



SHIRE OF WOODANILLING



SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL Unconfirmed Minutes 8 April 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.

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SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL MINUTES

1. DECLARATION OF OPENING / ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS

The Shire President, Cr Thomson opened the meeting at 10.30am. Cr Thomson advised that the meeting would be recorded in accordance with current requirements.

Cr Thomson also noted that the purpose of the Special Meeting was to consider matters relating to the appointment of a recruitment agent for the Chief Executive Officer position, and that discussion would be limited to this purpose.

1.1. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

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)

Present:

Cr HR Thomson	Shire President
Cr S Vermeulen	Deputy Shire President
Cr M Trimming	
Cr I Garstone	
Cr R Marshall	
Cr K Stephens	

Officers:

Anika Serer	Chief Executive Officer
Ciara Whitmore	Customer Service Officer

Apologies:

Observers:

Brigitte Burg
Maureen Haven
Barb Ashby
Theresa Dancy
Wendy Thomas
Ralph Thomas
Chris Berry

3. RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS PUBLIC QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE

Nil.

4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A question was raised regarding the number of Chief Executive Officer resignations.

The Shire President, Cr Thomson, advised that previous resignations had been influenced by workplace dynamics and past challenges within Council. He noted that Council had been working to improve cohesion and governance practices, and that progress had been made in fostering a more constructive working environment. The Shire President further advised that the most recent resignation was due to a personal career opportunity.

Further questions were raised regarding the cost and process of recruiting a Chief Executive Officer, the requirement to engage a recruitment consultant, the role of executive staff within the organisation, and the challenges of attracting applicants to a regional local government position.

The Shire President advised that a recruitment consultant was required to assist with compliance, transparency and management of the recruitment process. It was also noted that the Chief Executive Officer is responsible for overall organisational leadership, supported by executive staff, and that recruitment challenges are influenced by the limited candidate pool and the regional nature of the position.

Additional questions were raised regarding staffing levels, operational capacity, and the maintenance and presentation of community assets.

The matters were addressed by Council.

5. PETITIONS / DEPUTATIONS / PRESENTATIONS

Nil.

6. APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Nil.

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

Nil.

8. OFFICER REPORTS

8.1 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER – RECRUITMENT PROCESS

File Reference	ADM0118
Date of Report	2 April 2026
Responsible Officer	Anika Serer, Chief Executive Officer
Author/s 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	Absolute Majority
Attachments	Attachment 8.1 – CEO Recruitment and selection, performance review and termination (DLGSC – Guidelines) Attachment 8.2 – Council Policy – Adopted Standards for CEO Recruitment, Performance and Termination Confidential Attachment 8.3 – Quotes Received <i>This matter needs to be considered in accordance with Section 5.23 (2) (e) of the Local Government Act 1995.</i>

BRIEF SUMMARY

This report is for Council to appoint a recruitment specialist for the recruitment of a Chief Executive Officer for the Shire of Woodanilling and to determine the structure and membership of the committee of Council to undertake the recruitment consultation, supported by the appointed recruitment consultant. Membership of the committee is to include an independent member, in accordance with Council Policy.

COMMENT

The *Local Government Act 1995* and associated regulations stipulate a required process to recruit a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) following the position becoming vacant. Ms Anika Serer resigned as Chief Executive Officer of the Shire of Woodanilling and will finish on 26 June 2026.

Following the resignation of the CEO, the process of appointing a new CEO is required. It is important the Shire carefully considers the role of the CEO, which includes the powers and functions of the role, the selection criteria for the position and the specific skills and experience the Shire will require of the CEO.

Council has adopted the model Adopted Standards for CEO Recruitment, Performance and Termination as contained in **Attachment 8.2**. The Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC) has guidelines referenced in **Attachment 8.1**.

Council has agreed to the following:

- Determine the selection criteria and approval of job description form;
- Advertising requirements;
- Job description form to be made available;
- Establishment of selection panel for the employment of CEO –
 - Council members;
 - Human resources consultant; and
 - At least 1 independent person.

