanning	Cr Ian Garstone	Shire of Woodanilling
Stuart Drummond	Shire of Gnowangerup	Anthony Middleton	Shire of Plantagenet
Mel Eastough	CITS	Charmaine Wisewould	Shire of Jerramungup
Cr Paul Totino	Shire of Katanning	Kylie Severin	CITS
Cr Ian Clarke	City of Albany	Cr Kerryn Mickle	Shire of Kojonup
Julia Scriven	CITS	Cr Cherilyne Michael	Shire of Kojonup
Cr Kim Tyrer	Shire of Plantagenet	Boyd Rae	Active Farmers
Mitch Green	City of Albany	Simon Barras	City of Albany
Apologies			
Cr Craig Dewar	Shire of Broomehill Tambellup	David Nicholson	Shire of Gnowangerup
Grant Thompson	Shire of Kojonup	Charmaine Wisewould	Shire of Jerramungup
Cr Lauren Lehman	Shire of Cranbrook	Martin Cuthbert	Shire of Jerramungup
Christie Smith	Shire of Kent	Cr Neil Foreman	Shire of Jerramungup

1. Introductions

Round table introductions

Previous Minutes: Accepted as true and accurate.**2. Presentation – Active Farmers****Presenter:** Boyd Rae**Overview:** Addressing a regional need through active recreation in the Great Southern**5. Local Government project tracking**

- See attached
- Shire of Kent
- City of Albany
 - o Tennis Centre Stage 2 – progressing; RFQ issued for lighting.
 - o Albany Golf Club reticulation project – completed.
 - o Centennial Park Oval B – LED upgrade; Focus WA consultant audit completed.
 - o Sport & Recreation Strategy – draft report in design phase; high-level strategic priorities identified.
 - o Albany Whaling Station Dual-Use Trail – concept plan to extend trail from Albany to the Whaling Station.
 - o Heritage Trail – underway, expected to open mid-late 2026.
- Shire of Katanning
 - o Country Club Tennis Courts – completed, with significant contribution from local businesses.
 - o Club Development – ongoing.
 - o 24/7 Gym – in planning phase.

- Upgrade to top oval facilities – two ablution blocks purchased.
- Harmony Festival – whole-of-community celebration.
- Winter/Summer sport transition – busy period.
- Shire of Gnowangerup
 - Cricket nets – completed.
 - Wild Gravel event – Tourism WA funding secured; awaiting CITS events funding.
 - Expanding events including “Untamed” night event.
 - Opportunities for surrounding towns to participate and benefit.
 - Youth precinct – progressing.
 - Youth Development Officer – engaged to support youth not currently involved in organised sports.
- Shire of Denmark
 - Berridge Park – design and construct awarded to Convict; stakeholder consultation with skate and arts communities. Construction stage – expected to commence in August.
 - Turner Road – awaiting outcome of clearing permit.
 - Surf Club precinct – completed; disability access pending.
 - Peaceful Bay – outdoor gym installation
 - Future-proofing – ongoing work on green space and court space needs.
- Shire of Plantagenet
 - Wilson Park precinct – currently out to tender.
 - Swimming pool redevelopment – detailed design phase; preparing tender for construction.
 - Frost Park / Sounness Park Master Plan – nearing completion.
- Shire of Woodanilling
 - Centenary Park – new play equipment installed.
 - Bloom Festival – Woodanilling hosting the festival opening.
- Shire of Broomehill Tambellup
 - Youth facilities – quotes for building works obtained.
 - Tambellup lighting – quotes received; costs currently prohibitive.
 - Tambellup tennis lighting – progressing.
 - Trails – interpretation drafts prepared; May Carter engaged to complete work.
 - Ten-year footpath plan – includes integration of trails.
 - Water supply – dams nearly dry in Broomehill and Tambellup; working with DWER.
 - Water strategy – under development.
- Shire of Cranbrook
 - Town heritage trail – progressing.
 - Bowling green – completed; shelter installation next.
 - Cranbrook Show – focus on programs for young farmers.
 - Youth Week – activities planned.
 - Skate park – design review underway for 2026/27.
 - Seniors gym group – successful.
- Shire of Kojonup
 - Hockey lights – scheduled for upgrade.
 - Community screen – to be installed.
 - Seasonal sporting transition – ongoing.
 - Cricket nets – upgraded by local club.
 - Races – successful event.

6. General Business

Department of Creative Industries, Tourism and Sport – Mel Eastough

- Encouraged LGs to progress with planning in preparation for possible future funding rounds
- Active Regional Communities funding currently open – up to \$5000
- Staff updates – Alyssa Tollec finishing with CITS
- Regional club development plan being developed – JS will contact LGs to confirm club development needs

Actions summary

#	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY
1	Distribute Kidsport promotional material to LGs	JS

Next meeting: 30th July 2026 - Shire of Plantagenet

Closed: 12:10pm

Local Emergency Management Committee

Combined;

Shire of Katanning



Shire of Woodanilling



**Minutes of Meeting, held on
Wednesday 04 March 2026 at the
Shire of Katanning Council Chambers,
Austral Terrace Katanning**

Partner Local Governments, Supporting Agencies, Committee and Community delegates are invited to attend the combined Local Emergency Management Committee meeting as noted above.

Provisions for remote attendance through MS Teams can be made available on request.

Local Emergency Management Committee

MINUTES

Date 04 March 2026
Location Shire of Katanning Council Chambers
Time 2:00pm
Videoconference link: Available on Request

39. *Functions of local emergency management committees*

- (a) *to advise and assist the local government in ensuring that local emergency management arrangements are established for its district.*
- (b) *to liaise with public authorities and persons in the development, review and testing of local emergency management arrangements; and*
- (c) *to carry out other emergency management activities as directed by the SEMC or prescribed by the regulations.*

The hosting Local Government CEO or delegate shall preside over the meeting.

