



murchisonshire

Ancient land under brilliant skies

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the

Murchison Shire Council

Held in the Council Chambers, Carnarvon Mullewa Road, Murchison,
on Thursday **28 March 2024**, commencing at 12.00 noon.

Ancient land under brilliant skies

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	DECLARATION OF OPENING/ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS	3
2	RECORD OF ATTENDANCE/APOLOGIES/LEAVE OF ABSENCE	3
3	CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES	3
	3.1 Ordinary Council Meeting – 22 February 2024	3
4	DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS	3
5	RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS PUBLIC QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE	3
6	STANDING ORDERS	4
7	PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	4
8	NEXT MEETING	4
9	APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE.....	4
10	URGENT BUSINESS	4
11	NOTICE OF ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED BEHIND CLOSED DOORS	5
12	ANNOUNCEMENTS BY PRESIDING PERSON WITHOUT DISCUSSION.....	5
13	PETITIONS/DEPUTATIONS/PRESENTATIONS/SUBMISSIONS	5
14	ANNOUNCEMENTS CONCERNING MEETINGS ATTENDED	5
	14.1 Shire President	5
	14.2 Councillors	5
15	REPORTS OF COMMITTEES	6
16	WORKS	7
	16.1 Works Report.....	7
10	URGENT BUSINESS Continued.....	9
	10.1 Murchison Polocrosse Event	9
17	FINANCE.....	10
	17.1 Accounts Paid since the last list was presented to Council	10
	17.2 Financial Activity Statements 29 February 2024	12
	17.3 Grants Commission Advice Special Needs Cost Adjustor Uplift.....	13
18	DEVELOPMENT	14
	18.1 Murchison GeoRegion & Geoparks Constitution.....	14
19	ADMINISTRATION.....	16
	19.1 Local Government Reform Standardised Meeting Procedures	16
	19.2 Commonwealth Local Government Sustainability Inquiry	19
20	CEO ACTIVITY REPORT	20
21	OTHER ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED BEHIND CLOSED DOORS	22
	21.1 Rates Recovery Update	22
22	MEETING CLOSURE.....	23

ATTACHMENTS

1 DECLARATION OF OPENING/ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS

The Shire President declared the meeting open at 12.06pm

2 RECORD OF ATTENDANCE/APOLOGIES/LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Present

Councillors

Cr R Foulkes-Taylor
Cr A Whitmarsh
Cr E Foulkes-Taylor
Cr Q Fowler
Cr M Fowler

Staff

Bill Boehm – CEO
William Herold – Works Manager
Lisa Keen – Executive Manager/DCEO
Travis Bate (RSM) – Financial Accountant

Leave of Absence

Cr G Mead

3 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

3.1 Ordinary Council Meeting – 22 February 2024

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 22 February 2024 be confirmed as an accurate record of proceedings.

Voting Requirements:

Simple Majority

Council Decision

Moved: Cr E Foulkes-Taylor

Seconded: Cr A Whitmarsh

That the minutes of the Ordinary Council meeting held on 22 February 2024 be confirmed as an accurate record of proceedings.

Carried

For

5

Against

0

4 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Refer Item 10.1

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 M Fowler

Seconded: Cr E Foulkes-Taylor

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

- 8.2 Limitation on the number of speeches
- 8.3 Duration of speeches

Carried	For	5	Against	0
----------------	------------	---	----------------	---

7 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

8 NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 24 April 2024

9 APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Nil

10 URGENT BUSINESS

10.1 Murchison Polocrosse Event

Council Decision

Moved: Cr Q Fowler

Seconded: Cr M Fowler

That Council consider the matter of the hiring of Council Facilities for the 2024 Murchison Polocrosse Event as Urgent Business

Carried	For	5	Against	0
----------------	------------	---	----------------	---

11 NOTICE OF ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

17.1.1 Account Listings Paid since the last list was presented to Council.

21.1.1 Rates Recovery Update

12 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY PRESIDING PERSON WITHOUT DISCUSSION

Councillor Response Times

The Shire President raised the matter of recent request from the CEO requesting feedback from Councillors in relation to a recent RFQ for Supply of Fuels and Oils noting that not all Councillors responded back to the CEO/ The Shire President requested that in the future responses be sent back in a timely fashion suggesting that a minimum of 5 business days seemed appropriate ahead of a formal policy being prepared.

