

Great Eastern Country Zone Minutes

11 April 2024

Hosted by the Shire of Kellerberrin
Recreation and Leisure Centre
110 Massingham Street, Kellerberrin

Meeting commenced at 9.33am

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ATTACHMENTS

The following are provided as attachments to the Minutes

1. Item 5.1.1 Lotterywest presentation
2. Item 7.5 Water Corporation presentation

1 OPENING, ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

1.1 OPENING

The Chair opened the meeting at 9.33am.

1.2 ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS

Shire of Bruce Rock

2 Voting Delegates from each Member Council

President Cr Ram Rajagopalan

Cr Stephen Strange (**State Council Representative**)

Shire of Cunderdin

President Cr Alison Harris

Mr Stuart Hobley, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting

Shire of Dowerin

President Cr Robert Trepp

Cr Darrel Hudson

Mr Aaron Wooldridge, A/Chief Executive Officer, non-voting

Shire of Kellerberrin

Deputy President Cr Emily Ryan

Mr Raymond Griffiths, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting

Shire of Kondinin

Mr David Burton, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting

Shire of Koorda

President Cr Jannah Stratford

Mr Zac Donovan, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting

Shire of Merredin

President Cr Mark McKenzie

Deputy President Cr Renee Manning

Mr John Merrick, A/Chief Executive Officer, non-voting

Shire of Mount Marshall

President Cr Tony Sachse (**Zone Chair**)

Mr Ben McKay, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting

Shire of Narembeen

President Cr Scott Stirrat

Cr Michael Currie (observer)

Shire of Nungarin

President Cr Pippa de Lacy

Mr Ric Halse, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting

Shire of Tammin

Deputy President Cr Tanya Nicholls

Ms Joanne Soderlund, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting

Shire of Trayning

President Cr Melanie Brown

Cr Mark Leslie (observer)

Ms Leanne Parola, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting

Shire of Westonia	President Cr Mark Crees Deputy President Cr Ross Della Bosca
Shire of Wyalkatchem	President Cr Owen Garner Cr Rod Lawson Kerr Cr Christopher Loton (observer) Cr Mischa Stratford (observer) Ms Sabine Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
Shire of Yilgarn	President Cr Wayne Della Bosca Mr Nic Warren, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
GUESTS	
Water Corporation	Ms Rebecca Bowler, Manager Customer & Stakeholder – Goldfields & Agricultural Region
Wheatbelt Development Commission	Ms Renee Manning, Principal Regional Development Officer – Central East
Lotterywest	Lisa Jackson, Grants Development Manager
MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT	Hon Steve Martin MLC, Member for the Agricultural Region Hon Mia Davies MLA, Member for Central Wheatbelt
WALGA	James McGovern, Manager Governance & Procurement Meghan Dwyer, Executive Officer Governance

1.3 APOLOGIES

MEMBERS

Shire of Bruce Rock	Mr Darren Mollenoyux, Chief Executive Officer
Shire of Dowerin	Deputy President Cr Nadine McMorran
Shire of Mount Marshall	Deputy President Cr Nick Gillett
Shire of Mukinbudin	President Cr Gary Shadbolt Mr Dirk Sellenger, Chief Executive Officer
Shire of Narembeen	Ms Rebecca McCall, Chief Executive Officer
Shire of Nungarin	Deputy President Cr Gary Coumbe
Shire of Tammin	Cr Nick Caffell
Shire of Westonia	Mr Bill Price, Chief Executive Officer
Shire of Yilgarn	Deputy President Cr Bryan Close
MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT	Hon Martin Aldridge MLC, Member for Agricultural Region Hon Colin de Grussa MLC, Member for Agricultural Region

GUESTS

Main Roads WA
Regional Development
Australia WA

Department of Local
Government, Sport and Cultural
Industries

Mr Mohammad Siddiqui, Regional Manager Wheatbelt
Mr Josh Pomykala, Director Regional Development

Ms Samantha Cornthwaite, Regional Director Wheatbelt

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We, the Great Eastern Country Zone of WALGA acknowledge the continuing connection of Aboriginal people to Country, culture and community, and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Nil

4 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Nil

5 GUEST SPEAKERS / DEPUTATIONS

5.1 SPEAKERS FOR THE APRIL ZONE MEETING

5.1.1 Lotterywest

Lisa Jackson, Grants Development Manager, made a presentation to the Zone on funding processes and any potential areas of support Lotterywest can offer to the Great Eastern Country Zone region.

