



murchisonshire

Ancient land under brilliant skies

Agenda for the Ordinary Meeting of the

Murchison Shire Council

To be held in the Council Chambers, Carnarvon Mullewa Road, Murchison,
on Thursday **17 June 2021**, commencing at 12 noon.

Note: meeting will be conducted to meet COVID-19 restrictions.

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ATTACHMENTS

1 DECLARATION OF OPENING/ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS

Shire President declared the meeting open at.

2 RECORD OF ATTENDANCE/APOLOGIES/LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Present

Councillors

Cr R Foulkes-Taylor – President
Cr A Whitmarsh – Deputy President
Cr E Foulkes-Taylor
Cr Q Fowler
Cr P Squires

Staff

Bill Boehm – CEO
Steven Cosgrove – Community Manager / DCEO
William Herold – Works Manager

Apologies

Cr G Mead

3 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

3.1 Ordinary Council Meeting – 27 May 2021

Background

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council have previously been circulated to all Councillors.

Recommendation

That the minutes of the Ordinary Council meeting held on 27 May 2021 be confirmed as an accurate record of proceedings.

Voting Requirements:

Simple majority

Council Decision		
Moved: Cr	Seconded: Cr	
Carried/Lost	For	Against

4 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

5 RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS PUBLIC QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE

Nil

6 STANDING ORDERS

Matter for Consideration

It has been customary practice in the interests of a productive meeting in relation to the Conduct of Members during debates for the Council suspend Standing Orders 8.2 (Limitation on Number of speeches) and 8.3 (Duration of Speeches) under Local Law 2001. To facilitate this, the following recommended resolution is required.

Recommendation

That the following Local Law-Standing Orders 2001 be stood down:

8.2 Limitation on the number of speeches

8.3 Duration of speeches

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Council Decision		
Moved: Cr	Seconded: Cr	
Carried/Lost	For	Against

7 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

8 NEXT MEETING

Thursday 22 July 2021 commencing at 12:00 noon

9 APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

10 URGENT BUSINESS

Nil

11 NOTICE OF ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

21.1 Roadworks Contact

12 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY PRESIDING PERSON WITHOUT DISCUSSION

13 PETITIONS/DEPUTATIONS/PRESENTATIONS/SUBMISSIONS

Nil

14 ANNOUNCEMENTS CONCERNING MEETINGS ATTENDED

14.1 Shire President

14.2 Councillors

15 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Nil

16 WORKS

16.1 Works Report

File:
Author: William Herold – Works Manager
Bill Boehm – Chief Executive Officer
Interest Declared: No interest to disclose
Date 12 June 2021
Attachments: 16.1.1 Milly Milly Roadworks Request

Construction Crew

The Construction Crew has all but finished the tidy up and drainage work along the new seal section. Some areas are still too wet to get into and these will be attended to in time. A start has been made on the next section with forming up under way. As soon as it is dry enough to get to the Bullardoo pit the Pinegrove corner re-alignment will commence.

Maintenance Crew

The Maintenance Crew has been hampered by the recent weather event and has lost a week of grading as their graders and camp were surrounded by water. They have since started an opening up grading in the north of the Shire, mainly the Beringarra-Byro and Carnarvon-Mullewa Roads. The Mt Gould road is once again under water and impassable, so when the conditions allow, the crew will have to back track and tackle it.

Rain Event 28 to 30 May

While very welcome this event which ranged from 40mm up to 80mm at Beringarra, Milly-Milly and Innouendy has caused considerable new damage. We are currently attempting to secure new funding on top of the last flood damage pickup. Greenfield has already done a pickup to determine any new damage. The outcome is awaited.

Dozer Contractors

Both Rowe Contracting and Thurkles Dozing have been impacted by weather and should hopefully start in the coming week. The Shire has finally got the go-ahead for the new gravel pit at SLK 253 on the Carnarvon-Mullewa Road.

New Crew Cab for Construction

At that last Council meeting it was agreed that to avoid a delay in the replacement of the Crew Cab. It was resolved that:

Council delegate the authority to make a decision on the replacement of the Shires Crew Cab to the Chief Executive Officer in consultation with the Plant Working Group.

The E-Quotes have closed and will be circulated to Councillors for perusal and discussion at the June meeting.

Milly Milly Roadworks Request

As per the attached Brian Hall owner of Briandi Pastoral company (Beringarra and Milly Milly Stations) has written to Council with the following requests:

- Request 1 A bank be put on the east/north side of Beringarra homestead to divert the water that comes off the main road and through the homestead laydown area.
- Request 2 For the main road to be diverted around Milly Milly homestead complex to the south 2.5km as equipment has started to go missing from the homestead and sheds.

A few comments are provided.

- ~ to the best our knowledge the current road alignment has been in place for many years and served the community well.
- ~ the Beringarra- Byro Road does regularly flood around the road crossing at Milly Milly Homestead. Design Plans have been completed to reconstruct a section and provide a concrete floodway. Priority wise it is however very low in the scheme of things but had a design developed to maximize grant funding opportunities.
- ~ The proposed bunding seems to be a private station matter.
- ~ Apart from the cost the proposed realignment could create significant drainage and flood issues which would need very careful consideration. We are not sure that the rationale stated for the request provides enough justification for the potentially large expenditures involved.

For these reason's it is considered that the requests be denied.

Recommendation

That Council resolve as follows:

- 1 That the Works Report be noted.
- 2 That Brian Hall owner of Briandi Pastoral company (Beringarra and Milly Milly Stations) be advised that Council is unable to accede to his request for bunding works at the Beringarra Homestead and to realign a section of the Beringarra-Byro Road around the Milly Milly homestead noting that the bunding works are considered a private Station matter and that the road the realignment is not justified for the reasons stated in the Work's Manager's report, especially considering the costs and significant drainage issues involved.