1. Opening and Welcome

The presiding member declared the meeting open at 2:05pm.

"I would like to begin by acknowledging the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we meet today, and pay my respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. I extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people here today."

2. Attendance and Apologies

Attendees:

- Anika Serer – CEO Shire of Woodanilling
- Cindy Pearce – CESM Shire of Katanning / Woodanilling
- Kristy D'Aprile – Shire President, Shire of Katanning
- Graham Barnes – General Manager, Shire of Katanning
- John Paul Collins – DPIRD
- Keira Van Der Wal – Katanning Primary School
- Tony Pedlow – Water Corp
- Anthony Caracatsanis – Katanning Police
- Derek Jones – Emergency Management Consultant
- Sue McDougall – CWA
- Roy Parsons – DFES (MS Teams)

Apologies:

- Tina Jones - Dept of Health
- Mitch Davies – DBCA
- Ethan Gracomel – DBCA
- Cr Marshall – Shire of Woodanilling
- Hanna Wilson – Shire of Woodanilling
- Kelly Trinne – Regional Coordinator, Great Southern

Minute Taker: Taryn Human, Shire of Katanning

3. Disclosure of Interests

Identify real, perceived or potential conflicts of interest experienced by any member in relation to the items on the agenda. These should be declared now and if possible, raised with the chairperson prior to the meeting to determine the appropriate way to manage the conflict.

4. Guest Presentations

Risk Register Workshop – Derek Jones

5. Confirmation of the minutes

That the Minutes of the Local Emergency Management Committee Meeting held on 10 December 2025 in Woodanilling be confirmed as a true record of proceedings.

Moved: Cindy Pearce

Seconded: Kristy D'Aprile

6. Review of Action list and business arising

Item	Owner	Status
Bushfire Mitigation Program	Peter Klein	WALGA have decided not to continue with the position leaving Katg BHT and Koj without a BRMC to spend funding allocation.
Exercise – Flood event.	Lynda Elms and Cindy Pearce	A desktop will be facilitated for next year 2026 (May)
STAND Project	Cindy Pearce	Waiting to hear when this will be implemented. – Katanning Shire

		Office / Woodanilling Sports Pavilion.
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7. Correspondence

7.1 Correspondence In

- Katanning Senior Highschool request for the LEMC Contact and Resources List – CESM
- Recovery Coordinator Training – Shire of Kent - Nyabing (funded by AWARE Funding) – CESM
- Telstra Outage Hopetoun area 24/2

7.2 Correspondence Out

- Minutes from the previous meeting held on 10 December 2025 circulated. - CESM
- Correspondence in relation to the Risk Register Workshop – Derek Jones - CESM
- Contact and Resources List forwarded to the Katanning Senior Highschool - CESM
- Notice of Meeting and Agenda items for this meeting - CESM
- Kelly Trinne – Communities Report – see attached - CESM
- Main Roads Notification – road closure – section of the Albany Hwy and South Coast Hwy 22/1 - CESM
- Earthquake Flyer During and After information to Shires for circulation through social media - CESM
- Email to committee in relation to the Telstra Outage in the Hopetoun area 24/02 CESM
- Feedback required from DFES Planning Policy Department in relation to proposed **Bushfire Place of Last Resort**. Local CESM made a submission with information being forwarded to CEOs to make a submission.
- ROAC Upper Great Southern, received Contact and Resources List as per request previous meeting. CESM

7.3 Information tabled.

8. Review of LEMC membership and contact list updates

Updates are invited from attendees and agencies.

- Nil.

9. Local Emergency Management (standing items)

9.1 Post Incident Reports – discussion and note any outcomes to be actioned.

9.2 Post Exercise Reports – discussion and note any outcomes to be actioned.

Nil.

9.3 Exercise – discuss objectives (what needs to be achieved) and dates.

Nil.

9.4 Review Local Emergency Management Arrangements – updates as required

Nil.

9.5 Risk management update – monitor and review, emerging risks, mitigation.

Nil.

9.6 Review LEMC Business Plan – Plan needs to be implemented over the 2 Local Governments.

- **A plan has been sourced though need to run it past the DEMA before bringing it to the LEMC for feedback and endorsement.**

10. Agenda Items

- Engage with Ausgold in relation to what they require from our local emergency services and what services they will have in place. This was discussed at a meeting with Ausgold approx 7 years ago. CESM

11. Agency/Member Reports

Members to consider:

1. *What is your current capability for managing incidents/responses? (do you have enough trained and/or experienced people, resources)*
2. *What is your capacity (such as volunteer numbers) and resources looking like for the future? Do you have a volunteer recruitment strategy?*
3. *Are there any new or emerging risks which might impact on your organisation (changes to legislation, seasonal outlooks, new industrial developments)*
4. *Do you have any exercises planned? Can other agencies attend to participate or observe?*
5. *If you have had any incidents or exercises what were the lessons identified – are any of these common to other organisations?*
6. *Thinking about your community/ies, how well prepared are they to respond to your hazard/emergency*
7. *What community engagement activities have you carried out / have planned*
8. *How resilient do you think your community is for your hazards and what could be done to improve community resilience?*

12. General Business

- John Paul – Report Attached.
- Cindy Pearce

The mitigation work through MAF funding to reduce the fuel loading on the block corner Blantyre and Bokerup Street has been completed. With some positive feedback from the local community to the contractor engaged to complete the works.

The Local Government Grant submission has been completed and will be submitted for both Shires in March. Katanning are requesting reimbursement for the overspend to upgrade the Central Brigade station. Woodanilling are requesting Capital funding for 1 new

appliance station (single bay shed) at Kenmare and 1 new station (single bay shed) at Woodanilling Central to replace the current appliance housing that is located within the shire depot. Woodanilling have also applied again this year for an additional appliance for the western side of the shire due to the infrastructure in the area.