The presentation is attached (Attachment 1)

Noted

6 MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Members of the State Government in attendance were invited to provide a brief update on matters relevant to the Zone.

- Hon Steve Martin MLC, Member for the Agricultural Region
- Hon Mia Davies MLA, Member for Central Wheatbelt

Noted

7 AGENCY REPORTS

7.1 DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, SPORT AND CULTURAL INDUSTRIES

Samanta Cornthwaite, Regional Director Wheatbelt, was an apology for the meeting.

The DLGSC report was submitted for the Zone.

Executive Officer comment:

WALGA has contacted the Department and are working with them to allocate attendance at some Zone meetings. The Zone requested if an officer from the Department is attending, they would prefer an officer from the Local Government portfolio.

Noted

7.2 WHEATBELT DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Renee Manning, Principal Regional Development Officer

The Wheatbelt Development Commission report was submitted for information.

Noted

7.3 REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUSTRALIA WHEATBELT

Josh Pomykala, Director Regional Development was an apology for the meeting.

The Regional Development report was submitted for the Zone.

The Zone expressed its congratulations to Ms Mandy Walker who was awarded the 2024 AgriFutures Rural Women's Award for her project to help Wheatbelt businesses participate in the defence industry supply chain. The Zone requested the Executive Officer send a letter of congratulations to Ms Walker.

Noted

7.4 MAIN ROADS WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Mohammad Siddiqui, Regional Manager Wheatbelt is an apology for the meeting.

The Main Road Western Australia report was submitted for the Zone.

Shire of Westonia informed that the Carrabin Roadhouse intersection with Great Eastern Highway, the condition of which was discussed at previous meetings, has been repaired.

Noted

7.5 WATER CORPORATION

Rebecca Bowler, Manager Customer and Stakeholder

A short presentation was given to the Zone (Attachment 2).

Ms Bowler informed that the Water Corporation Board is due to consider an internal review of the serious storm event of February 2024 with information likely to be provided to the next Zone meeting.

Noted

**The Zone adjourned for a short break at 11.18am.
The meeting recommenced at approximately 11.30am.**

8 MINUTES

8.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES FROM THE GREAT EASTERN COUNTRY ZONE MEETING HELD ON 22 FEBRUARY 2024

The Minutes of the Great Eastern Country Zone meeting held on 22 February 2024 have previously been circulated to Member Councils.

RESOLUTION

**Moved: Shire of Westonia
Seconded: Shire of Yilgarn**

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Great Eastern Country Zone held on 22 February 2024 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

CARRIED

8.2 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES FROM THE GREAT EASTERN COUNTRY ZONE MEETING HELD ON 22 FEBRUARY 2024

8.2.1 Carriage Lighting – Rail Network

Background:

At the February Zone meeting, it was resolved that:

That the Zone Executive Officer request a comment from WALGA on their capacity to advocate for change, with an item to be prepared for the next Great Eastern Zone meeting.

Comment

The following comment has been provided by WALGA's Executive Manager Infrastructure:

WALGA is a stakeholder, but not leading advocacy to improve the conspicuity of trains. Further to the advice to the November Zone meeting the following activities have been undertaken:

- WALGA participated in a workshop and safety review of a trial installation of LED headlights, additional side and brow lighting to the existing locomotive fleet owned by CBH and operated by Aurizon. The workshop noted that this lighting is additional to required rail standards and focussed on potential risks of moving beyond current standards and risk mitigation actions.
- ALGA, representing the Local Government sector nationally, participated in the rail crossing safety roundtable in Brisbane in early March. Advocacy highlighted that with more than 20,000 level crossings intersecting roads and paths across the country, the safe system needs to deliver significantly more than public education and enforcement.