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Council Decision		
Moved: Cr	Seconded: Cr	
Carried/Lost	For	Against

17 FINANCE

17.1 2021 / 22 Rates Review

File:	3.1
Author:	Bill Boehm – Chief Executive Officer
Interest Declared:	No interest to disclose
Date	13 June 2021
Attachments:	17.1.1 Objects and Reasons for Proposed Differential Rates and Minimum Payments for the 2021/22 Financial Year 17.1.2 Regional Rates Benchmarking Comparison June 2021

Matter for Consideration

Review of Council's Rating Strategy as part of Council considering its proposed 2021/22 Rates and the supporting objects and reasons for differential rates.

Background & Legislative Provisions

It is incumbent on the Shire administration, for equity reasons to ensure that differential rating proposals are highly equitable amongst ratepayer groupings, optimise total rate yields and are legally compliant.

Whilst the consideration of rates and the supporting objects and reasons for differential rates is an annual event given last year's COVID19 influence and zero rate increase scenario and expansive COVID 19 changes to Council's operating environment, it is considered prudent to reset and undertake a more "eyes wide open review."

The legislative provisions for rating are lengthy and complex. The following relevant summary highlights relevant legislative provisions under the *Local Government 1995* that are provided as a snap shot as part of this Rating Strategy Review

Rateable Land – s6.26

Except as provided all land within a district is rateable land. Exemptions include:

- ~ Land which is the property of the Crown and used or held for a public purpose.
- ~ Land owned by the local government and used for that purpose by the local government.
- ~ Land used exclusively for charitable purposes.
- ~ Land which is exempt from rates under any written law
- ~ Land which is declared by the Minister to be exempt from rates.

Basis of Rates – s 6.28

Land is rated according to the method of valuation as determined by the Minister. ie

- ~ unimproved value for land use predominately for rural purposes (UV); or
- ~ gross rental value for land used predominately for non-rural purposes (GRV).

Rates are based on valuations under the *Valuation of Land Act 1978*. The local government sets a rate in the dollar which is applied to this valuation to give the rates liability for each property.

Mining Valuations and Rates – s6.29

Unless otherwise provided for mining tenements under the *Mining Act 1978* or permit drilling leases or licences under the *Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Resources Act 1967* are rated on unimproved value.

Rates and Service Charges - s 6.32

Rates are established at the time Council adopts its budget to make up the budget deficiency. The following may be imposed:

- ~ a general rate imposed either uniformly or differentially.
- ~ a special area rate of minimum payment and
- ~ service charges

Where a rate is imposed it is required to be expressed rate in the dollar of the gross rental value of rateable land or on the unimproved value of rateable land depending on the circumstances.

Differential General Rates – s6.33

A local government may impose a single general rate which applies to all the properties in the unimproved value or gross rental value category; or alternatively, the local government can distinguish between land in either category on the basis of its zoning, use or whether or not it is vacant land (or a combination of these factors) and apply a differential rate to each.

Ministerial approval is required where a differential rate which is more than twice the lowest differential rate is to be imposed by it.

Limit on Revenue from General Rates – s 6.34

Unless otherwise approved by the Minister the amount shown in the annual budget as being yielded from general rates shall be within 90 and 110% of the budget deficiency.

Minimum Payment – s 6.35

A local government may impose on any rateable land in its district a minimum payment which is greater than the general rate which would otherwise be payable on that land. A minimum payment is to be a general minimum but, must ensure that the general minimum is imposed on not greater than —

- ~ 50% of the total number of separately rated properties in the district; or
- ~ 50% of the number of properties in each category being land rated on gross rental value, unimproved value to each differential rating category where a differential general rate is imposed.

A minimum payment is not to be imposed on more than the prescribed percentage separately rated properties or the number of properties rated under gross rental value, (GRV), unimproved value (UV) or in each differential rate category where this is imposed. The current prescribed limits are set under the *Local Government Financial Regulations 1996*.

There is no restriction on the proportion of properties subject to the minimum providing the minimum is not more than \$200. If the minimum is over \$200, no more than half of the properties (50%) can be subject to the minimum unless the differential rating category is for vacant land **and** Ministerial approval is granted.

Local Government to give notice of certain rates – s6.36

Before imposing any differential general rates or a minimum payment applying to a differential rate category a local government is to

- ~ give local public notice of its intention to do so.
- ~ prepare a document describing the objects of, and reasons for, each proposed rate and minimum payment and to publish the document on the local government's official website.
- ~ provide opportunity to receive and hear any submissions.

Service Charges – s 6.38

The money from any service charge imposed on owners or occupiers can only be used to meet the cost of providing a specific service. Under the *Local Government Financial Regulations 1996* prescribed works include property surveillance and security, television and radio rebroadcasting, underground electricity, and water.

Rates Charges on Land- s 6.43

Subject to the *Rates and Charges (Rebates and Deferrals) Act 1992*, rates remain a charge on the land.

A Value and Principle Approach

Through the Local Government Act 1995, Part 6, the Western Australian Parliament has conferred upon local government the power to levy and collect property tax in the form of rates. Property taxes with rare exemptions, are not fees for service or relate to directly or indirectly an any specific services provided by the Shire. Just like income tax they are a just that, a tax; with the property owner responsible for paying, although it is doubtful whether all ratepayers would necessarily see this in this light.

The application of Councils rate and budget setting are partly outlined in the Minister's policy approach when exercising his / her discretionary powers in relation to Minimum Payments, and differential rating with key values of **objectivity, fairness and equity, consistency, transparency, and administrative efficiency** required to be demonstrated. So long as Council meets these criteria the rating regime should comply.

However, this does not really provide much guidance when it comes to determining matters such as the levels and nexus between differential rates and minimums or any specific justification.

As with all taxation systems there are various well-established principles that have been applied in other local government jurisdictions. Some of these seem to have been included in the above values but perhaps the most useful in this regard a few points to consider.