13 PETITIONS/DEPUTATIONS/PRESENTATIONS/SUBMISSIONS

Nil

14 ANNOUNCEMENTS CONCERNING MEETINGS ATTENDED

14.1 Shire President

Murchison Mining and Local Government Forum

Attachments: 14.1.1 Summary Letter Murchison Mining and Local Government Forum
 14.1.2 Regional Development Australia Final Report - Mining Industry and Shire Relationships in the Western Australian Murchison Region: Strategies for enhancing balanced economic, environmental and social outcomes.

Cr Emma and I attended the Murchison Mining and Local Government Forum in Geraldton on March 11th, please find a summary letter (*Attachment 14.1.1*) along with a copy of the Final Report (*Attachment 14.1.2*).

I found the forum reasonably constructive but with one fairly major frustration being the lack of representation from the smaller iron ore operators.

There was several longer-term miners (Golden Grove, Westgold etc) but as was pointed out so much of the LG extra workload/hassles are caused by short term iron ore extractors.

Hopefully a few might turn up if there is another one.

Regional Road Group Meeting

Attended the Regional Road Group Meeting via Teams on 25 September 2024

Audit Entrance Meeting

Attended the Audit Entrance Meeting via Phone on 28 September 2024

14.2 Councillors

Cr Emma Foulkes-Taylor

Murchison Mining and Local Government Forum

I attended along with the Shire President the Murchison Mining and Local Government Forum in Geraldton on 11 March 2024

Murchison GeoRegion

Attend online a meeting of the Murchison GeoRegion Project Working Group on 7 March 2024. A few points to note as follows.

- ~ Geosite Signage designed by Raw Creative was endorsed.
- ~ Amendments to the Communications and Marketing Plan (requested from the previous meeting) to include more focus placed on Mining and Pastoral history and culturally including old and new Rabbit Proof Fences. Storytowns to also be included on MGR website.
- ~ Sylvia Vella of Bee-Box Marketing was appointed, subject to acceptance of quote to manage the MGR website as part of the Marketing and Communications Plan
- ~ The Murchison GeoRegion Ancient Lands Brilliant Sky tagline be adopted for branding for events to promote each Shire's unique Murchison GeoRegion features incorporating Geological Survey of WA senior geologists and leading astronomers with more events in region be considered for inclusion on MGR website.

15 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Nil

16 WORKS

16.1 Works Report

File: 12.42
Author: William Herold – Works Manager
Interest Declared: No interest to disclose
Date: 16 March 2024
Attachments:

Construction Crew

In the last few weeks, the crew have been doing the final preparatory work for the stabilising on the Carnarvon-Mullewa Road widening and reconstruction project. Final floodway levels have been put in and centerline marks put in place. By the time Council meets the stabilising operation should be in full swing. This phase should take about 14 to 15 working days assuming no major weather event or breakdowns. It is hoped the sealing team will arrive around April 6 or 7 to commence the sealing work thus minimising the time that the stabilising work will be exposed to heavy traffic.

Maintenance Crew

By the time the Council meets the Maintenance Crew should be approaching the Nookawarra homestead having worked up the Beringarra-Pindar Road and completed the Boolardy-Kalli and Kalli-Cue Roads. The Mileura-Nookawarra and parts of the Beringarra-Cue Road. will also be picked up before they continue up to Beringarra. The Mt.Gould Road will then be done once the Murchison River level has dropped.

Stabilising and Sealing

WA Stabilising will commence works on Tuesday 26 March and as mentioned earlier should take 14 to 15 working days to complete which will be around April 10. It is hoped Bitutek will commence the sealing works around April 6 or 7.

Settlement Power and Water Upgrade

The CEO has advised that the Shire has been successful with an application under the State Government's the Infrastructure Development Fund- Stream 3 - Unlocking Regional Worker Accommodation Opportunities to secure a grant of approximately \$1.1m towards improving the reliability of water and electricity supplies support the development of five key worker accommodation units. The majority of the funding goes towards a new powerhouse with a chlorinator for the current water upgrade project also included. As a likely condition of the grant future worker accommodation via duplexes and a dwelling will follow in later years.

Fuel Supply

The RFQ for the supply and delivery of fuel has finalised with FueleX (our current supplier) being successful.

Caravan Park Ablutions

MI Global Constructions remain on track with the off-site build with progress as follows.