Some of you may be aware, I handed in my resignation earlier last month and I finish up at the end of April, once fire season has finished. I would like to thank you all for your support over the past 15 years and wish you all the best in the future. A few stats on the role – currently the longest serving CESM in the State and have worked under 19 CEOs and covered 5 Local Governments.

- Anthony Caracatsanis
Officer in charge Dave Costello will commence in April 2026.
- Anika Serer
Recruitment for Cindy's position has commenced, and appreciation was extended to Cindy Pearce for her 15 years of dedicated service. She will be greatly missed.
- Kristy D'Aprile
Cindy was thanked for her service to the Shire and wished all the best for the future.

Risk Register Workshop

- Presentation attached.

13. Next Meeting

LEMC calendar

Proposed calendar dates for LEMC 2025

Date	Activity	Venue	Comment
February 2025 – March 2025	LEMC Meeting	Katanning	
May 2025	LEMC Meeting	Woodanilling	13 May 2026
September 2025	LEMC Meeting	Katanning	
December 2025	LEMC Meeting	Woodanilling	

14. Meeting Closure

The meeting was declared closed at 2:20pm, with attendees to participate in a discussion exercise to follow.

SHIRES OF KATANNING & WOODANILLING

RISK TREATMENT WORKSHOP – MARCH 2026

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

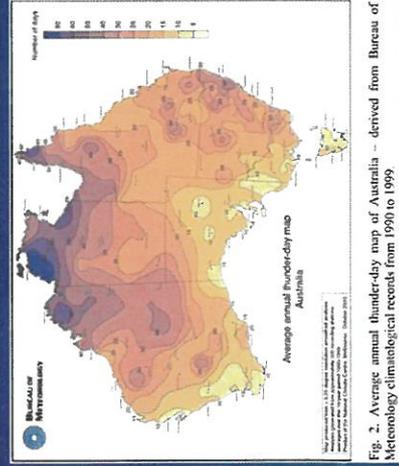
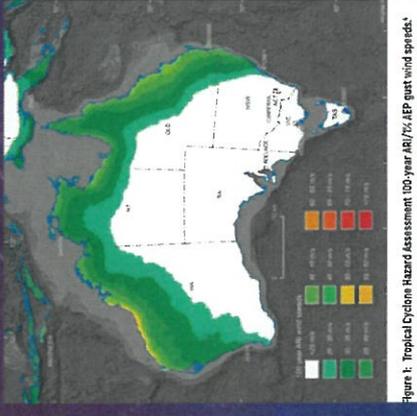
- Previous workshops have risk undertaken assessments for Shires of Katanning and/or Woodanilling
- Workshop identified six main hazards for each local government
- 2024 saw shire investigate hazards and risks – Katanning (Fire) and Woodanilling (Storms)

Katanning	Woodanilling
Fire	0/14
Storm	21/16
Flood	0/39
Heatwave	8/9
Animal and Pest Disease	6/7
Earthquake	0/14

SEVERE WEATHER

Severe Weather – Floods, Storms and Cyclones

- A riverine flood occurs when water levels rise over the top of riverbanks due to excessive rain from weather systems producing widespread heavy rainfall. The flooding of rivers, creeks, lakes and basins following heavy rainfall is the most common form of flooding in WA.
- Flash flooding, is generally defined as flooding occurring within approximately six hours of rain, usually from relatively short intense bursts of rainfall (e.g. thunderstorms) and is characterised by rapid rises in water-levels.



Warning Level	Avg Wind - Threshold	Gust - Threshold
Damaging Winds	63kmh	90kmh
Destructive Winds	89kmh	125kmh
Thunderstorms		
Severe		90kmh
Very Dangerous		125kmh

SEVERE WEATHER

Wind Speeds

2025 – Katanning Research Station

Highest Gust 76kmh Aug

Albany 81km July

Avg All Gusts 65kmh

Albany 69km

Daily Rainfall Records - Kojonup

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	ANNUAL
High Max (°C)	44.2	43.2	38.6	36.1	32.2	22.8	21.5	24.6	27.6	33.2	38.8	40.1	44.2
Low Max (°C)	16.4	15.4	13.9	10.6	9.0	8.0	7.4	7.8	7.8	9.0	9.8	15.3	7.4
High Min (°C)	25.5	25.2	22.8	22.8	18.6	13.8	12.8	12.5	13.2	18.6	23.3	22.0	25.5
Low Min (°C)	4.0	3.9	2.4	2.2	-3.5	-2.5	-2.6	-1.4	-1.0	-0.2	0.0	2.2	-3.5
High Rain (mm)	113.6	92.7	69.9	78.0	81.2	57.7	46.5	47.2	34.6	44.7	48.8	59.7	113.6

Jan 21 – 1982
 Feb 17 – 1955
 Mar 5 – 1956
 April 2 – 2005

SEVERE WEATHER

LEMA/Local Role

Building codes

Resilience

Evacuation Centre identification

Local drainage networks

ISG



ANIMAL AND PLANT DISEASE



- an “Emergency Animal Disease” – (e.g. Foot and Mouth Disease or Avian Influenza)
- an “Emergency Plant Pest” –Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed (EPPRD) for Australia – (e.g. Karnal Bunt or Khapra Beetle)
- a “Declared Pest” – as defined in the Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007. An endemic animal or plant pest or disease that is occurring in such a fulminate form that an emergency response is required to ensure that it does not become a large-scale epidemic within Western Australia