Does the tax burden fall appropriately across different classes of ratepayers? Equity is a subjective concept that is difficult to define. What is considered fair for one person may be considered unfair for another. There are two main equity concepts used to guide the development of rating strategies (and taxation more generally): namely the Benefit Principle (Horizontal Equity) and Capacity to Pay Principle (Vertical Equity).

Benefit Principle

Taxpayers should receive some benefits from paying tax, but not necessarily to the extent of the tax paid. Ratepayers in similar situations should pay similar amounts (ensured mainly by accurate property valuations undertaken in a consistent manner, their classification into homogenous property classes and the right of appeal against valuation).

Example of this is the application of a fixed charge or minimum rate component of a rating system; although the minimum payment example applies on a 'sliding' scale and unlike the fixed charge is not applied equally to all ratepayers.

In many local government jurisdictions this must be applied the same across all differential rate sectors whilst in Western Australia it can vary between differential rates sectors, although in doing so it could be argued that it weakens this principle.

Capacity to Pay Principle

In levying taxes, the ability of the taxpayer to pay the tax must be considered. Those who are better off should pay more than those worse off (the rationale applies for the use of progressive and proportional income taxation. It implies a "relativity" dimension to the fairness of the tax burden).

Example of this is the rate in the \$ component and differential rate classification. How this is balanced is open to question. Benchmarking with other local governments are a useful exercise although only this provides a guide.

Rating Nuances

A few rating issues.

- ~ There is a common misconception that rates are directly set by property values when in fact they are only derived in part from them after Council has considered a raft of budget and equity considerations.
- ~ If property values increase generally due to market forces by say 10%, rarely do rates increase by that amount and if property values decline, rates do not normally reduce. In each instance the rate in the \$ and potentially the minimum rate is adjusted.
- ~ Property valuations are a surrogate for income when it comes to the application of the Capacity to Pay Principle, even though this may not reflect in a personal sense.
- ~ For properties that have a perpetual life and continue to exist from one year to then next, when property valuations increase through market forces, in reality there is no change to the rates base. If, however, a property has its GRV expanded by a capital development or subdivision or say a new tenement or changes its rating category then that is often termed "natural growth." If that element is not segmented for analysis purposes, then a rates base does not grow, adversely affecting the financial capacity of the local government and leads to new "growth" ratepayers subsidising old ones. As a result, any increase in the rate should be expressed in terms of a % revenue increase "excluding natural growth." However, for UV properties that situation is less clear as there is no easy identifiable increase through natural growth as Capital Values are not directly considered.
- ~ For properties such as in the mining sector that do not have a perpetual life and are often highly speculative and can come and go regularly, property numbers and valuations from year to year can vary markedly. This makes it more difficult to treat in the same manner as perpetual life properties in part as the use of the capacity pay principle may be relatively short lived and often any rates levied do not necessarily remain a charge on the land.
- ~ With perhaps the exception of perpetual life mining type properties given the vagaries and variables of valuations, differential rates, minimum rates and rates in the \$, the best and least unreliable comparator is properties actual rates from one year to another and on a district wide basis the average rate in a sector.

Benchmarking

Like last year, benchmarking included comparisons with neighbouring Shires (*Regional Rates Benchmarking Comparison*) with the addition of two additional sparsely populated Shires more akin in makeup with Murchison. Whilst such an exercise is far from perfect and not conclusive there are common themes.

Like all local governments the Grants Commission undertakes a more systematic amongst other things to establish an average local governments rate capacity and with it an assessed level applied to each local government. This analysis is also presented.

The following attached Tables and graphs are attached. Summary comments are also shown.

fig 1 Rate Revenue \$

Murchison is way and far the smallest rate base.

fig 2 Rate Revenue %

In % terms the Mining contribution Murchison appears well within the parameters compared to others.

fig 3 Average Rate \$

The average mining rates paid in Murchison on the surface are well outside those of others giving an opposite picture to fig 2.

fig 4 Rate Cents in \$

The Pastoral and Mining Exploration Rates in the \$ appear low compared to others.

fig 5 Rate Highest Rate in \$ v Pastoral Rate in the \$

The Mining Rate differential for Murchison appears very high compared to others.

fig 6 % of ratepayers based on Minimum Payment

No major difference compared to others in the region.

fig 7 Min UV Rates Comparison \$

Min UV Rates for Murchison appear within the parameters of others.

fig 8 No of Pastoral Properties vs Others

The small numbers for Murchison appear to merely reflect our relative Pastoral Rates base compared to others.

fig 9 UV Rates Comparison as % of Rates Base.

In % terms the Pastoral sector in Murchison appears to contribute to greater extent than other areas most likely reflecting the lack of GRV rates

fig 10 Min Rate

Min Rates for Murchison are within parameters of others.

fig 11 Grant Commission 3 Year Average Rates Assessments

The Grants Commission have assessed Murchison as having significant capacity to lift rates in the mining sectors but also conversely reduce rates in the mining sector. However, this situation is not dissimilar to most other Shires.

The following observations are also noted.

- ~ The Mining Rate appears on the surface to be too high in comparison and makes up a much higher percentage of the rate base than compared to other areas.
As outlined in *DLGSC Rates Detailed Discussion Paper* a differential of 4 times the lowest differential rate has been suggested instead of the current level requiring rates to obtain Ministerial approval. This implies a recognition that large differentials are not exceptional.
- ~ As shown Murchison's rate base is much smaller by comparison with others. Other Shires also have larger numbers within the Other (Mining and Other GRV) than Murchison, so the current differences are explainable.
- ~ Even though the Pastoral Rate makes up a small percentage of the rates base the average rate appears low in comparison and can be potentially lifted. Given the apparent and arguable reliance on the mining sector, lifting the pastoral rates would seem appropriate but only as a part of a detailed review of our rating base.

Detailed Local Rates Analysis

Whilst benchmarking with Shires provides a useful guide, modelling local rates and changes in valuations needs to be undertaken. The following comments are provided.