Preliminaries (40%), Concrete Slab (100%), Wall and Roof Framing (75%), Wall & Roof Cladding (75%), Doors & Door Frames (50%), Door Hardware (50%), Plumbing (50%), Electrical (50%) and Cabinetry (50%)

Swimming Pool / Splash Pad

The CEO has advised that the closing of tenders for the Murchison Swimming Pool & Splash Pad Design & Construct Project have been extended by two weeks till the 4 April 2024, meaning that it is now expected to come before Council for consideration at the April 2024 Meeting in lieu of the March 2024 Meeting.

Carnarvon-Mullewa Road

The CEO has advised that MRWA and the City of Greater Geraldton are still in discussions about MRWA taking over the 27 km section of unsealed road on the Carnarvon-Mullewa Rd ahead of us (Shire of Murchison)

potentially becoming sub-contractors to MRWA to oversee the maintenance of this section of road as part of the SKA Route.

Meanwhile MRWA have now provided traffic pavement analysis data for the Carnarvon Mullewa Road. This been referred to Greenfield Technical Services for preliminary advice on a way forward with what is a sophisticated the analysis.

DFES Flood Recovery Works

Final approved cost estimate has been signed for AGRN 1012 (Flood 10)

MRWA RRG Murchison Sub-Group

The CEO has advised that amongst other things at the March meeting of the Murchison Sub-Group of Main Roads WA Regional Roads Group that Cr R Foulkes-Taylor was re-appointed as Chair of the Murchison Sub-Group and the CEO also re-appointed as a member on the Technical Working Group. Both appointments are two-year terms.

Consultation

Chief Executive Officer, Josh Kirk (Greenfield Technical Services)

Recommendation

That Council resolve that the Works Report be noted.

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Council Decision

Moved: Cr Q Fowler

Seconded: Cr A Whitmarsh

That Council resolve that the Works Report be noted.

Carried

For

5

Against

0

Councillor Comments

Councillors R Foulkes-Taylor and E Foulkes-Taylor congratulated the CEO in securing funding for the Settlement Power and Water Upgrade works under the State Government's the Infrastructure Development Fund- Stream 3 - Unlocking Regional Worker Accommodation Opportunities

Cr A Whitmarsh declared an Impartiality Interest in relation to the next Item 10.1 relating to the Murchison Polocrosse Event and left the room at 12.29pm

10 URGENT BUSINESS Continued

10.1 Murchison Polocrosse Event

File:

Author: Bill Boehm – Chief Executive Officer

Interest Declared: No interest to disclose

Date 28 March 2024

Attachments: 10.1.1 Councillor Polocrosse Event Briefing 28 March 2024

Matter for Consideration

Council considered the matter of the hiring of Council Facilities for the 2024 Murchison Polocrosse Event as Urgent Business

Briefing

A copy a background briefing on the Murchison Polocrosse Event provided to all councillors prior to the meeting is attached.

Councillor Discussion

Councillors discussed the local history of the event noting that amongst other things over time has seen a decline in the strength on the local membership of the Murchison Polocrosse Club which used to assist in preparation of the fields and facilities and provision of waste management, firewood and other incidentals with more expense now covered by the Shires' workforce. There was strong support for the event but also a view expressed that fees should be charged for use of the facilities. Last year a donation of \$1,000 was received which is close to what would have been charged if Council's scheduled hire fees had been applied. It was thought that normal fees and booking arrangements for caravan park use on powered and unpowered sites should apply with some fees charged for campsites outside of these areas.

Motion

That Council request a donation of \$1,000 from the Murchison Polocrosse Event Club for use of the Council facilities for the 2024 Murchison Polocrosse Event and advise the Club that normal Council Booking requirements and Fees and charges will apply for the use of powered and unpowered sites and that from the Tuesday prior to and after the event, a fee of \$10 per adult will apply for camping outside of these areas.

Voting Requirements

Absolute Majority

Council Decision

Moved: Cr E Foulkes-Taylor **Seconded: Cr** M Fowler

That Council request a donation of \$1,000 from the Murchison Polocrosse Event Club for use of the Council facilities for the 2024 Murchison Polocrosse Event and confirm the Club that normal Council Booking requirements and Fees and charges will apply for the use of powered and unpowered sites and that from the Tuesday prior to and after the event, a fee of \$10 per adult will apply for camping outside of these areas.

Carried **For** 3 **Against** 1

Note an absolute majority of 4 is required for any amendment to fees and charges meaning that the requested donation of \$1,000 and fee of \$10 per adult to apply for camping outside of powered and unpowered sites within the caravan park cannot be applied unless a motion with revised charges is carried with as absolute majority at a subsequent Council Meeting.