ANIMAL AND PLANT DISEASE

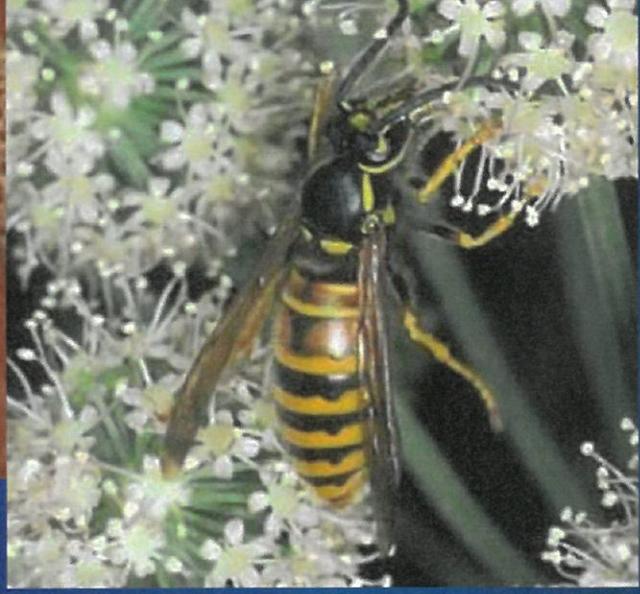
Current Status

- 2 incidents @ Active Status
- 9 incidents @ Look and Report Status
- 1 incidents @ Advice Status

Educate – Prevent - Eradicate – Containment - Educate

LEMA/Local Role

- Identify local risk level
- Resource List
- ICC/FCP Identified
- ISG if required



HEATWAVE

A heatwave is a period of abnormally and uncomfortably hot weather, that is unusual for the location and which could impact on human health, infrastructure and services

- is protracted and forecast to occur for longer than 3 days at a level of extreme (EHF)
- requires a significant coordinated response



Know your warnings this

heatwave season



Low intensity heatwave

- Most frequent during summer
- Most people can cope during these heatwaves
- We don't issue warnings for this heatwave category

Severe heatwave

- Less frequent
- Likely to be more challenging for vulnerable people e.g. the elderly and people with health conditions
- We issue warnings for this heatwave category

Extreme heatwave

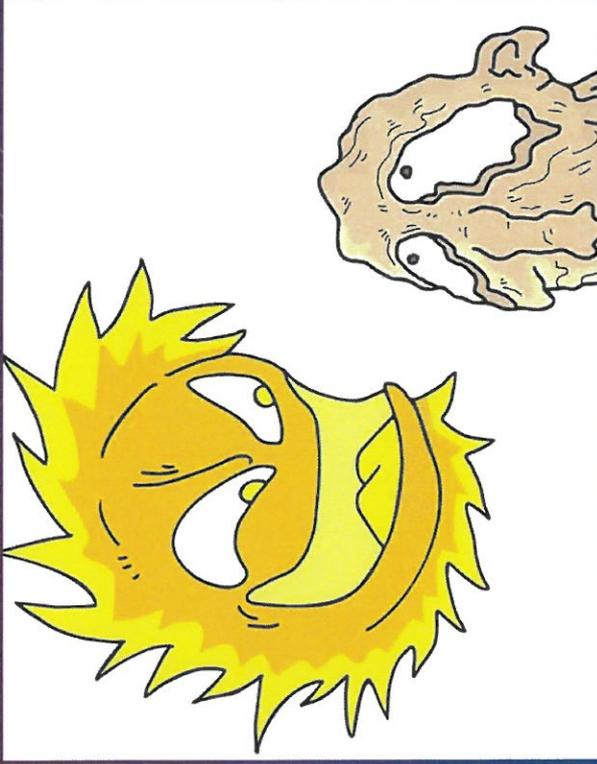
- Rare
- People who don't take precautions to keep cool are at risk
- Take extra precautions if you work or exercise outdoors
- We issue warnings for this heatwave category

HEATWAVE

BOM – Dept of Health – Allied Agencies

LEMA/Local Role

- Identify local risk level
- Pre-plan for 6-day event
- Workforce - staff fatigue and/or increased demand for care
- Emergency Services ability to respond
- Public utilities
- Local resilience – impact on community groups
- National Warning System in place for Heatwave
- ISG if required



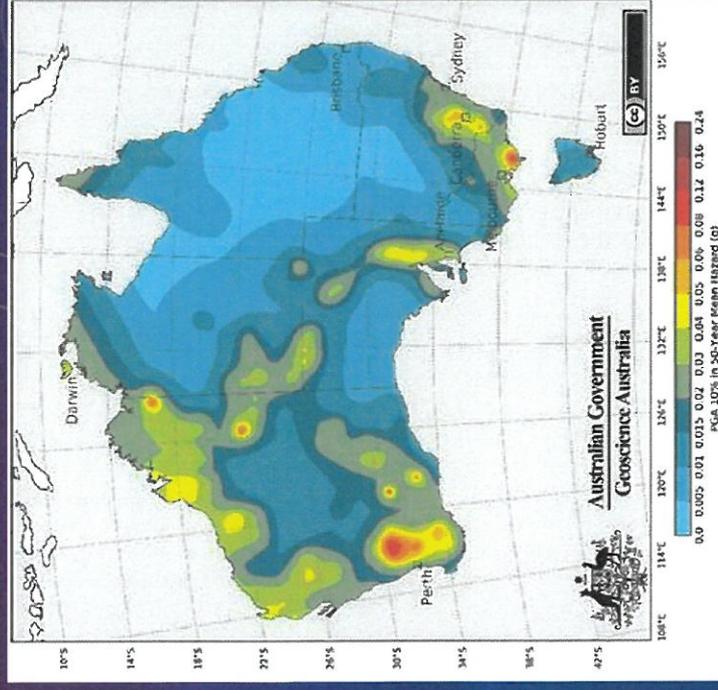
EARTHQUAKE

A sudden release of energy resulting in ground shaking.

Western Australia sits in middle of a plate – but our earthquakes generally, the result of plate movements.

Less common and don't follow patterns.

Geoscience mapped 10% chance of significant event in next 50years.



