



WEROC Inc. Board Meeting MINUTES

Wednesday 11 September 2024

Shire of Bruce Rock Council Chambers

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WEROC Inc.

Wheatbelt East Regional Organisation of Councils Inc.

Shires of Bruce Rock, Kellerberrin, Merredin, Tammin, Westonia, Yilgarn

MINUTES

Minutes of the Board Meeting held in Bruce Rock on Wednesday 11 September 2024.

1. OPENING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Lisa O'Neill as Interim Chair of WEROC Inc. welcomed Members of the Board and opened the meeting at 9.36am.

2. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

2.1 Attendance

Ms. Emily Ryan

Mr. Wayne Della Bosca

Mr. Raymond Griffiths

Ms. Lisa O'Neill (Interim Chair)

Mr. Ramesh Rajagopalan

Ms. Charmaine Thomson (joined via videoconference)

Mr. Craig Watts

Mr. Ross Della Bosca, proxy and voting delegate for Mr. Mark Crees

Ms. Jasmine Geier, proxy and voting delegate for Mr. Bill Price

Mr. Cameron Watson, proxy and voting delegate for Nic Warren

Ms. Rebekah Burges, Executive Officer

2.2 Apologies

Mr. Mark Crees

Mr. Bill Price

Mr. Nic Warren

2.3 Guests

Mr. John Merrick, Acting Chief Executive Officer, Shire of Bruce Rock

Mr. Darren Mollenoyux, Acting Chief Executive Officer, Shire of Tammin

Mr. Stephen Strange, Councillor, Shire of Bruce Rock

Mr. Mark Furr, incoming Chief Executive Officer, Shire of Bruce Rock

Ms. Lucy Booth, People & Culture Consultant, HR Cornerstone (joined the meeting via videoconference at 9.45am and left the meeting at 9.50am).

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Nil

4. PRESENTATIONS

4.1 Lucy Booth, HR Cornerstone, 9.45am

Ms. Lucy Booth, People & Culture Consultant at HR Cornerstone has been appointed as the lead consultant to help facilitate WEROC Shires with the transition from the Federal to State Award. Ms. Booth has provided a project brief, which has been emailed to Board Members and which she will talk to and answer any questions the Board may have on the proposed approach.

Comments from the meeting:

- Ms. Booth advised that they are in the discovery and engagement phase at the moment, trying to get an understanding of where each Council is at.
- Ms. Booth requested that if there are any employee issues that arise over the coming months, can the Shires please let her know.

Ms. Booth left the meeting at 9.50am and did not return.

5. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

5.1 Minutes of the WEROC Inc. Board Meeting held on Wednesday 31 July 2024

Minutes of the WEROC Inc. Board Meeting held in Southern Cross on Wednesday 31 July 2024 have previously been circulated.

Recommendation:

That the Minutes of the WEROC Inc. Meeting held in Southern Cross on Wednesday 31 July 2024 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Mr. Ram Rajagopalan

Seconded: Mr. Wayne Della Bosca

That the Minutes of the WEROC Inc. Meeting held in Southern Cross on Wednesday 31 July 2024 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

CARRIED

5.2 Business Arising – Status Reports

5.3.1 Actions Arising from the WEROC Inc. Board Meeting held on 31 July 2024

Agenda Item	Action(s)	Status
7.1 Appointment of signatories to the WEROC bank accounts	Remove Ms. Renee Manning as signatory to the accounts Add Ms. Lisa O’Neill as signatory to the accounts	Ms. Manning has been removed and Ms. O’Neill has been added to the WEROC accounts.
7.2 Eastern Wheatbelt Self-Drive Trail	Accept quote from Aesthete Creative for branding guide and logo refresh Accept quote from Taylormadefortravel and coordinate visit	The branding guide and logo refresh has been completed. Ms. Carol Taylor has been advised of the Council’s preferences for her coverage of the drive trail and her visit is planned for mid-September.
7.3 IR/HR Consultant for WEROC	Accept quote from HR Cornerstone	HR Cornerstone has appointed a project lead – Lucy – who has been provided with the contact details for each Shire CEO and who has advised that she will make direct contact to