Cr A Whitmarsh returned to the room at 12.58pm.

William Herold left the meeting to attend to work business at 12.58pm. The CEO left the room at 12.59pm and returned at 1.02pm.

Meeting was adjourned for lunch at 1.04pm and reopened at 1.36pm after lunch.

17 FINANCE

17.1 Accounts Paid since the last list was presented to Council

File: 4.37.1
Author: Bill Boehm – Chief Executive Officer
Interest Declared: No interest to disclose
Date: 22 March 2024
Attachments: 17.1.1 EFT & Cheque Details for February 2024 (Elected Members Only)

Matter for Consideration

The *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996 Regulation 13* requires that 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, then the CEO is to prepare a list of accounts paid by the CEO for each month and present this to the next ordinary meeting of the Council after the list has been prepared and have this list recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

A list of payments presented in accordance with *Regulation 13* of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* made since the last report to Council is attached.

Strategic Implications

None

Policy Implications

None

Budget/Financial Implications

Nil

Consultation

Nil

Recommendation

- 1 That that pursuant to LGA s5.23(2)(b) & (e) of the *Local Government Act 1995* that attachment 17.1.1 EFT & Cheque Details for February 2024 be discussed behind closed doors
- 2 That Council receive and note attachment 17.1.1 EFT & Cheque Details for February 2024 and that the accounts since the last report to Council, as provided to Councillors be recorded in the minutes as being presented to Council.

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

1 Item to be Discussed behind closed doors

Council Decision

Moved: Cr A Whitmarsh

Seconded: Cr E Foukes-Taylor

That that pursuant to LGA s5.23(2)(b) & (e) of the *Local Government Act 1995* that attachment 17.1.1 EFT & Cheque Details for February 2024 be discussed behind closed doors

Carried	For	5	Against	0
----------------	------------	---	----------------	---

The meeting was moved to behind closed doors at 1.37pm

3 Motion to open the meeting to the public

Council Decision

Moved: Cr A Whitmarsh

Seconded: Cr M Fowler

That that the Meeting out of closed doors

Carried	For	5	Against	0
----------------	------------	---	----------------	---

The meeting was moved out of closed doors at 1.38pm

2 Decisions Disclosed from the Closed Section of Meeting associated with Attachment Item 17.1.1

Council Decision

Moved: Cr A Whitmarsh

Seconded: Cr Q Fowler

That Council receive and note attachment 17.1.1 EFT & Cheque Details for February 2024 and that the accounts since the last report to Council, as provided to Councillors be recorded in the minutes as being presented to Council.

Carried	For	5	Against	0
----------------	------------	---	----------------	---

17.2 Financial Activity Statements 29 February 2024

File: 2.6
Author: Travis Bate (RSM) – Financial Accountant
Interest Declared: No interest to disclose
Date: 22 March 2024
Attachments: 17.2.1 Monthly Management Financial Report February 2024

Matter for Consideration

The Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996 Regulation 34 requires that local government report monthly and prescribes what is required to be reported. Council is required to consider and receive the Monthly Financial Statements.

Comment

These statements are being presented to meet a statutory obligation to have each month's end and report presented within the following two months.

Budget/Financial Implications:

Reports showing year to date financial performance allow monitoring of actual expenditure, revenue and overall results against budget targets.

Consultation

RSM Australia

Recommendation

That Council note the financial statements as presented for the period ending 29 February 2024 as attached.

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Council Decision

Moved: Cr Q Fowler

Seconded: Cr M Fowler

That Council note the financial statements as presented for the period ending 29 February 2024 as attached.

Carried

For

5

Against

0

17.3 Grants Commission Advice Special Needs Cost Adjustor Uplift

File: 3.4
Author: Bill Boehm – Chief Executive Officer
Interest Declared: No interest to disclose
Date: 22 March 2024
Attachments: 17.3.1 Grants Commission Advice Special Needs Cost Adjustor Uplift

Update

Council has been advised by the State Grants Commission that the Shires's submission for an amendment to the general-purpose grant methodology, submitted in March 2023, for an uplift to the Special Needs Cost Adjustor for the provision of power water and other unique costs relevant to the operation of the Shire, has been successful.

As indicated in the attached advice the Commission has increased the Special Needs Cost Adjustor for the Shire from \$80,000 to \$120,000, applicable for the 2024/25 Financial Assistance Grants Calculation.