EARTHQUAKE

Broome (off shore) – 2019 – magnitude 6.6

Meckering – 1968 – magnitude 6.5

Cadoux – 1979 – magnitude 6.1 - \$3.8m damage

Lake Muir – 2018 – magnitude 5.7

Gnowangerup – 2023 – magnitude 5.2

Kalgoorlie – 2010 – magnitude 5.0

Gnowangerup – 2023 – magnitude 5.2 – house destroyed

3.0 – Light – Often felt, little damage (130,000)

5.0 – Strong – possible damage (1,300)

7.0 – Great – Serious damage (10-20)



ALL HAZARDS - TODAY

Local Area

- What currently happens?
- Rate effectiveness of each
- Rate application of each
- What else could/can/should be done?

Katanning	Woodanilling
Fire	Fire
5/11	0/14
Storm	Storm
8/10	21/16
Flood	Flood
0/15	0/39
Heatwave	Heatwave
3/3	8/9
Animal and Pest Disease	Animal and Plant Disease
5/6	6/7
Earthquake	Earthquake
0/14	0/14

SO, WHAT'S NEXT?

- Digest information provided
- Formulate report
- Report provided to LEMC via Cindy Pearce
- Includes recommendations for future



Emergency Relief and Support

LEMC REPORT FOR DISTRIBUTION

3rd Quarter 2025 - 2026

Regional Emergency Relief and Support contact

Activation of Emergency Relief and Support (ERS) services is via
Communities Emergency Operations Coordinator (EOC)
M: 0418 943 835 and Email: emergencyservices@communities.wa.gov.au

Regional Coordinator	Kelly Trinne – 0432 831 689 kelly.trinne@communities.wa.gov.au
Regional Officer	Jo Spadaccini – 0429 102 614 jo.spadaccini@communities.wa.gov.au
Regional Manager	Mark Schorer – 0429 108 226 mark.schorer@communities.wa.gov.au

Region specific update

Emergency Food - Go Bags

- In mid-2025 ERS introduced an exciting new Go Bags initiative — designed to enhance comfort, dignity, and practical support for people displaced during emergencies.

🌿 Go Bags introduced included:

- 📦 Personal Requisites/Hygiene Go Bags
- 🛏 Sleeping/Bedding Go Bags

- In addition, a new range of Emergency Food Go Bags have been implemented to complement the existing range of Go Bags, ensuring rapid deployment and coordinated support across the State during emergency events.

🌿 What is inside an Emergency Food Go Bag

- 2 x Main Meals
- 1 x Single Serve Noodles
- 1 x Single Serve Rice
- 1 x Breakfast Muesli
- 4 x Energy Bars
- 2 x Flameless Heater Bags
- 2 x Cutlery Sets
- 1 x Coffee

- 1 x Tea
- 3 x Sugar
- 3 x Creamer
- 1 x Hydration Drink
- 1 x Hot Chocolate

Prepositioning of Emergency Relief and Support Supplies

- ERS Regional Coordinators are working with Local Governments across the State to assess the need to preposition small quantities of ERS emergency relief and support supplies at Evacuation Centre facilities.
- Prepositioning of supplies will assist Local Government staff to support evacuees during the initial states of emergency events.

Emergency Relief and Support update

State Recovery Changes

- The Department of Communities has new roles and responsibilities under the State Emergency Management Arrangements for Recovery, following the changes endorsed by SEMC on 4 December 2025.
- To support implementation of these new roles, Communities is actively working with local governments, the Community Services Sector and relevant government agencies to understand the new State Recovery roles and responsibilities to support the delivery of local led recovery programs.
- Communities will participate in Local Government recovery planning and activities to ensure services are tailored to the needs and strengths of the community.
- Communities can provide support through a range of activities under the State Support Plan, either directly or in collaboration with State and Local partners, to deliver practical assistance, wellbeing services, and social supports.
- Communities ERS approach to recovery support considers the psychosocial impacts, complexity, and context of any hazard, ensuring assistance is tailored accordingly along with information and referral services to connect impacted individuals with appropriate assistance and resources.

Evacuation Centres

- The SEMC has the WA Community Evacuation in Emergencies Guideline open for Feedback until 20 February 2026. You can submit your comments through <https://engagewaem.com.au/evacuation-guideline>
- The review of community evacuation guidelines has highlighted the need for greater clarity on how evacuation centres are identified, activated, and managed.
- Communities responsibility is to maintain a register of endorsed community facilities and ensure they are ready to be activated. In collaboration with local government,

Communities reviews facilities regularly and manages service delivery within the centre once activated.

- During an emergency event, the Hazard Management Agency engages with Local Government and Communities to assess the risks of and activate an evacuation centre.
- As a suggestion for the LEMC, Communities and the Local Government can review and confirm the register of endorsed facilities before the onset of each high threat season, to ensure they meet the needs of all Hazard Management Agencies.

High threat Season

- ERS is actively supporting communities during this high-threat season by assisting with evacuation centres, providing immediate accommodation, and coordinating early recovery planning in alignment with Local Government.
- ERS has commenced supporting community evacuations with the new Go Bags, with positive feedback received to date, noting the hygiene packs are popular to support people to freshen up, and the air bed, pillow and sleeping bag has been a welcome take home pack.



Reminder to all Hazard Management Agencies / Controlling Agencies

- To activate the State Support Plan - Emergency Relief and Support and the Communities team - please call 0418 943 835. All ISG, IMT and other meeting invites can be sent to emergencyservices@communities.wa.gov.au email box.