The Office of National Rail Safety Regulator (ONRSR) is currently consulting on a draft [Code of Practice – Level Crossings and Train Visibility](#) as requested by the Infrastructure and Transport Ministers. This code of practice will set out best practice to the industry and is intended to be admissible in a proceeding as evidence of whether or not a rail operator has complied with a duty or obligation under the *Rail Safety National Law*. Consultation is open until Thursday 11 April.

WALGA does not have sufficient resources to prioritise development of a submission in the four week consultation period.

Noted

8.2.2 Medicare Rebate

Background

At the February Zone meeting, it was resolved that:

That the Zone Executive Officer write to Medicare / Services Australia and inform that the WALGA Great Eastern Country Zone is opposed to any change to the Medicare rebate for initial telehealth consultations with specialist doctors.

The Zone Executive Officer sent correspondence to the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) Review Committee (MRAC).

Comment

The MRAC acknowledged the Zone's correspondence and advised the following:

As the consultation process closed on 6 November 2023 your submission will be considered more broadly by the department and we thank you for taking the time to provide feedback.

For future updates on the progress of this and other MRAC reviews, please monitor the [MRAC Webpage](#) on the Department of Health and Aged Care website.

Noted

8.2.3 Great Eastern Country Zone Conference 2025

Background:

At the February Zone meeting, a Zone Conference Planning Subcommittee was established. Members of the committee are Cr Melanie Brown, Cr Jannah Stratford, Cr

Ram Rajagopalan, Cr Gary Shadbolt, Cr Tony Sachse, Cr Stephen Strange and Cr Mark Crees.

Comment:

The Zone secretariat will meet in early April with WALGA's Senior Adviser Events Michelle Dayman to initiate development of priority actions as agenda items for the initial meeting of the subcommittee.

Executive Officer comment

WALGA staff have met. An agenda for a meeting of the Subcommittee (TBC) will be prepared and distributed. An update and proposals for the Conference will be provide at the next Zone meeting.

Noted

8.3 MINUTES OF THE GREAT EASTERN COUNTRY ZONE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 2 APRIL 2024

The Minutes of the Great Eastern Country Zone Executive Committee meeting held on 2 April 2024 were submitted for the Zone.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Shire of Nungarin

Seconded: Shire of Cunderdin

That the Minutes of the Great Eastern Country Zone Executive Committee meeting held on 2 April 2024 be received.

CARRIED

8.4 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE GREAT EASTERN COUNTRY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 2 APRIL 2024

8.4.1 WoWem Sundowner

Background

On March 15, Cr Alison Harris in partnership with other Members of the Great Eastern Country Zone, hosted a Sundowner for female councillors in the region; "Women of the Wheatbelt Elected Members Sundowner". At the February meeting of the Zone, it was resolved that a contribution up to the value of \$1,000 could be made to this event. No invoice has been received to date.

WALGA's communication team will be highlighting this event to the sector.

President Cr Harris provided the following update:

- Approximately 25 elected members attended.
- Positive feedback was received.
- There was interest in a meeting of the group at the LG Convention.
- Thanked the Hon Mia Davies, the Zone, and others, for their contributions to the event.

The Zone Executive Officer confirmed an invoice for \$625.00 is being processed for payment.

Noted

9 ZONE BUSINESS

9.1.1 Enhanced and Alternative Education Opportunities for Regional WA

The WALGA Secretariat requests consideration of the following item from the Great Southern Country Zone.