Quotes have been sought for the Human Resources Consultants and the CEO has received two contained in **Confidential Attachment 8.3**.

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's approval for:

- a) The appointment of an independent person and an external Human Resources consultant to support the CEO Recruitment process;
- b) The proposed recruitment process (including the appointment of a selection panel) is to be undertaken to facilitate the recruitment of a new CEO.

It is at the discretion of the local government to determine the number of people on the selection panel.

STATUTORY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The process of CEO Recruitment is conducted in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1995* and the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996* and *Local Government (Administration) Amendment Regulations 2021* (CEO Standards).

Under section 5.36 (4) of the *Local Government Act 1995*, states:

5.36 Local Government Employees

- (4) *Unless subsection (5A) applies, if the position of CEO of a local government becomes vacant, it is to be advertised by the local government in the manner prescribed, and the advertisement is to contain such information with respect to the position as in prescribed.*

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There is the current Council Policy – Adopted Standards for CEO Recruitment, Performance and Termination associated with this item.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The cost to appoint a recruitment consultant can be in the range of an estimated cost between \$5,000 - \$20,000 to help fulfil the role of the Chief Executive Officer. This cost will be allocated under the GL 042040 Governance - Consulting & Relief Staff.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

‘The Woodanilling Way’

Pillar 3: Civic Leadership

- Good Governance: Upholding ethical standards, clear policies, and sound financial management.
- Leadership Development: Training Councillors, staff and community to achieve strategic goals
- Strategic Planning and Accountability: Aligning actions with the community’s vision and adapting to changing needs through regular reviews.

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

Consultation has occurred with the Shire President and the CEO to commence the process to present to Council for consideration.

RISK MANAGEMENT

If the CEO Recruitment fails to exercise due diligence in the recruitment process leading to the appointment of an unsuitable candidate, fails to establish effective Key Performance Indicators or appointing a Selection Panel and undertaking the recruitment process to appoint a CEO would lead to uncertainty, inconsistency and lack of leadership. It is assessed that the risk is “High” as reflected below.

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

Absolute Majority

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Appoints _____ to undertake the Recruitment process for the position of Chief Executive Officer for the Shire of Woodanilling;
2. Establishes a committee of Council to undertake the recruitment and selection process for the Chief Executive Officer, with the following elected members appointed – Councillors _____; and
3. Appoints _____ to be the independent member of the recruitment committee in accordance with clause 8 of the Adopted Standards for CEO Recruitment, Performance and Termination.

CLOSURE OF MEETING TO THE PUBLIC AT 11.02AM

Moved: Cr Marshall

Seconded: Cr Garstone

That in accordance with Section 5.23(2)(e) of the *Local Government Act 1995*, the meeting be closed to the public to consider confidential matters relating to the Chief Executive Officer Recruitment Process.

CARRIED 6/0

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

Against: Nil

REOPENING OF MEETING AT 11.19AM

Moved: Cr Vermeulen

Seconded: Cr Stephens

That the meeting be reopened to the public.

CARRIED 6/0

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

Against: Nil

COUNCIL RESOLUTION – 8.1 – CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER – RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Moved: Cr Marshall

Seconded: Cr Vermeulen

That Council:

1. Appoints Fitzgerald Strategies to undertake the Recruitment process for the position of Chief Executive Officer for the Shire of Woodanilling;
2. Establish a committee of Council to undertake the recruitment and selection process for the Chief Executive Officer, comprising all Councillors; and
3. Appoints Mr Mal Baxter to be the independent member of the recruitment committee in accordance with clause 8 of the Adopted Standards for CEO Recruitment, Performance and Termination.

CARRIED 6/0

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

Against: Nil

9. MOTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE BY PERMISSION OF THE COUNCIL

Nil.

10. CLOSURE OF MEETING

There being no further business the meeting closed at 11.22am.