Response October to January

Activations

ERS were activated for and responded to twenty-two (22) incidents as below:

- Four (4) Single House Fires
- Eleven (11) Bushfires
- Five (5) Complex Bushfires
- Two (2) Cyclones

October 2025 - One (1) Incident

- 16/10/2025 AP East Pilbara Complex Fire

November 2025 - Two (2) Incidents

- 4/11/2025 Tammin Bushfire Cunderdin - Nov 25
- 30/11/2025 Single House Fire

December 2025 - Eleven (11) Incidents

- 01/12/2025 Single House Fire
- 10/12/2025 Single House Fire

- 11/12/2025 Kenwick Bushfire
- 11/12/2025 Upper Swan Bushfire
- 15/12/2025 Eneabba Complex
- 15/12/2025 Gingin Complex Fire
- 15/12/2025 Nambeelup Bushfire
- 16/12/2025 Mindarabin Bushfire
- 25/12/2025 Boddington Bushfire
- 30/12/2025 Wellesley Bushfire
- 29/12/2025 Tropical Cyclone Hayley

January 2026 – Eight (8) Incidents

- 1/01/2026 Kalamunda Bushfire
- 2/01/2026 Boya Bushfire
- 2/01/2026 Single House Fire
- 7/01/2026 High Wycombe Bushfire
- 19/01/2026 South Coast (Lake King Newdegate) Complex Fires
- 21/01/2026 Collie Bushfire
- 22/01/2026 Boddington complex Fires
- 23/01/2026 Tropical Cyclone Luana

**LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
DISTRICT EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ADVISOR REPORT
January to March 2026**

STATE NEWS

The last meeting of the State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) was held 4th December 2025. **The next meeting is the 12 March 2026.** SEMC Communiqués can be found [here](#).

Local Emergency Management Arrangements Improvement Project

The new templates for the LEMA Improvement Project are going to the next SEMC Meeting for approval. Watch this space!

2026-2029 Comprehensive Framework Review

The State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) has initiated a comprehensive review of the State Emergency Management Policy, Plan, Procedure and Glossary (EM Framework) to ensure that it remains effective, adaptable, and fit-for-purpose in addressing current and emerging risks.

In December 2025, SEMC adopted five principles and identified four focus areas for the review designed to guide review scope and decisions, as well as ensure the review remains responsive to sector needs while targeting systemic gaps and opportunities for improvement.

Review Principles:

- make the framework simplified and functional
- clarify roles and responsibilities
- be outcomes-focused
- integrate preparedness and assurance
- remain agile and forward-looking

Review Focus Areas:

- Incorporation of systemic risk and resilience in framework
- Integrated preparedness and assurance framework
- Local capacity and community resilience
- EM roles and responsibilities review

Four sector-wide workshops with emergency management agencies have been completed to refine the problem statement, outcomes, and scope for each focus area and to shape next steps for project planning. The workshop outcomes will inform a high-level project plan, which will outline focus area scopes, the overall program approach, and resourcing requirements, and will be submitted to SEMC in March 2026 for endorsement.

Comprehensive Review Schedule of State EM Documents

The following State EM documents and projects are currently accepting feedback:

- **Local Government EM Knowledge Hub – closes 27 March 2026.**
- WA Community Evacuation in Emergencies Guideline – initial consultation closes 20 February 2026.

The following State EM document consultation period has closed and is currently pending endorsement from SEMC subcommittees before progressing to SEMC for approval:

- SHP - HAZMAT (Annex B - SPRED)

The following State EM documents are due to commence comprehensive review in 2026 for a 2027 SEMC approval.

- Green highlights – comprehensive review likely to commence in the second half of 2026, meaning broad consultation will likely not commence until early 2027.
- SHP – Cyber Security and Hostile Act are due for broad consultation before June 2026.
- Remaining plans will likely commence broad consultation sometime in 2026.

WA Community Evacuation in Emergencies Arrangements – initial feedback open until 20 Feb 2026	SHP – Collapse
SHP – Nuclear Powered Warship (NPW)	SHP – Maritime Environmental Emergencies (MEE)
SHP – Cyber Security	SHP – Tsunami
SHP – Hostile Act	SSP – Freight and Resupply
SHP – Animal and Plant Biosecurity	SSP – Emergency Public Information
SHP – Earthquake	WA Managing Exercises Guidelines (due likely to be pushed back to 2027)
Impact Statement Guide	Local Recovery Guidelines
Communicating in Recovery Guideline (will form part of SSP – Emergency Public Information review)	SHP – Heatwave
SHP – Terrorist Act	Traffic Management in Emergencies Guideline
District Emergency Management Committee (DEMC) Handbook	Comprehensive review of the State EM Framework (State EM Policy, Plan, Procedure and Glossary)

Updated plans can be found on the SEMC website, along with a summary of amendments.

DISTRICT NEWS

The last Great Southern District Emergency Management Committee meeting was held on the 22nd October 2025 the next meeting will be held on the 18 March 2026.

Training Opportunities

WALGA Local Recovery Coordinator Training - Nyabing, Shire of Kent

Face-to-face training at [The Nyabing Community Hub](#), 18 Richmond St, Nyabing WA 6341:

Recovery Coordinators Course in Local Government – Day 1
Monday, 23 March 2026 | 9:00am–4:30pm

Recovery Coordinators Course in Local Government – Day 2
Tuesday, 24 March 2026 | 9:00am–4:30pm

If any local governments/organisation wishes to send additional attendees, please contact me directly at 0436 668 242 or via ryan.sutherland@dfes.wa.gov.au to ensure availability.

NOTE: under the revised Recovery Framework Local Governments must ensure the preparation and maintenance of LEMA includes the identification and training of a Local Recovery Coordinator(s). More than one LRC can be identified.

For further information about this course: [WALGA Recovery Coordinators course](#)

Community Preparedness

Summer Safety – Fire, Heat and Community Care

This February, we're focusing on Summer Safety – Fire, Heat and Community Care. February can be the hottest month of the year, and with prolonged heat comes fatigue, complacency, and an increased risk of fast-moving bushfires.

By staying vigilant and supporting one another, we can help protect families, neighbours, and communities.