For Information

18 DEVELOPMENT

18.1 Murchison GeoRegion & Geoparks Constitution

File: 2.6
Author: Bill Boehm – Chief Executive Officer
Interest Declared: No interest to disclose
Date: 22 March 2024
Attachments: 18.1.1 Murchison GeoRegion and Geoparks Incorporated Constitution

Matter for Consideration

Council endorsement of the Murchison GeoRegion and Geoparks Incorporated Constitution

Background

Over several years, as auspicated through the Murchison Executive Group (MEG), the Murchison GeoRegion Project Working Group (MGR PWG) has been working towards the creation of a separate legal identity so as to more advance the operation of the GeoRegion in a long-term sustainable manner. In order to meet potential UNESCO recognition a separate legal entity is required. After considerable investigation the MGR PWG identified that this would be best undertaken as a separate Incorporated Association and with the endorsement of MEG have been working towards a suitable model.

Attached is formal advice from the MGR PWG along with a copy of the proposed constitution with advice that this document is now ready to be presented to all seven Murchison Geo Region CEO's and through to respective Shire Councils, for endorsement.

As previously advised all Shires are well represented on the MGR Project Working Group, including with very engaged CEO representative members, as well as three Councillors including a Shire President This has proved very valuable in bringing this document together for endorsement.

The MGR PWG have requested responses are received by the end of March and, given this would be Easter, have requested that responses by Thursday 28th March 2024

Comment

It is extremely pleasing that this stage of the process has been reached and that the intent of all Shires within the region being involved long-term has been retained with each local government in the region having a representative on the Board of Management.

Statutory Environment

Associations Incorporation Act 2015

Policy Implications

None

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.

Budget/Financial Implications

Along with other participating Shire, budget allocations have been made to assist in funding MGR PWG activities. Ongoing budget allocations will be expected.

Strategic Implications

Vision Statement	<i>Working together to preserve the unique character of the Shire, supporting diverse and sustainable lifestyle and economic opportunities.</i>
Economic Objective 1	<i>To develop the region's economic potential to encourage families and businesses to stay in the area.</i>
Strategies	
Tourism Development	<i>To promote and support a sustainable tourism industry in the Shire of Murchison.</i>

Consultation

Murchison Executive Group (MEG), Murchison GeoRegion Project Working Group (MGR PWG).

Recommendation

That Council endorse the Murchison GeoRegion and Geoparks Incorporated Constitution as attached.

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Council Decision

Moved: Cr E Foulkes-Taylor

Seconded: Cr A Whitmarsh

That Council endorse the Murchison GeoRegion and Geoparks Incorporated Constitution as attached.

Carried

For

Against

0

19 ADMINISTRATION

19.1 Local Government Reform Standardised Meeting Procedures

File:	14.19.6
Author:	Bill Boehm – Chief Executive Officer
Interest Declared:	No interest to disclose
Date	22 March 2024
Attachments:	19.1.1 WALGA Standardised Meetings Discussion Paper - March 2024 - CEO Comments 19.1.2 DLGSC Standardised Meeting Procedures Consultation Paper 19.1.3 Murchison Standing Orders Local Law 2001

Matter for Consideration:

Council submission to WALGA and DLGSC regarding the State Government's proposed reforms to the *Local Government Act 1995* in relation to Meeting Procedures

Background

The State Government is implementing a number of reforms to the *Local Government Act 1995* through changes to legislative compliance to suit, what the Government sees as a need to improve transparency and accountability in local government in Western Australia, to deliver what they claim to be benefits to ratepayers and residents. Standardising council and committee procedures is seen as part of these reforms.

The Government is looking for a consistent approach to all local government council and committee meetings with the assertion that it will make it easier and simpler for people to participate in and observe council meetings, wherever they are held. Establishing one standard is expected to simplify and improve training for council members and local government staff. It can also strengthen the enforcement of breaches of meeting procedures (for instance, if a person repeatedly and unreasonably disrupts a meeting).

Currently, it is usual practice for local governments to have local laws and policies in place to govern the conduct of council meetings. The Government sees that this approach means that there can be variation in how members of the public can engage with council meetings.

The Local Government Amendment Act 2023 inserts section 5.33A, to allow standardised meeting procedures for all local governments to be made in the form of Regulations or model provisions. The State Government intends under section 5.33A to make Regulations that apply to all local governments and an order of the Governor under section 3.17 of the Act to repeal all existing local government meetings procedures, standing orders or council meeting local laws.