Valuation Effects

- ~ The pastoral sector and mining sector have seen little movements in numbers of ratable assessments. This contrast with the minerals exploration sector which is highly volatile with many ins and outs. Whilst the overall numbers increased only slightly, average valuations per new assessment are around twice what was retired.
- ~ With such a small valuation base very small changes in occupation can have a significant effect. In the pastoral sector the loss of only one pastoral property and changes in valuations to only two others have had a more significant effect than would otherwise be the case compared to a local government with a much larger rate base.
- ~ Valuations in the Pastoral sector have largely remained static, those in the Mining Sector have increased by 7% whilst those in exploration sector have increased generally by 3.7% but with some also reducing by as much as 78%
- ~ The valuation base has increased in part through the addition of new Mining Tenements. This element should see an increase in the overall rates collected through *Natural Growth* above the norm through the rate setting process. This can be explained and justified. However, variation with several tenements surrendered and replaced by new ones with an increased values will also need to be considered.

Rate Parameters

- ~ General Rate Increase
The Corporate Business Plan 2017-2021 which allows for an average 5% rate increase each year. Given no rate increase last year a 5% increase (excluding natural growth) has been assumed.
- ~ Minimum Payment
Council has currently the lowest minimum payment compared with other neighbouring Councils but that in itself is not a real issue and merely one of balance. Given this, it is considered to standardise the minimum and increase the base amount. Paying \$350 would seem a small contribution. Model shows a uniform \$600 minimum payment which increases the number of ratepayers on the minimum from 14 to 20. The change only affects the Minerals Exploration sector.
- ~ Differential Rates in the \$
In line with benchmarking undertaken these have been adjusted to aim to have the mining differential reduce as a ratio to the Pastoral Rate.

Equity across Rate Differential Categories

For consistency, Council has ensured that properties that are used for the same purpose are rated in the same way and has considered and analysed in detailed the rates charged by neighbouring councils in its deliberations. For a very small local government achieving equity across the Pastoral and Mining Sectors is not without its challenges but this year the variable nature of the Minerals Exploration Sector provided an additional challenge.

As such following review and benchmarking with other local governments, although the Pastoral Rates are proposed to increase slightly more compared to the Mining Sector, a potentially more profound change was affected by the need to address the variability encountered in the Minerals Exploration Sector.

Non-Rateable Properties

The status of land being unrateable is entirely non-discretionary and subject to the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1995*. A review of current non-rateable properties has been undertaken and legal advice obtained to support the judgement. At this stage, no changes are proposed but a watching brief should be taken.

Basis of Rating

The basis of rating is determined by the Minister. Council currently has all rateable assessments rated on unimproved value for land use predominately for rural purposes (UV)

Where land is predominantly used for non-rural purposes gross rental value (GRV) may be used. Where a portion of a property is used for such non rural purposes an application can be made to the Minister for a separate assessment for a portion of the land. A typical example would be Cellar Door sales on a vineyard property where separate GRV assessment could be undertaken even though the predominate use of the property may very well be rural.

There are several potential examples of this situation in the Shire although it is arguable whether that Minister would ultimately consent as in practice these types of situations are more keenly addressed in urban and rural residential areas and not something practiced in the broader pastoral sector. Whilst it is the responsibility of Officers to pursue this as a matter of course, in these circumstances no further action is contemplated at this stage by a spot GRV assessment. Again, a watching brief should be taken.

General

The Shire of Murchison considers the key values of objectivity, fairness, consistency, transparency, and administrative efficiency, when setting rates each year. As the attached benchmarking analysis shows and as outlined above this has been undertaken and how adjustments have been undertaken to better align with these key values.

Council is satisfied that the services and facilities it provides are managed efficiently and effectively and that it is appropriate to rate differentially in order to meet the budget deficiency. Adapting to the COVID19 environment has also seen significant challenges and this will reflect in the Objects and Reasons for differential rating.

As part of the 2020/21 Budget adoption amongst other things Council resolved as follows

Part A- COVID-19 Pandemic Budget Considerations

- A1 *That in accordance with section 6.2 of the Local Government Act 1995 and clause 7 of the Local Government (COVID-19 Response) Ministerial Order 2020 that Council confirms that the 2020/21 Budget has been prepared having regard to the COVID-19 pandemic.*
- A2 *That Council in adopting the 2020/21 Budget and given the strategic importance to the 2020/21 Budget, the COVID-19 pandemic situation, and desires that all level of governments look to stimulate to assist in the recovery of the economy, that that the State Government be formally and informally advised of extent of COVID-19 response items that Council is pursuing.*

The 2021/22 budget will be further affected by these considerations.

The Corporate Business Plan and Long-Term Financial Plan have been based on an assumption that rates will increase by 5% every year. This rating strategy was affected by a zero-rate increase in 2021/22 but has attempted to be retained albeit with variations resulting from this year's more expansive analysis. The emphasis on recovery is reallocated between the three categories of differential rates to more accurately reflect the objects and reasons closely associated with the strategic objectives of the Shire.

If Council decides to continue to rate on a differential basis in 2021/22, then the objects and reasons for imposing each differential rate must be set out by the local government in a publicly available document and local public notice is required to be given of its intention to impose differential rates, giving details of each rate or minimum payment, and inviting submissions within 21 days of the notice. If there are less than 30 ratepayers in a sector, then each rate payer is to be written to individually, inviting submissions.

Any submissions received will be considered at the July 2021 Ordinary Council Meeting, before making the final decision regarding the imposition of the rate or minimum payment, with or without modification. This year, as in the past, the proposed differential rates for mining and exploration will be more than twice the lowest differential rate (pastoral) and Ministerial approval will consequently be required before the rates can be imposed as part of the 2021-22 budget.

Objects and Reasons for Differential Rates

The objects and reasons for differential rating are is attached for Council to consider prior to adoption in some form.