Background

The Great Southern Country Zone has written to the Minister for Education, Hon. Tony Buti MLA seeking support to prioritise increased State Government investment to improve regional education, including:

- Increased access to alternative programs for students disaffected by main-stream education, those at risk or who have specific learning needs, who may be disruptive, falling behind and at risk of failing to learn; providing these students with intensive support, active, empathic, and practical instruction, combined with health and other services to enable their success.
- Increased secondary education distance ATAR, VET and other WACE subject courses, if necessary supplemented by private providers, with qualified teacher mentoring and support provided in schools closest to students, supplemented with online access to subject specialist teachers to enable student success.
- Implement strategies to attract and retain quality teachers and subject specialists in remote communities, including:
 - Subsidised high standard GROH housing.
 - Increased financial bonuses, for remote locations and to encourage longer term retention.
- Providing sufficient GROH housing for State Government employees to reduce pressure on regional private rental availability and improve housing security for teachers and all Government service staff when transferring to regional locations.

The Great Southern Country Zone's call to action from State Government, seeks to reduce disadvantage for students living in regional Western Australia, so they can access the same quality educational opportunities available in metropolitan and regional centres, without need to attend boarding schools. In addition, these strategies will also deliver substantial economic and social benefit for regional communities.

Comment

If your region also experiences disadvantage in educational opportunities, the Great Southern Country Zone now seeks your consideration of the below recommendations and if the Great Eastern Country Zone accepts the recommendations below, then your Zone may use the above content to assist in developing your submissions.

The Great Southern Country Zone communicated with the Minister on the following matters:

- Supports the call to action to reduce regional disadvantage in educational opportunities;
- Agrees to write to the Minister for Education requesting action; and
- Requests the WALGA Secretariat to advocate to State Government on this matter.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Shire of Bruce Rock

Seconded: Shire of Kellerberrin

That the Great Eastern Country Zone:

- 1. Supports the call to action to reduce regional disadvantage in educational opportunities;**
- 2. Agrees to write to the Minister for Education requesting action; and**
- 3. Requests the WALGA Secretariat to advocate to State Government on this matter.**

CARRIED

9.1.2 Agricultural Land Use

WALGA has received a request from WEROC for a motion be presented to the GECZ for consideration.

Background

The Wheatbelt region is becoming an increasingly attractive place for investors seeking to decarbonise their operations and meet their environmental, sustainable and governance (ESG) obligations.

Project proponents are active in the region, seeking to develop projects across renewable energy (wind and solar farms), tree planting (for carbon offsets, biodiversity or nature repair credits, clearing offsets) and biofuel production. All are at various stages of development.

Without a coordinated or considered approach to settlement of those investments into the current predominantly agricultural landscape, there is a risk that poor outcomes may result for Wheatbelt communities, the economy and the environment.

Current Situation

This issue is not new and has been raised in zone meetings across the Wheatbelt region.

The 2023 WALGA State Council Annual General Meeting included a resolution that included referral to the WALGA People and Place Policy team for further work to be undertaken on:

5.2 Land Use Policy - that WALGA establish and promote policies to protect and prioritise the preservation of agricultural land against its displacement by non-agricultural activities that lead to a net reduction of the State's productive agricultural land.

In November 2023, the Avon Midland Zone resolved:

That the Zone recommends to the WA Local Government Association that in considering land use policy WALGA establish polices that provide local governments options to protect and prioritise the preservation of agricultural land against its displacement by non-agricultural activities that lead to a net reduction of the State's productive agricultural land.

At the February 2024 GECZ meeting, Cr. Crees spoke to item 9.4.1, where "Agricultural land use" was endorsed as a new strategic priority for the Zone. He noted concern about the impact of large scale land use change such as trees for carbon offsets on communities and the local economy.

Local government authorities in the Zone, including WEROC members are actively grappling with proponents seeking to undertake projects that will result in significant land use change across their Shires. Many of these land uses are driven by private and public decarbonisation ambitions.

Rather than individual local governments tackling this issue, WEROC proposes the Great Eastern Country Zone request WALGA to undertake investigation and provide advice to assist local governments in preparing to engage with proponents that helps minimise negative impacts and maximises positive outcomes for communities and the region.