It is intended that the new standard meeting procedures (also known as "standing orders") apply to all council and committee meetings held by local governments. It is also intended that Regulations will contain consistent rules for how meetings are held. It is envisaged that relevant elements of Parts 2 and 3 of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996 (the Regulations) would be incorporated into the new standardised meeting procedures.

The Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC) will also develop reference materials for council members, local government staff and communities to assist in ensuring consistency throughout the sector.

Consultation Process

DLGSC

As a result, DLGSC have developed a consultation paper as attached and have invited local governments, council members, Chief Executive Officers (CEOs), local government employees, groups and associations, and members of the community to consider the proposals and provide feedback. Preferred method for providing a submission is the online feedback form. It is preferred that the feedback form is used to guide

responses, general submissions and suggestions on any relevant topic can be provided via email to actreview@dlgsc.wa.gov.au

WALGA

As part of this process WALGA is conscious that Local Government consultation leading to the development of the *Local Government Amendment Act 2023* evidenced broad sector support for standardisation of meeting procedures.

WALGA is equally aware that while many current Meeting Procedures / Standing Orders Local Laws include a solid core of common provisions, there is also some diversity across a range of Local Laws content. It also recognises the challenge inherent in developing standardised meeting procedures and the potential they may differ significantly from, or even exclude, well-entrenched Local Law practices and procedures applied at Council and Committee meetings. Participating in the consultation process is therefore crucial to developing workable standardised meeting procedures.

The WALGA Discussion Paper is developed with a view to being read in conjunction with the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries Standardised Meeting Procedures Consultation Paper, released in February 2024. The Discussion Paper melds the Consultation Paper content with WALGA Comment that is intended to provoke thought and lead to a considered response to the 34 questions posed by the Department. It is WALGA's recommendation that Local Government administrators and Council Members work collaboratively in determining a response to the Consultation Paper.

WALGA would greatly appreciate receiving your formal response by close of business Monday 29 April 2024. This is a different timeframe to the Department's Consultation Paper closing date of 29 May 2024; however, it is necessary to facilitate development of a consolidated advocacy position that reflects the aggregated views of the sector on standardised meeting procedures.

WALGA have also encouraged each Council to provide their own submission direct to DLGSC as well as to WALGA.

Murchison Shire Response

For background a copy of Council's Murchison Standing Orders Local Law 2001 is attached. Also attached is a copy of WALGA's Standardised Meetings Discussion Paper - March 2024 as described with CEO Comments included.

Comments

The CEO comments provided within the WALGA template are shown in red and have been provided as means to aid Council's deliberations, but should not be seen as recommendations per say, merely a summary to assist Council in determining its position.

This aspect is one of a large number of the State Government Reform processes for Local Government aimed to suit what the Government sees as a need to improve transparency and accountability in local government in Western Australia to deliver what they perceive to be benefits to ratepayers and residents.

By definition reform means "*make changes in (something, especially an institution or practice) in order to improve it. Reform refers to the improvement or amendment of what is wrong, corrupt, unsatisfactory, etc.*"

It is difficult to see within Murchison and one would expect the vast majority of local governments that there is anything fundamentally wrong, corrupt or unsatisfactory with current legislative mechanisms or operations generally. For reforms to work there must be improvements.

With this in mind I have drawn on my experience within Murchison and also elsewhere in other jurisdictions in relation to operating under various Meeting Procedures. The following observations are provided.

- ~ In Murchison current arrangements have worked well but like all local governments the Shire will be required to comply with new operating requirements.
- ~ The conduct of meetings within Murchison has created an operating environment that is conducive to a collaborative approach between the Executive and Elected Members. This is based on mutual trust and respect but significantly enhanced by the way meetings are conducted, in part through the regular

suspension of standing orders. Any changes to this operating environment compromised through legislative requirements will not constitute reform.

- ~ Notwithstanding that many current Meeting Procedures / Standing Orders Local Laws include a solid core of common provisions, there is also some diversity and challenging to develop standardised meeting procedures there is potential they may differ significantly from, or even exclude, well-entrenched practices locally.
- ~ Like all legislative controls there is an acute difference between empowering an operation and strict compliance. From previous experience having set meeting procedures was essential for the Presiding Officer and CEO to manage the operating environment but this also created formality, letter of the law operations, and a more debate focused sometimes adversarial environment, in stark contrast to councilor workshops which were generally collegiate.
- ~ The Council's current Standing Orders Local Law 2001 has a number of controls and requirements in place which are essential if and when circumstances arise that they may need to be used. Strengthening them through a uniform approach is not at issue, so long as they can be varied through some form of suspension of standing orders or through inbuilt flexibilities.
- ~ Along with a number of other Local Government Reforms additions compliance reporting steps, which currently do not exist nor apply in other jurisdictions are proposed. This hardly meets the definition of an improvement.