Budget/Financial Implications:

Proposed differential rates are set to meet the estimated budget deficiency in the 2021-22 financial year.

Consultation

Acting Finance Manager, McLeods Barristers and Solicitors, Landgate Valuation Services and DLGSC.

References

Regional Rates Benchmarking Comparison.

Analysis of rating information from 2020/21 budgets from the Shires of Murchison, Yalgoo, Mt Magnet, Cue, Menzies, Sandstone, Meekatharra, Upper Gascoyne, and Shark Bay.

Skilmar Rating Review.

Local Government Rating - A Discussion Paper prepared for Playford Council by Skilmar Systems - December 1998.

Access Economics Rating Review.

Valuation and local government rating in Tasmania: a robust framework for the Future. Prepared for Local Government Division, Department of Premier and Cabinet (Tasmania) by Access Economics – October 2010.

DLGSC Rates Detailed Discussion Paper.

Strategic Implications:

The Corporate Business Plan 2017-2021 allows for an average 5% rate increase each year. This is based on the estimated budget deficiency and has been set to help fund community services and amenities as outlined in the plan.

Sustainability Implications

Environmental There are no known significant environmental considerations.
 Economic There are no known significant economic considerations.
 Social There are no known significant social considerations.

Policy Implications

Nil

Recommendation

That Council Resolve as follows:

- 1 That the Chief Executive Officers 2021 / 22 Rates Review Report be noted
- 2 That Council endorse the following proposed differential rates and minimum payments for 2020/21 Financial Year for the purpose of giving local public notice of its intentions to impose differential general rates and minimum payments for the 2021/22 Financial Year, and inviting public submissions and to apply to the Minister for Local Government for approval

Differential Rate Types	Current		Proposed	
	Rate in dollar cents	Min Payment \$	Rate in dollar cents	Min Payment \$
UV Pastoral	3.295	320	3.377	600
UV Mining	27.940	450	26.543	600
UV Exploration	8.015	450	9.618	600

- 3 That Council adopts the Objects and Reasons for Differential Rates and Minimum Payments for 2021/22 as attached in attachment 17.1.1.

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Council Decision		
Moved: Cr	Seconded: Cr	
Carried/Lost	For	Against

17.2 Analysis of Reserve Funding Budgets & Actuals For 2020-21

File: 2.8 (EOY)
Author: Keith White – Acting Finance Manager
Interest Declared: No interest to disclose
Date: 11 June 2021
Attachments: Nil

Matter for Consideration

In conjunction with the CEO, an analysis has been done of the outturn results for transfers both from and to the Shire's varying Reserves. This is a necessary prelude to closing the Shire's books for 2020-21.

Background

Transfers both to and from the Shire's reserve accounts were adopted by Council as part of its budget adoption process on the 26 August 2020. Specific funding was to be withdrawn for specific works embodied in the budget, interest earnings were budgeted to be retained in the relevant reserves and programmed "savings" were earmarked for transfer out to the varying reserves. These actions are, for the most part, measurable and will be reflected in the final transfers.

Two aspects of funding have been identified where a formal budget amendment will be of advantage. These are:

- ~ The settlement building reserve was to have interest added to it, with \$400,000 to be withdrawn as a funding setoff against \$1,675,000 of mainly unspecified developmental works. At this point only \$150,000 has been utilized as a potential draw down (off the \$400,000). This means that the net savings of \$1,399,000 should, if one wanted to retain their purpose, be transferred to the Settlement Buildings Reserve before year end. This will require Council approval as no budget authority exists.
- ~ The Local Government Grants Commission has provided the Shire with an advance on its 2021-22 funding totaling \$2,055,000. At the CEO's suggestion, this could be transferred to the Asset Rehabilitation Reserve to be dealt with as a potential Transfer Ex Reserve in the 2021-22 budget. This will require Council approval but will not be feasible if final cash flows do not allow. i.e., If there are insufficient cash assets to have the Reserve fully cash backed. The 20-21 budget was to complete the year with a zero surplus/deficit containing \$58,650 in unrestricted cash. As the opening surplus deficit was some \$100,000 less than predicated in the budget, and there are rate debtors, cash flow timing issues unforeseen at the time of adopting the budget, the Shire's final ability to fund this transfer remains unclear at this time, albeit there are strong indications that this will still be possible.

Statutory Environment

Local Government Act 1995

6.8. *Expenditure from municipal fund not included in annual budget.*

- (1) *A local government is not to incur expenditure from its municipal fund for an additional purpose except where the expenditure —*
 - (b) *is authorised in advance by resolution**

* *Absolute majority required.*

6.11. *Reserve accounts*

- (1) *Subject to subsection (5), where a local government wishes to set aside money for use for a purpose in a future financial year, it is to establish and maintain a reserve account for each such purpose.*

Strategic Implications

'Reserve funding scenarios are an integral part of long-term financial planning. This report aims to further the expressed strategic aims of Council.

Sustainability Implications

Environmental There are no known significant environmental considerations.
Economic There are no known significant economic considerations.
Social There are no known significant social considerations.

Policy Implications

There are no known policy implications. The Council has by resolution, when adopting its budgets, specified the purposes for which each of its reserve funds has been created. The purpose of the Asset Rehabilitation Reserve is "to fund works associated with rehabilitating Council's infrastructure assets." Any money transferred to that Reserve will later only be able to be used for that specified purpose.

Financial Implications

Financial implications are as per the body of this report. The staff recommendation does not contain any added cost overall.

Consultation

Chief Executive Officer

Comments

Reserve fund purposes need to be better codified by formal Council policy. This could perhaps occur as part of the Council's annual review of Policy items.

Recommendation

That Council adopt the following budget amendment, but authorises its CEO to not implement the latter aspect dealing with the Grants Commission payment in the event that cash reserves at the 30 June 2021 do not permit.