Recommendation

That WEROC recommend to GECZ that WALGA;

1. In considering Agricultural Land Use, establishes and promotes policy templates to guide Local Governments for their individual adoption to protect and prioritise the preservation of agricultural land against its displacement by non-agricultural activities that lead to a net reduction of the State's productive agricultural land.
2. Within the Policy includes such uses but not limited to tree planting for offsets or carbon, renewable energy generation and transmission.
3. Investigates potential impacts to local government rates on rural land, that has approved long term tree planting for different purposes, for example but not limited to planting for carbon offsets, planting for clearing offsets, or planting for renewable fuels; and renewable energy investments.
4. Provides advice to local government on what Policies or Special Area Rates should be considered for the land affected.

Clarifying comments

As part of its investigation WALGA would consider:

- a) Land use change that relates to farmland where the primary purpose remains farming, but a portion of the land is used for renewable energy generation or tree planning,
- b) Land use changes that relate to farmland where the primary purpose becomes renewable energy generation or tree planting.

It is assumed for the purposes of this investigation that all rural land used for agriculture is considered "productive".

As part of its investigation WALGA will engage with Local Governments and landowners and work closely with agencies such as Department of Planning, Lands & Heritage, Department of Water and Environmental Regulation and Department of Primary Industries & Regional Development.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Shire of Merredin
Seconded: Shire Westonia

That the Great Eastern Country Zone recommend that WALGA

- 1. In considering Agricultural Land Use, establishes and promotes policy templates to guide Local Governments for their individual adoption to protect and prioritise the preservation of agricultural land against its displacement by non-agricultural activities that lead to a net reduction of the State's productive agricultural land.**
- 2. Within the Policy includes such uses but not limited to tree planting for offsets or carbon, renewable energy generation and transmission.**
- 3. Investigates potential impacts to local government rates on rural land, that has approved long term tree planting for different purposes, for example but not limited to planting for carbon offsets, planting for clearing offsets, or planting for renewable fuels; and renewable energy investments.**
- 4. Provides advice to local government on what Policies or Special Area Rates should be considered for the land affected.**

CARRIED

9.1.3 Adoption of Policy and Advocacy Prioritisation Framework

By Kathy Robertson, Manager Association and Corporate Governance

Background

State Council uses a Policy and Advocacy Prioritisation Framework to guide discussion and decision-making on policy and advocacy issues. The Framework was developed in 2020 on the request of State Council to assist State Councillors in determining the priority of a particular issue relative to existing (and competing) policy and advocacy priorities.

The Framework (included below) utilises 11 criteria to sharpen thinking (e.g. the impact on the Local Government sector, the number of Member Local Governments affected, the level of support amongst the public or other stakeholders, etc.), and encourage decision-makers to consider the wider context and impacts of the issue before settling on a pathway forward.

The Great Southern Country Zone also adopted the Prioritisation Framework not long after it was developed in 2020.

Comment

It is proposed that all Zones consider adopting the Policy and Advocacy Prioritisation Framework as included below.

If the Zone were to adopt the Prioritisation Framework, Zone Delegates could use it to guide their decision-making when determining whether or not to request action or advocacy from WALGA on a particular issue (that is, sector-wide issues). Issues that are not sufficiently prioritised (that is, regional issues) could instead be dealt with at the Zone level (e.g. through direct advocacy efforts on behalf of the Zone).

The Prioritisation Framework could also be used by Zone Delegates when drafting Agenda items and motions on policy or advocacy issues, using the criteria as prompts for what kind of information to include.

The Prioritisation Framework does not remove the need for judgements to be made and is intended to *guide*, not replace, decision-making.

How to use the Framework:

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

Following prioritisation, an appropriate and proportionate policy and advocacy approach can be determined.