It is also my view that on this particular topic, Council is well versed and has significant knowledge and experience locally that can be brought to bear on the matter. From a timeline perspective, if Council so chooses it can hold this item over till the April 2024 Council Meeting. Once finalised a copy can be sent to WALGA and the State Government.

Statutory Environment:

Local Government Act 1995

Strategic, Policy and Financial Implications:

Nil

Consultation

WALGA, Lyn Fogg (WALGA Governance Specialist),

Recommendation

That Council.

- 1 Note the Chief Executive Officer's Local Government Reform Standardised Meeting Procedures Report
- 2 Review the CEO's comments included as part of WALGA's Standardised Meetings Discussion Paper - March 2024 and finalise its position.
- 3 Provide the finalised submission to WALGA and the State Government within the required deadlines.

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Council Decision

Moved: Cr E Foulkes-Taylor **Seconded: Cr** Q Fowler

That Council.

- 1 Note the Chief Executive Officer's Local Government Reform Standardised Meeting Procedures Report
- 2 Review the CEO's comments included as part of WALGA's Standardised Meetings Discussion Paper - March 2024 and finalise its position.
- 3 Provide the finalised submission to WALGA and the State Government within the required deadlines.
- 4 Councilors to provide comments to the Chief Executive Officer by 14 April 2024

Carried **For** 5 **Against** 0

19.2 Commonwealth Local Government Sustainability Inquiry

File: 14.19.6
Author: Bill Boehm – Chief Executive Officer
Interest Declared: No interest to disclose
Date: 22 March 2024
Attachments: 19.2.1 House of Reps Local Gov Sustainability Equiry

Matter for Consideration

Council decision as whether to put in a submission to the Commonwealth's House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport inquiry examining local government sustainability.

Background

The Commonwealth's House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport has announced a new inquiry examining local government sustainability. Copy of details of the Inquiry including Terms of Reference and Committee Membership is attached.

Broadly speaking the Committee is has prioritised gaining a deeper understanding of local government financial sustainability and funding frameworks and the challenges faced by local government in servicing infrastructure requirements across Australia's regional rural and remote locations.

Submissions close 3 May 2024.

Comment

I am of the view that given our remote location and unique operation a local perspective view could be of benefit to the Inquiry. In this instance a "collective" sector view is not necessarily being asked for with a "local" touch perhaps more important. There will of course involve some time and effort required but a collective effort might not go astray. How much impact we may have is unknown. Perhaps it would be minimal but certainly something is better than nothing.

Recommendation

Council may not see this as a priority hence it is my view that it is up for Council to decide.

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Council Decision

Moved: Cr A Whitmarsh **Seconded: Cr** E Foulkes-Taylor

That Councillors provide comments to the Chief Executive Officer on the Commonwealth's House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport local government sustainability inquiry for inclusion in an agenda item at the next meeting.

Carried **For** 5 **Against** 0

20 CEO ACTIVITY REPORT

File:

Author: Bill Boehm – Chief Executive Officer

Interest Declared: No interest to disclose

Date: 24 March 2024

Attachments: Nil

General

The table below provides an update of activities undertaken since the last report.