COA or Job	Description	Adopted Budget		Variation Sought		Amended Budget	
		Inc	Exp	Inc	Exp	Inc	Exp
13622	Transfer From Res - Sett Fac.	400,000		-250,000		150,000	
SBWKS	Settlement Building Works		1,545,000		-1,545,000		0
C13003	Roadhouse Point of Sale		20,000		-20,000		0
C14710	Improve Drinking Water Retic		100,000		-100,000		0
C14715	Bollards Around Fuel Bowsers		10,000		-10,000		0
C13009	Capex - Accommodation Units		0		50,000		50,000
C13010	Capex - Roadhouse Residence	0	0		9,000		9,000
C13011	Capex - Roadhouse Business		0		27,000		27,000
	Trans To Sett Bldgs Reserve		9,574		1,339,000		1,348,574
03201	Grants Commission - General	1,357,977		1,550,000		2,907,977	
03202	Grants Commission - Roads	394,907		505,000		899,907	
3199	Trans To Asset Rehab Reserve		0		2,055,000		2,055,000
	Nett Budget Cost	-468,310				-468,310	

Voting Requirements

Absolute Majority

Council Decision		
Moved: Cr		Seconded: Cr
Carried/Lost	For	Against

18 DEVELOPMENT

18.1 Community Development Report

File:

Author: Steven Cosgrove – Community Manager / DCEO

Interest Declared: No interest to disclose

Date 12 June 2021

Attachments: NIL

Matter for Consideration

Ongoing update of community development at Murchison Shire.

Update

There are currently four major community development operations underway as follows.

- ~ The Pia Wadjarri Community Funding Application
- ~ Oasis Roadhouse Update
- ~ Murchison Settlement Information Bays
- ~ Geo-Tourism Workshop

PIA COMMUNITY

Commenced an Indigenous Language and Arts Competitive grant to undertake an arts project with the children, Elders and community members at Pia Wadjarri Remote Community School and Community. The Arts and Cultural Development Program through the Indigenous Language and Arts (ILA) grant provides opportunities for Indigenous peoples to actively engage in the Language and Arts program.

The objectives of the Arts Project are

- ~ Develop, produce, present, exhibit or perform a diverse range of traditional and contemporary Indigenous art forms.
- ~ Support new and innovative forms of Indigenous cultural expression through arts.
- ~ Contribute to the Australian Government's priorities and outcomes for Aboriginal culture expressed through arts activities, including those under Target 16 of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

The ILA program provides operational funding support to a network of 20 Indigenous language centres around the country working on capturing, revitalising, and maintaining Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. The program also supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to develop, produce, present, exhibit or perform Indigenous arts and language projects that showcase Australia's traditional and contemporary Indigenous cultural and artistic expressions.

A successful application will provide for a mosaics workshop(s) depicting Aboriginal culture and will be undertaken by Pia students, Elders, and community members. The workshop(s) will likely be undertaken over two or possibly more days. The specific details are being determined with the potential facilitator as the application progresses.

The project will provide an opportunity for students, community members and school staff to work together on a project that will encourage interactions with the arts, improved cultural awareness as well as educational development with the children.

A letter of support for the project has been received from the Principal, Pia Wadjarri Remote Community School. A verbal recommendation for support has been given by the region's relevant language centre and I am awaiting a written letter of support.

OASIS ROADHOUSE

Oasis has been operational for six weeks. In this time there has been considerable works and undertakings happening.

During this time, Oasis has been visited by the Health Inspector, Pest Controller, Locksmith, Electricians, and builder all doing work or inspections of the Roadhouse and caravan park and motel units.

Work done includes the following.

- ~ New Locks to the motel units, roadhouse, laundry, and ablutions
- ~ New Split System air conditioner to Roadhouse kitchen
- ~ New 15amp power point to Roadhouse kitchen
- ~ Outdoor power point to Roadhouse residence
- ~ New storeroom alcove to roadhouse
- ~ Updated laundry to Roadhouse residence.
- ~ New bench space to Motel Unit 1 and painting

The Yuck Circus completely filled the motel units for 3 nights in May. They were a pleasure to accommodate and even cooked a vegan tea for us on the Sunday evening.

Due to the rain and road closures, we have noticed a number of cancellations as people have been unable to travel in the Upper Gascoyne Shire from here. Most if not all were heading to Mt Augustus. However, we have had unexpected campers coming from Butchers track to escape the congested NW Coastal Highway.

The Oasis has received some positive reviews in relation to people's stays.

There are a couple of major visitations coming up with 40-50 Perth Adventure Riders staying with us on the nights of 19 and 25 June, then the Polo cross carnival over the weekend of 10 & 11 July.

MURCHISON SETTLEMENT INFORMATION BAYS

At the Ordinary Council Meeting May 2021, a working group was created consisting of DCEO/Community Manager Steven Cosgrove, Cr Whitmarsh and Cr Squires.

Information dated 2016 minutes was received from Cr Emma Foulkes Taylor and forwarded to the new working group. Awaiting response from the working group for further development. In the meantime, the DCEO has researched and is drafting a possible signage options and opportunities to value add to the project.

WORKSHOP ATTENDANCE

PIA

The DCEO/Community Manager and CEO will be attending Pia Wadjjarri Remote Community School on the 30th of June 2021 to participate in NAIDOC Week celebrations. Pia Wadjjarri school will be celebrating Indigenous culture with NAIDOC week events and projects. It is an opportunity to celebrate and make connections with the community and students which the Arts support through creative expression and cultural respect for others.

This attendance also provides a great opportunity for the Community Manager and Pia School principal to elaborate on the proposed community arts mosaic workshop as well as future collaborative projects.

Geo-Tourism

Deep Dive Geo Tourism Workshop DCEO/Community Manger is attending the 'Deep Dive Geo-Tourism' event to be held in Mt Magnet on Thursday 1 July 2021. This is the Shire's opportunity to provide Tourism WA with our 'Gascoyne Murchison Story' and how we want it articulated so that Tourism WA knows how to convey who we are.