Impact on Local Government Sector Impact on Local Government sector without intervention	High	Medium	Low
Reach Number of member Local Governments affected	Sector-wide	Significant (multiple regions, Zones, or bands)	Few
Influence Capacity to influence decision makers	High	Medium	Low
Principles Alignment to core principles such as autonomy, funding, general competence	Strong	Partial	Peripheral
Clarity Policy change needed is clear and well-defined	Clear	Partial	Unclear
Decision-maker support Level of support among decision-makers (political and administrative)	High	Medium	Low
Public support Level of support among the public or other stakeholders	High	Medium	Low
Positive consequences for WALGA Prospect of positive consequences for WALGA. E.g. enhanced standing among members or leverage for other issues.	High	Medium	Low

Negative consequences for WALGA Prospect of negative consequences for WALGA for not undertaking the advocacy effort. E.g. diminished standing among members or other stakeholders.	High	Medium	Low
Partnerships Potential for partnerships with other stakeholders	Yes (3+)	Possibly (1-2)	No (0)

RECOMMENDATION

That the Great Eastern Country Zone adopt the Policy and Advocacy Prioritisation Framework to determine the priority of a particular policy or advocacy issue, and guide future decision-making.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Shire of Bruce Rock

Seconded: Shire of Wyalkatchem

That the Great Eastern Country Zone acknowledge the Policy and Advocacy Prioritisation Framework to determine the priority of a particular policy or advocacy issue, and guide future decision-making.

CARRIED

9.1.4 Consultation Opportunities

The following consultations are currently open and Zone Local Governments may consider providing a response or formal submission:

Standardised Meeting Procedures

Meeting Procedures (Standing Orders) Local Laws have been the foundation for facilitating efficient and effective Council and Committee meetings.

State Government's Local Government Reform includes the proposal for replacing local laws with Standard Meeting Procedures Regulation. [The Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries is consulting](#) on proposals, with feedback required to the Department by 29 May 2024.

WALGA has prepared a [Discussion Paper](#) that combines the Department's Consultation Paper with comment and is seeking feedback from Local Governments.

This feedback will be utilised to develop a sector-wide advocacy position for submission to the Department.

Feedback on the WALGA Discussion Paper must be submitted to James McGovern, Manager Governance and Procurement by Monday, 29 April 2024.

For more information, [click here](#).

National Inquiry into Local Government Sustainability

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport will inquire into and report on Local Government sustainability.

Local Governments are encouraged to make a submission by the due date of Friday, 3 May 2024 and provide recommendations relating to any or all of the inquiry's terms of reference.

WALGA is seeking an extension for this deadline for Local Governments until 31 May 2024. Further communications will be provided if this deadline extension is approved.

For more information, [click here](#).

2024 Regional Telecommunications Review

The 2024 Regional Telecommunications Review has now commenced.

The Committee has been asked to examine the adequacy of regional Australia's telecommunications, including hearing from people in regional, rural and remote parts of Australia. You can find out more about how the Committee will do this in the [Terms of Reference](#).

For more information, [click here](#).

The WALGA Executive Officer will invite a Committee representative to attend an upcoming Zone meeting (June or August) as a guest speaker.

Noted

10 ZONE REPORTS

10.1 CHAIR REPORT

President Cr Tony Sachse

The Zone Executive met on Tuesday, 2 April 2024. A range of items were discussed many of which form part of the agenda today. The emerging issue of Agricultural Land Use was added as a new strategic priority and there is some follow up regarding that today.

Thanks to the WALGA staff for their contribution in preparing today's agenda, especially James McGovern and our new GECZ Executive Assistant Meghan Dwyer. Meghan is an Executive Office with Governance at WALGA. Welcome Meghan.

Special thanks to our former Executive Assistant Naoimh Donaghy for her time and considerable effort over recent years.

Thanks also to the Shire of Kellerberrin for hosting us today.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Shire of Wyalkatchem

Seconded: Shire of Koorda

That the Zone Chair's report be received.

CARRIED

10.2 WHEATBELT DISTRICT EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (DEMC)

President Cr Tony Sachse

The last Wheatbelt DEMC met on 13 March 2024. The minutes have not yet been distributed.