Heatwave

For more information about preparing for and managing in extreme heat, visit [HealthyWA](#) and you can also find many fact sheets here [Extreme heat and heatwave resources for the community](#)

Know the signs of heat-related illness and act fast



Dehydration

Feeling thirsty, a dry mouth, and darker urine.



Treatment

Rest in a cool area, remove excess clothing and drink water.



Heat stress

Pale skin, excess sweating or no sweating, and dark urine.



Treatment

Lie in cool area and remove excess clothing. Apply wet cloths, cold water or wrapped icepacks to the skin (armpits and groin) and drink water. Call triple zero (000) if symptoms do not improve in 30 minutes.



Heat stroke

Confusion, incoherent speech, abnormal walking, seizures or coma.



Heat stroke is a life-threatening medical emergency. Immediately call triple zero (000).

TeleRedi

West Australians are also urged to register for TeleRedi – a free welfare check service delivered by the Department of Health in partnership with the [Australian Red Cross \(external site\)](#).

Registered participants who may be at higher risk during officially declared heatwaves receive regular check-in calls from trained Australian Red Cross volunteers. If a call goes unanswered or a person appears unwell or distressed, an escalation process is activated to support their safety and wellbeing.

TeleRedi is important for:

- people living alone
- older people
- people living with disability or managing chronic health conditions



- people recovering from illness or injury
- individuals experiencing mental health challenges.

Carers of vulnerable people are also encouraged to register for the service. Registration is simple, via [Microsoft Forms \(external site\)](#) or by phone – 1800 188 071. For more information about TeleRedi, visit the [Australian Red Cross website \(external site\)](#).

GRANT PROGRAM UPDATES

AWARE

The annual AWARE competitive grant program aims to enhance West Australia's emergency management arrangements by investing in capacity building and preparedness activities at a local level. Only Western Australian local governments are eligible to apply for AWARE grants. Local governments are encouraged to collaborate and submit joint applications. To be eligible, activities must address at least one or more of the following four criteria:

- further the emergency risk management process
- facilitate capability-based exercises
- assist in reviewing Local Emergency Management Arrangements
- deliver emergency management training, events or forums

The opening dates for this year's round are yet to be finalised and will be published on our website once confirmed. In the meantime, local governments are encouraged to review the AWARE Guidelines and associated program documentation to familiarise themselves with the application requirements.

DRF ROUND FOUR

The Disaster Ready Fund (DRF) is the Australian Government's flagship disaster resilience and risk reduction initiative, which will deliver up to \$200 million of Commonwealth funding annually from 1 July 2023 to establish a comprehensive set of disaster resilience and mitigation projects across Australia, in partnership with Australian state, territory and local governments. The intended outcome of the program is communities that are better informed, more resilient, and less exposed to future natural disaster risks and impacts in the long term, across the built, social, natural and economic domains.

The **Fourth round of DRF is expected to open in late March 2026**, with information and associated documentation to be published on the Disaster Ready Fund section of our website once available. To be eligible for DRF, the primary focus of the proposed project must be on how it will increase the understanding of natural disaster impacts, build resilience to future natural disasters, and/or reduce natural disaster risk, in line with the DRF objectives.

The Commonwealth has provided overarching feedback on Round Three applications. This information is available here: <https://publications.dfes.wa.gov.au/publications/drf-round-three-feedback-and-opportunities-for-improvement-from-nema>.

To be considered for funding, project proposals must satisfy the grant amount, project duration, and co-contribution requirements, meet the eligibility criteria, address all the assessment criteria, and provide the required evidence as set out in the respective round Guidelines.

LOCAL NEWS

Optus Emergency Response Information – in an emergency if Optus services are impacted call the following numbers:

0434 679 690 and 0448 114 039 - Primary & Backup. Also on a satellite service 0410795298 if terrestrial networks are inoperative.



Emergency Waste Management Plan Template

WALGA has been working with DFES and Local Government, to develop a Template Emergency Waste Management Plan.

There have been a range of situations in Western Australia where recovery efforts have been hampered by challenges associated with emergency waste management. Ineffective emergency waste management has the potential to significantly delay recovery efforts, present a considerable risk to human health and the environment and increase the costs of recovery.

The Plan provides a way for Local Governments to explore, at a high level, the likely types of waste that could be generated from an event and consequent considerations and management options.

- [Emergency Waste Management Plan Template - Editable Word Doc](#)
- [Emergency Waste Management Plan Template - with example \(PDF\)](#)
- [Waste Calculator](#)

For more information and case studies visit:

<https://walga.asn.au/policy-and-advocacy/our-policy-areas/waste/programs/better-practice/emergency-management>

Responding to a potential outbreak of high pathogenic H5 avian influenza

DPIRD is leading the WA cross-agency Biosecurity Special Officers Group (BSOG) developing a joint approach on. In 2024, BSOG developed [FAQs for H5 avian influenza](#) that set out carcass disposal responsibilities as follows:

Who is responsible for the disposal of dead wild birds during an outbreak?

During an outbreak, where dead wild birds do not pose a risk to human health, they may be left where they are to minimise the potential risk of spreading the disease further. The relevant landowners or government authority will manage safe disposal of dead birds on public land where they are considered to present a risk. On private properties, subject to council local laws, owners will be able to dispose of dead birds by placing them in plastic bags in their red bin. Care should be taken to wear disposable gloves and to wash hands thoroughly after handling the dead bird.

It is up to each individual LGA to decide on how they would dispose of dead birds / wildlife as per their local situation. Homeowners within the LGA will need guidance on where to dispose of dead birds if the LGA does not approve of disposal of bagged birds in the red bin.

In the circumstance where commercial poultry are affected, DPIRD will regulate the property and provide instructions on disposal at the time of the incident.