The workshop highlights the Spirit of Adventure is Western Australia’s new shared tourism story that defines the Mid West’s unique points of difference and sense of identity while uniting our industry’s diverse offerings, experiences, and regions.

The session will provide an insight into the creation of The Spirit of Adventure, followed by an interactive workshop, where attendees share their passion for their place, so that the facilitators of ‘Our Story’ can craft the Murchison’s story, the way we want it to be told.

GEO-Region Working Group (PWG) Strategic Planning and Governance workshop

The following day, Friday 2nd July 2021 the DCEO and Cr Emma Foulkes -Taylor will be attending the GEO-Region Working Group (PWG) Strategic Planning and Governance Workshop in Mt Magnet.

Statutory Environment

Nil.

Financial Implications

Nil.

Consultation

CEO

Recommendation

That Community Manager / DCEO’s Community Development Report be noted.

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Council Decision		
Moved: Cr	Seconded: Cr	
Carried/Lost	For	Against

18.2 Report on 1 Man & a Bike 'Murchison' TV Series.

File:

Author: Steven Cosgrove – Community Manager / DCEO

Interest Declared: No interest to disclose

Date: 12 June 2021

Attachments: NIL

Matter for Consideration

FOUR LGA's – Murchison, Mt Magnet, Yalgoo, and Meekatharra in joint collaboration to form Series Two of *1 Man & a Bike*.

Background

The Mid-West Development Commission and Regional Development Australia in collaboration with the Department of Planning and the Mid-West Tourism Alliance have established a regional tourism development strategy. The objective of the project is to identify tourism opportunities, game changers, priorities, and gaps for the Mid-West region and to inform future development and investment.

The 'Murchison' subregion includes the Shire of Upper Gascoyne, which is in the neighbouring Gascoyne region. The term 'Murchison' refers to 8 LGA's working together. The Murchison subregion comprises eight shires, seven towns, 4,500 residents, and covers approximately 423,000km².

The MWDC's focus for the Murchison region is to:

- 1 Open-up day use sites-places previously overlooked or under-developed to enhance the Mid West's appeal as a destination.
- 2 Increase accommodation capacity from camping through to resorts.
- 3 Improve the quality and distribution of information for pre-trip planning and way finding.
- 4 Attracting more high-yield visitors and the growing self-drive and RV market; and
- 5 Increasing the range of Aboriginal and eco nature-based tourism activities, attractions, and experiences.

The distinctiveness of Murchison offers an opportunity for branding the region as a unique and interesting geo-tourism destination. Landscapes, scenery, and geology can provide a non-contentious focus for communities to work towards a mutual goal and by doing so to achieve a common purpose (e.g., socio-economic, and cultural regeneration).

While the Murchison region is mostly considered a transit point for travellers' enroute to farther destinations it encompasses a wide geographical, socio-economic, and cultural context which for tourism purposes sit under the umbrella of geo-tourism. Each LGA engaged in the geo-tourism market has a role to play in promoting geo-tourism by marketing it's distinct subsector of natural (flora and fauna), as well as its wider cultural and heritage components, all of which can be considered as distinct and separate aspects of tourism in their own right.

Current Opportunity

The Shire of Murchison was recently contacted by *Visage Productions* with a view to developing a series showcasing each of the LGA'S unique natural landscape as an amenity providing tourists with a wider appreciation of the outstanding natural landscapes and cultures of the region.

After the successful launch of series one of the **1 MAN & A BIKE** televised on Channel 7 in late 2020 *Visage Productions* have announced they will be producing series two for broadcast later this year. In the first series they travelled WA's Goldfields, the Midwest, the Central West and the Wheatbelt.

The proposed episode will provide an opportunity to realise a specific branding and marketing opportunity for the Murchison Oasis Settlement and the greater Murchison. By raising public awareness, the project provides

an opportunity to attract tourism to the Shire while boosting the socio-economic and cultural enrichment and regeneration for the Settlement and the broader region.

Everything you need to know about the series, including the attached synopsis:

- ~ The five-episode series will be broadcast throughout Western Australia on the Seven Network, the State's highest rating free-to-air channel, on a weekend afternoon later in 2021.
- ~ After broadcast, the episodes will be added to the Seven Network on-line catch-up service.
- ~ Filming for the series to commence once the episodes are fully subscribed (plan is to commence mid-year with filming in destinations appropriate to seasonal weather conditions and attractions, for example we filmed during the wildflower season last series).
- ~ The overall aim of the series model is to promote Western Australia's road trip possibilities, from a different perspective.
- ~ The series is to be produced by VISAGE Productions www.visageproductions.com.au - we are a Perth based production company which has been in operation for over 27 years.
- ~ Each episode will be allocated to a particular region or road-trip, with multiple-LGA collaborations coming together to form an episode.
- ~ Series to be filmed in high definition with multiple use of drone technology (within CASA approved areas).
- ~ Each episode, based on previous series' will be filmed over four-five days.
- ~ Option to utilise existing file footage supplied by partners.
- ~ A designated Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/onemanandabike> and Instagram page https://www.instagram.com/1man_and_abike/ will provide another marketing medium and be profiled and promoted extensively before, during and after the series, with regular updates on location, inclusive of linked sites and hashtag branding.
- ~ VISAGE team will work closely with each partner in developing the story outline, concept, and script, with full editorial control given to each partner, inclusive of final approval prior to broadcast.
- ~ Each half-hour episode ends up being 20-21 minutes after commercials, being four, five-minute segments, which can be broken up in various ways.
- ~ Each partner will be liaising with just one person throughout the process, from initial contact right through to final delivery, providing a more personal service and a more streamlined process throughout.

Future Opportunities

Value adding derived from the film could be for example: flyers, postcards, key rings, fridge magnets and alike to be sold at the Oasis and distributed widely to outlets and tourism offices throughout the region.