There were presentations from:

- Red Cross
- Neville Ellis – Emergency Management Sector Adaptation Plan Discussion Paper

Agenda Items included:

- 8.1. Gingin Bushfire Debrief – Availability of traffic management contractors.
- 8.2. January Storms Electricity Supply Disruption Debrief
 - 8.2.1. Identification of Critical Infrastructure and its Interdependencies
 - 8.2.2. Vulnerable people register/database/list information sharing
 - 8.2.3. Reliance on 000 in emergencies
 - 8.2.4. Accommodation for operational staff in emergencies
 - 8.2.5. Generator usage during Total Fire Bans in emergencies
- 8.3. DEMC strategic activities
 - 8.3.1. District strategic plans
 - 8.3.2. Trainings and engagement
 - 8.3.3. District Level Exercises

The Wheatbelt Operational Area Support Group (OASG)/ISG is now meeting on an as needed basis.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Shire of Yilgarn

Seconded: Shire of Cunderdin

That the Wheatbelt District Emergency Management Committee Report be received.

CARRIED

10.3 REGIONAL HEALTH ADVOCACY GROUP

President Cr Alison Harris

The Regional Health Advocacy Group report was submitted for the Zone.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Bruce Rock

Seconded: Nungarin

That the Regional Health Advocacy Report be received.

CARRIED

10.4 WALGA ROADWISE

Position currently vacant.

On behalf of the Zone, President Cr Tony Sachse expressed thanks to Cliff Simpson for his services to the Zone over many years.

11 WESTERN AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION BUSINESS

11.1 STATE COUNCILLOR REPORT

Cr Stephen Strange

Cr Strange provided a verbal report to the meeting.

- At the Strategic Forum held on 6 March, the new Minister for Local Government, Hon Hannah Beazley addressed State Council and took questions.
- A Election Priorities workshop was held with State Councillors on 7 March.
- Encourage all Local Governments to make submission to both the State and Federal Telecommunications Reviews being conducted. A review of the Universal Services Obligations Agreement is also under review. Encourage this to be reference in any submission.
- The Salaries and Allowance Tribunal determination was recently issues. There has been an increase in the Band 4 allowances. The Regional/Isolation Allowance was not reviewed, a request made in the WALGA submission.
- Encourage Local Government to undertake training to prepare for the recording of meetings and new standardised meeting procedures.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Shire of Wyalkatchem

Seconded: Shire of Narembeen

That the State Councillor Report be received.

CARRIED

11.2 STATE COUNCIL AGENDA ITEMS – 1 MAY 2024

Background

WALGA State Council meets five times each year and as part of the consultation process with Member Councils circulates the State Council Agenda for input through the Zone structure.

Zone delegates to consider the Matters for Decision contained in the WA Local Government Association State Council Agenda and put forward resolutions to Zone Representatives on State Council.

The full [State Council Agenda can be found on the WALGA website](#).

11.2.1 Matters for Decision

71 Waste Levy Advocacy Position

By Rebecca Brown, Manager Waste and Environment

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council:

- 1. Replace the existing WALGA *Waste Levy Policy Statement and Advocacy Position 7.4 Waste Management Funding*.**

Local Government considers that:

- 1. Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Levy funds should be hypothecated to strategic waste management activities in line with the State Waste Strategy and strongly opposes the application of the Levy to non-waste management related activities, such as funding State Government core activities; and**
- 2. The Levy should not be applied to licensed landfills outside the metropolitan area.**

- 2. Endorse a new Waste Levy Advocacy Position as follows:**

The Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Levy (the Levy) was established in WA to fund programs relating to the management, reduction, reuse, recycling, monitoring or measurement of waste and administering the fund. The current Levy is applied to waste generated, or landfilled, in the Perth metropolitan area.

Currently, only 25% of the collected funds are retained for strategic waste management activities, 75% are allocated to the ongoing operations of the Department responsible for administration of the Levy.