Your WALGA representative on the BSOG committee is Rebecca Brown rbrown@walga.asn.au) if you would like further guidance on how other LGAs in WA are preparing for wild bird disposal should an outbreak occur.

WALGA is hosting an H5 Bird Flu update webinar for local government on Wednesday, 18 March from 10:00-11:00am – see details below. [click here to register](#).

Complied by: Vivienne Gardiner, viv.gardiner@dfes.wa.gov.au
District Emergency Management Advisor Great Southern DFES



LEMC & DEMC report – 1st Quarter 2025/2026

DPIRD's On-Call Coordinator Duty Phone

If needing to activate the State Support Plan: Animal Welfare in Emergencies or require assistance in the DPIRD support role of another Hazard Management Agency's incident, the contact number is **08 9368 3132**.

DPIRD's role in emergency management

- DPIRD is the Hazard Management Agency (HMA) for animal and plant pests and disease incursions. Refer to the [State Hazard Plan: Animal and Plant Biosecurity](#) for information on DPIRD's legislated roles and responsibilities.
- DPIRD is the executor of the State Support Plan for Animal Welfare in Emergencies. This includes livestock, horses, and companion animals. Refer to the [State Support Plan: Animal Welfare in Emergencies](#) for information on DPIRD's legislated roles and responsibilities.
- DPIRD may from time to time provide support to other agencies where requested. This includes administering some components of the [Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements WA](#).

Emergency Management Directorate

Learning & Development

DPIRD EM Preparedness Team are working through the emergency management training program for the 2025/2026 calendar year.

Following SEMC endorsement (March 2025) of the revised State Support Plan of Animal Welfare in Emergencies (SSP-AWIE) – DPIRD has commenced planning an exercise to test the SSP-AWIE arrangements in accordance with State Emergency Management Policy. The Exercise will be a Desktop format and will be held in Oct 2025.

Emergency Animal Disease (EAD) Preparedness

DPIRD has recently conducted a number of internal workshops focused on EAD preparedness across the preparedness, response and recovery phases to build awareness and capacity.

New Director

DPIRD's Emergency Management Directorate (EMD) has a new Director, Scott Beaton. Scott was DPIRD's Director of Work, Health, Safety & Wellbeing and has a background and experience in emergency management.

Current Vacancies

The EM Directorate has gone through a significant restructure. DPRD is currently advertising two new positions being Assistant Director, Emergency Preparedness and Assistant Director, Emergency Coordination.

Additionally, DPIRD will be advertising shortly a Learning and Development Coordinator position which has recently become vacant due to a resignation.

National alerts and investigations

Avian Influenza

CURRENT STATUS in WA: Absent – no known detections

Responses to outbreaks of H7 high pathogenic avian influenza are currently underway in Victoria, New South Wales, and the ACT. Note that this is not the H5 strain currently causing concern globally. DPIRD is monitoring the situation and undertaking preparedness

activities. Also, DPIRD is providing personnel and resources to support jurisdictions with confirmed outbreaks. Poultry producers and owners are encouraged to view our [avian influenza page](#) for information on preparedness and detection.

Tomato brown rugose fruit virus

CURRENT STATUS IN WA: Absent – no known detections

A highly contagious plant virus affecting tomatoes, capsicums, and chillies. It has been detected in South Australia in August 2024. It presents a significant risk to growers and the industry if established. No known detections in Western Australia currently. Industry and backyard growers are encouraged to recognise and report signs and symptoms of the virus if found. Information is available on our [tomato brown rugose fruit virus page](#).

Animal Welfare in Emergencies

DPIRD is the executor of the State Support Plan for Animal Welfare in Emergencies (AWiE). Please note the following important notices regarding AWiE for district and local representatives:

- Please refer to DPIRD's [animal welfare](#) section of our website for resources, support, and contacts. Local governments can reach out to our Incident and Emergency Management Branch if they require advice and support for the development of their PAWE (contact emergencymanagement@dpiird.wa.gov.au).
- DPIRD's Incident and Emergency Management Branch is undertaking preparedness and response activities where activated under the [State Support Plan - Animal Welfare in Emergencies](#).
- DPIRD is working with the SEMC to finalise responses to feedback on the proposed improvements to the [State Support Plan - Animal Welfare in Emergencies](#). The review is scheduled to be finalised in late 2025.

Important Disclaimer

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DPIRD EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW

Emergency Coordination Overview	
Reporting Period:	1 st Quarter 25-26
Emergency Activations and Declarations	
Emergency Declarations	Nil

Incident Coordination Overview				
Animal and Plant Based Biosecurity ¹				
Incident Title	Location	Date	Incident Level ²	
African Black Sugar Ant	Perth Metro	Since Jan 2020	Level 1	
Polyphagous Shot-Hole Borer	Perth Metro	Since Sep 2021	Level 2	
Carpet Sea Squirt	Perth Metro	Since Jan 2023	Level 1	
Red Dwarf Honeybee	Pilbara Region	Since Jul 2023	Level 2	
Queensland Fruit Fly	Perth Metro	Since Nov 2024	Level 2	
Starling	Great Southern	Since Nov 2024	Level 1	
Support to Animal Welfare in Emergencies ³				
Incident Title	Region	Date	HMA	Details
Nil				
Support to Natural Hazards				
Incident Title	Region	Date	HMA	Details

DPIRD Emergency Coordinator Comments and Outlook
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DPIRD continues to manage three level 2 incidents. The Browsing Ant incident that was being managed has now achieved eradication. DPIRD Biosecurity and Emergency Management is monitoring the developing situation in Victoria related to High Pathogen Avian Influenza Outbreaks.

¹ Regarding a "Declared Pest", an incident is only listed where a formal Incident Management Team has been established.

² Incident levels as per section 5.1.5 of the State Emergency Management Plan

³ Only when the State Support Plan – Animal Welfare in Emergencies has been activated.