Murchison Settlement maps utilising clips from the film could be adopted to form the artwork that is used in flyers to encourage visitors to the Settlement; to stay a night or two and explore what the settlement and surrounding district has to offer. For instance, maps could illustrate:

- ~ Discreet landscape maps, each of which are developed to showcase a specific geological feature, social and or cultural event or series of events.
- ~ Established walking trails and sites of environmental, cultural, and historical pastoral importance.
- ~ A Story through Time book accompaniment to the landscapes map and a well-illustrated guide to the Settlement and a guide to the district/region.
- ~ Explore Series - a series of eight touring guides for car or bicycle covering the diverse landscapes of the region.
- ~ Walk Series – a series of walks packs, each pack containing loop walks featuring the geology and landscapes of subregions in more detail.

There are multiple benefits for the partners:

- ~ With series one the episodes were initially broadcast throughout WA; however, they were repeated nationally on the Seven Network at a later date.
- ~ The series will also be available via catch-up on [7plus](#)
- ~ All participating partners will have total control of editorial content and will have final approval on each episode prior to broadcast.
- ~ Pre-broadcast exposure via social media platforms and on-location hashtag relevant links.
- ~ On-location social media coverage during filming.
- ~ Opportunities to cross-promote with other marketing mediums in designated regions, being both newspaper and radio. We can supply previous examples of this, if required.
- ~ On-camera promos to be filmed on location that can be utilised pre-broadcast via social media platforms.
- ~ Every episode to be made available via our Facebook page, once aired on the commercial network. This has resulted in thousands of additional shares and plays, inclusive of international reach.
- ~ Unlimited access to the final edited story and full episode, which can be forwarded in various sizes and formats, across multiple mediums.
- ~ Capability to cut-down packages for other marketing purposes.
- ~ Access to the filmed high-definition raw video files, inclusive of drone footage, which can be further promoted through other promotional mediums such as television commercials, websites, and social media (conditions apply).
- ~ We can also film any additional required footage whilst on-location if time permits.

Statutory Environment

Nil.

Financial Implications

The project as a whole is estimated at \$34,000, ex GST (\$8,500 per LGA) which will be included in the 2021/22 for consideration

Consultation

Bill Boehm CEO, Ian Holland (CEO Shire of Yalgoo), Lee Lorraine (Visage Productions), Adam Murszewski (MWDC)

Recommendation

That Man & a Bike 'Murchison' Report be noted.

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Council Decision		
Moved: Cr	Seconded: Cr	
Carried/Lost	For	Against

19 ADMINISTRATION

Nil

20 CEO ACTIVITY REPORT

File:

Author: Bill Boehm – Chief Executive Officer

Interest Declared: No interest to disclose

Date 12 June 2021

Attachments: Nil

General

Summary of activities which highlights the areas worked in is shown as follows:

Date	Activity
24.05.2021	Agenda Work Works Fuel
25.05.2021	Administration. Works Fuel
26.05.2021	Rates Work
27.05.2021	Council Workshop, Council Meeting & Follow Up
28.05.2021	Council Follow Up. Rates Review. Meetings with Finance Manager and Community Manager / DCEO
29.05.2021	Council Minutes. Rates Review
30.05.2021	Rates Review
31.05.2021	TOIL. Rates Review. Meeting with Main Roads WA @ Geraldton
1.06.2021 to 2.02.2021	Rates Review. Meetings with Finance Manager and Community Manager / DCEO. and Works Manager. Work on Journals Roadhouse Fuel Template
3.06.2021	Rates Review. Finance Work. Roadhouse Fuel
4.06.2021	Rates Review. Meetings with Finance Manager and Community Manager / DCEO. and Works Manager. Work on Journals Roadhouse Fuel Template
5.06.2021 to 6.06.2021	Budget & end of Year Review Work
7.06.2021	Public Holiday. Budget & end of Year Review Work. Rates Review
8.06.2021	Budget & end of Year Review Work. Rates Review. Discussions with Alan Carmichael (DLGSC) & Gavin Crane (Landgate)
9.06.2021	Budget & end of Year Review Work. Rates Review. Training session on Fuel with Finance Manager and Administration Staff
10.06.2021	Works & Roadhouse Fuel. Rates Review Work. Meetings with Finance Manager and Community Manager / DCEO. Remote Team Meeting with Antonia Hodby, Crs Rossco and Emma Foulkes-Taylor and Francis Pollock regarding SKA Project Social Impact Assessment
11.06.2021	Works & Roadhouse Fuel. Rates Review and Agenda Work. Meetings with Finance Manager and Community Manager / DCEO
12.06.2021 to 13.06.2021	Rates Review and Agenda Work
14.06.2021	TOIL

Recommendation

That the CEO's Activity Report be noted.

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Council Decision		
Moved: Cr	Seconded: Cr	
Carried/Lost	For	Against

21 ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

Pursuant to Local Government Act 1995 (LGA) s5.23(2)(c) and (e) Council is to discuss the following items behind closed doors.

21.1 Roadworks Contact

Potential Roadworks Contract that may come before Council.

Recommendation

That the meeting moves behind closed doors to discuss an item pursuant to LGA s5.23(2)(c) and (e) relating to the following items:

21.1 Roadworks Contract

Voting Requirements

Absolute Majority

Council Decision		
Moved: Cr	Seconded: Cr	
Carried/Lost	For	Against

Meeting was closed to the public at.

Motion to open the meeting to the public.

Recommendation

That the meeting moves out from behind closed doors.

Voting Requirements

Absolute Majority

Council Decision		
Moved: Cr	Seconded: Cr	
Carried/Lost	For	Against

Meeting was reopened to the public at.

Decisions Disclosed from Closed Section of Meeting

21.1 Roadworks Contract

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Council Decision		
Moved: Cr	Seconded: Cr	
Carried/Lost	For	Against

22 MEETING CLOSURE

The Shire President closed the meeting at.