Local Government considers that:

- 1. The Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Levy funds must be fully hypothecated to strategic waste management activities in line with the State Waste Strategy and not be used for non-waste management related activities, such as funding State Government core activities.**

2. **Strategic waste management activities funded by the State Government should:**
 - a. **Provide adequate funding and support for Regional Councils, non-metropolitan and metropolitan Local Governments;**
 - b. **Reflect the targets and priorities within the Waste Strategy;**
 - c. **Fully fund and acknowledge the life cycle costs of infrastructure and services; and**
 - d. **Facilitate the development, implementation and ongoing operation of Product Stewardship Schemes.**
3. **The Levy should not be applied to waste generated in the non-metropolitan area as it is not feasible, or appropriate, to implement the Levy in areas with a limited rate base, access to markets for recycled materials, economic growth and resources to manage such a change.**
4. **The Levy should not be applied to waste received at premises undertaking licensed activities whose primary purpose is resource recovery.**
5. **The Levy must be supported by a clear, evidence-based rationale to demonstrate the suitability of how charges are set, how and where funds are allocated, and the extent to which it is delivering on its objectives.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Waste Levy and Strategic Waste Funding Policy Statement was first endorsed in 2008 and was amended in 2018.
- The Statement outlines the Local Government position on levies charged on the weight or volume of waste received at licensed premises and the application of those funds to waste management activities.
- In 2023, the WA Government published the findings of a Review of the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery (WARR) Levy. The consultation summary report and supporting consultant report can be accessed on the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) [website](#).
- Key outcomes of the Levy Review included a five-year schedule of increases and a commitment to investigate extending the levy boundary to regional areas.
- The new Waste Levy Advocacy Position uses contemporary language emphasises:
 - Full hypothecation of the Levy;
 - The key areas of expenditure for the Levy;
 - Opposition to the expansion of the Levy's geographic application;
 - Opposition to the application of the Levy to resource recovery activities; and
 - The need for a clear evidence-based rationale for setting and expending the Levy.
- The Municipal Waste Advisory Council (MWAC) endorsed the new Advocacy Position in February 2024.

11.2.2 Policy Team and Committee Reports

- 8.1 Environment Policy Team Report
- 8.2 Governance Policy Team Report
- 8.3 Infrastructure Policy Team Report
- 8.4 People and Place Policy Team Report
- 8.5 Municipal Waste Advisory Council (MWAC) Report

11.2.3 Matters for Noting/Information

- 9.1 WALGA 2023 Emergency Management Survey
- 9.2 Tree Retention Model Local Planning Policy
- 9.3 Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMA) Improvement Plan Implementation
- 9.4 Planning and Building Performance Monitoring Project
- 9.5 2024 WALGA Aboriginal Engagement Forum

RESOLUTION

Moved: Shire of Merredin
Seconded: Shire of Yilgarn

That the Great Eastern Country Zone:

1. **Supports all Matters for Decision listed above in the May 2024 State Council Agenda, and**
2. **Notes all other Policy Team and Committee Reports and Organisational Reports as listed in the May 2024 State Council Agenda.**

CARRIED

11.3 WALGA PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The WALGA President's report was submitted for the Zone.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Shire of Bruce Rock
Seconded: Shire of Cunderdin

That the WALGA's President's Report be received.

CARRIED

12 EMERGING ISSUES

12.1.1 Invitations to attend a Zone Meeting

MOTION

Moved: Shire of Bruce Rock
Seconded: Shire of Westonia

That the Great Eastern Country Zone invite all State Government Ministers to attend an upcoming Zone meeting.

AMENDMENT

Moved: Shire of Trayning

Seconded: Shire of Merredin

That the Great Eastern Country Zone invite the Minister for Local Government to attend an upcoming Zone meeting, followed by invitations to Minister's whose portfolio aligns with the Zone's Strategic Priorities.

LOST

RESOLUTION

The substantive motion was put to the vote.

CARRIED

12.1.2 2024 WALGA Convention

The 2024 WALGA Convention will be held from Tuesday, 8 to Thursday, 10 October. The Convention returns to the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre.

13 NEXT MEETING

The next Executive Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, 5 June 2024 commencing at 8.00am, via MSTeams.

The next Great Eastern Country Zone meeting will be held on Thursday, 13 June 2024 commencing at 9.30am. This meeting will be hosted by the Shire of Merredin.

14 CLOSURE

The Chair closed the meeting at 12.25pm.