		introduce herself and discuss each Shire’s requirements so that she can formulate a plan for the policy/contract review.
7.4 McCusker Centre Internship	Advise McCusker Centre of our interest in hosting another intern.	The McCusker Centre have been advised of our interest in hosting another intern. They are looking to start matching students with projects for the summer internship period which runs from 11 November to 13 December. Ms. Vu’Rusha Dormasy, our Public Health Planning Intern is still yet to submit her final report.
7.5 Housing	Request that Mr. Alex Mackenzie conduct a road tour of WEROC Shires to discuss individual housing requirements.	Mr. MacKenzie has advised that he is happy to visit WEROC Shires to discuss their housing requirements. It is planned that he will visit the region in late September.
7.8 Discussion and decisions arising from presentation by Ms. Renata Paliskis	Write to Wheatbelt NRM to advise of WEROC’s decision to withdraw from the Corella Management Project.	A letter was sent to Ms. Paliskis on 15 August 2024. Ms. Paliskis acknowledged receipt of the letter and responded to say that she now understands WEROC’s reasons for withdrawing from the project.

Recommendation:
That the status reports be received.

RESOLUTION: **Moved:** Mr. Ram Rajagopalan **Seconded:** Ms. Emily Ryan
That the status reports be received. **CARRIED**

6. WEROC INC. FINANCE

6.1 WEROC Inc. Financial Report as of 31 August 2024

Author: Rebekah Burges, Executive Officer
Disclosure of Interest: No interest to disclose.
Date: 1 September 2024
Attachments: Nil
Voting Requirement: Simple Majority

At the WEROC Inc. Board Meeting held on 9 May 2024 the budget for the financial year commencing 1 July 2024 and ending 30 June 2025 was adopted. The approved Budget 2024-25 is used as the basis for the financial report.

An explanation for each of the notations on the financial report is provided below.

WEROC Inc. Board Meeting Wednesday 11 September 2024 - Minutes

Note 1	Annual Financial contributions paid by Member Local Governments.
Note 2	GST received
Note 3	GST refund for Q4 BAS 2023-24
Note 4	Executive Officer services
Note 5	Executive Officer travel to Board and other meetings
Note 6	Monthly subscription fee for Xero accounting software
Note 7	Payments to Vanessa King for Town Team Builder services, HR Cornerstone for IR/HR consultancy services and Lauren Clarke for the branding guide and logo refresh.
Note 8	Payments to PWD for the domain name renewal
Note 9	Catering expenses for WEROC CEO farewell in Kellerberrin on 9 May and ERP demonstrations in Kellerberrin on 6 August
Note 10	Personal accident, workers compensation and cyber insurance renewals
Note 11	GST paid

WEROC Inc.
ABN 28 416 957 824
1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025

		Budget 2024/2025	Actual to 31/08/2024	Notes
INCOME				
0501	General Subscriptions	\$72,000.00	\$72,000.00	1
504.01	Consultancy & Project Reserve	\$0.00		
0575	Interest received	\$4,863.29		
584	Other Income	\$0.00		
	GST Output Tax	\$7,200.00	\$7,200.00	2
	GST Refunds	\$6,184.00	\$2,153.00	3
Total Receipts		\$90,247.29	\$81,353.00	
EXPENSES				
1545	Bank Fees & Charges	\$0.00	\$0.00	
1661.01	WEROC Inc. Executive Services	\$35,383.84	\$5,854.54	4
1661.02	Executive Officer Travel and Accommodation	\$1,400.00	\$884.00	5
1661.03	WEROC Executive Officer Recruitment	\$0.00		
1687	WEROC Financial Services Accounting	\$1,000.00	\$136.36	6
1687.03	WEROC Financial Services Audit	\$1,050.00		
1585	WEROC Consultant Expenses	\$60,000.00	\$8,462.80	7
1850	WEROC Management of WEROC App & Website	\$420.00	\$109.50	8
1801	WEROC Meeting Expenses	\$500.00	\$829.09	9
1851	WEROC Insurance	\$6,300.00	\$3,935.50	10
1852	WEROC Legal Expenses	\$2,000.00		