Date	Activity
20.02.2024	Swimming Pool Splash Pad Tender. Governance Review Work
21.02.2024	Attend MRWA Technical Working Group Meeting via Teams. Council Day Preparation & Annual Report Amendment Work. Meeting with Works Manager
22.02.2024	Camp Oven Muster Festival Working Group Meeting. Audit Committee, Council Meeting Minutes & follow up actions
23.02.2024	Council Meeting Minutes & follow up actions. TOIL
25.02.2024	Council Meeting Minutes & follow up actions.
26.02.2024	Finalise Council Minutes. Telephone discussions including touch base with Executive Manager DCEO and Cr E Foulkes-Taylor. Attend to emails and Phone calls. TOIL
27.02.2024	TOIL. MRWA Project Variation Request. Emails send Phone calls
28.02.2024	Compliance Audit Return. SKA Traffic Analysis Update. Emails Phone Calls.
29.02.2024	TOIL
1.03.2024	Meeting with Works Manager & Geraldton Builder. Council Meeting follow up work. Bush Fire Brigade administration work. Annual Report Work
2.03.2024	Delegations Work
4.03.2024	Public Holiday
5.03.2024	Follow up Council Actions. Fuel RFQ review work. Meeting with Executive Manager DCEO and Alex Aitken (KD.1). Telephone touch base with Leon Wilson (MRWA)
6.03.2024	Catch up with Works Manager & Executive Manager DCEO. 10M Meeting with Works Manager & Shire President. Finalise Fuel RFQ Review. Attend Audit Planning Meeting via Zoom with Armada Audit
7.03.2024	Touch base with Leon Wilson (MRWA). Finalise Bush Fire Appointments
8.03.2024	TOIL
10.03.2024	Splash Pad Pool Works. Finalise Fuel Supply Contract. Equivalent travel to Gero to attend Meetings
11.03.2024	Attend Local Government and Mining in the Murchison Region and MEG Meetings in Geraldton
12.03.2024	Meet with MRWA Acting Director (Louise Adamson) regarding SKA Route in Geraldton. Attend MRWA RRG Murchison Subgroup Meeting in Geraldton. Drive back to Murchison. Attend to emails
13.03.2024	Attend PIA Community School Council Meeting (which was cancelled at late notice) at Pia. Rates Work. Meetings with Works Manager & Executive Manager DCEO. Touch base with Chris Brayton (CSIRO) via Phone
14.03.2024	Rates Work. Infrastructure Development Fund Follow Up. Meeting with Cr E Foulkes-Taylor & Frances Pollock and MAC
15.03.2024	Meeting with Potential Swimming Pool Splash Pad Tenderer. MRWA Work. Rates Work. Travel to Perth for SAT Tribunal Mediation Hearing in Perth
18.03.2024	Attend SAT Tribunal Rates Mediation Hearing in Perth. TOIL

Date	Activity
19.03.2024	Travel back from Perth. Attend and Chair LEMA Meeting in Murchison. Roads to Recovery and MRWA Work. Rates follow up work
20.03.2024	Rates Work. Catch up with Executive Manager DCEO. Telephone discussions with legal personnel regarding rating matters. Commence draft responses concerning WALGA Standardised Meeting Procedures Discussion Paper
21.03.2024 to 22.03.2024	Agenda Work. Meeting Procedures Discussion Paper
23.03.2024 to 24.03.2024	Agenda Work
25.03.2024	Finalise Agenda. Attend Pia School Council and Regional Road Group Meetings via Teams.

Recommendation

That Council note the CEO's Activity Report.

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Council Decision

Moved: Cr M Fowler

Seconded: Cr A Whitmarsh

That Council note the CEO's Activity Report

Carried

For 5

Against 0

21 OTHER ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

Other Items to be Discussed behind closed doors

21.1 Rates Recovery Update

Recommendation

That that pursuant to LGA s5.23(2)(b)(c)(d) & (e) of the *Local Government Act 1995* that the following matters be discussed behind closed doors

21.1 Rates Recovery Update

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Council Decision

Moved: Cr E Foulkes-Taylor

Seconded: Cr A Whitmarsh

That that pursuant to LGA s5.23(2)(b)(c)(d) & (e) of the *Local Government Act 1995* that the following matters be discussed behind closed doors

21.1 Rates Recovery Update

Carried	For	5	Against	0
----------------	------------	---	----------------	---

The meeting was moved to behind closed doors at 2.07pm

Motion to open the meeting to the public

Recommendation

That the meeting come from behind closed doors

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Council Decision

Moved: Cr E Foulkes-Taylor

Seconded: Cr M Fowler

That the meeting come from behind closed doors

Carried	For	5	Against	0
----------------	------------	---	----------------	---

The meeting was moved out of closed doors at 2.25pm

Decisions Disclosed from the Closed Section of Meeting

21.1 Rates Recovery Update

Council Decision

Moved: Cr A Whitmarsh

Seconded: Cr Q Fowler

That Council note the Chief Executive Officers Rates Recovery Report and endorse the actions and proposed actions to be taken.

Carried	For	5	Against	0
----------------	------------	---	----------------	---

22 MEETING CLOSURE

The Shire President closed the meeting at 2.26pm.

Minutes of the Meeting were confirmed at the Council Meeting held on 24 April 2024

Signed..... Presiding Officer