1853	WEROC Incorporation Expenses	\$0.00		
1854	Transfer to Term Deposit	\$4,863.29		
1930	WEROC Sundry	\$300.00		
3384	GST Input Tax	\$10,835.39	\$1,525.84	11
	ATO Payments	\$3,464.57		
Total Payments		\$127,517.09	\$21,737.63	
Net Position		-\$37,269.79	\$59,615.37	
OPENING CASH 1 July		\$64,270.72	\$69,784.64	
CASH BALANCE		\$27,000.93	\$129,400.01	

Recommendation:

That the WEROC Inc. financial report for the period 1 July 2024 to 31 August 2024, be received.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Mr. Wayne Della Bosca

Seconded: Ms. Emily Ryan

That the WEROC Inc. financial report for the period 1 July 2024 to 31 August 2024, be received.

CARRIED

6.2 Income, Expenditure & Balance Sheet

Author: Rebekah Burges, Executive Officer

Disclosure of Interest: No interest to disclose.

Date: 1 September 2024

Attachments: Nil

Voting Requirement: Simple Majority

A summary of income and expenditure for the period 1 July to 31 August 2024 is provided below.

Date	Description	Credit	Debit	Running Balance
Opening Balance		69,784.64		
08 Jul 2024	150 Square Pty Ltd		3,754.00	66,030.64
08 Jul 2024	JV King Family Trust		1,375.00	64,655.64
10 Jul 2024	ATO	2,153.00	0.00	66,808.64
18 Jul 2024	Shire of Merredin	13,200.00	0.00	80,008.64
18 Jul 2024	Shire of Kellerberrin		300.50	79,708.14
19 Jul 2024	Shire of Tammin	13,200.00	0.00	92,908.14
19 Jul 2024	Cheyenne Love		700.00	92,208.14
25 Jul 2024	Shire of Kellerberrin	13,200.00	0.00	105,408.14
26 Jul 2024	Shire of Westonia	13,200.00	0.00	118,608.14
26 Jul 2024	Shire of Yilgarn	13,200.00	0.00	131,808.14
07 Aug 2024	JV King Family Trust		1,775.18	130,032.96
07 Aug 2024	150 Square Pty Ltd		3,720.00	126,312.96
09 Aug 2024	Shire of Bruce Rock	13,200.00	0.00	139,512.96
12 Aug 2024	PWD Australia		120.45	139,392.51

12 Aug 2024	HR Cornerstone	5,060.00	134,332.51
26 Aug 2024	Local Community Insurance Services	3,164.00	131,168.51
26 Aug 2024	Shire of Kellerberrin	611.50	130,557.01
26 Aug 2024	Lauren Clarke	299.00	130,258.01
29 Aug 2024	Local Community Insurance Services	412.50	129,845.51
29 Aug 2024	Local Community Insurance Services	445.50	129,400.01
Total		81,353.00	21,737.63
Closing Balance		129,400.01	

Balance Sheet

Wheatbelt East Regional Organisation of Councils Inc As at 31 August 2024

31 AUG 2024

Assets

Bank

Term Deposit	100,000.00
Westpac Community Solution One	129,400.01
Total Bank	229,400.01

Total Assets 229,400.01

Liabilities

Current Liabilities

GST	3,449.08
Total Current Liabilities	3,449.08

Non-current Liabilities

GST Clearing	2,214.00
Total Non-current Liabilities	2,214.00

Total Liabilities 5,663.08

Net Assets 223,736.93

Equity

Current Year Earnings	51,788.21
Retained Earnings	171,948.72
Total Equity	223,736.93

Recommendation:

That the WEROC Inc. summary of income and expenditure for the period 1 July to 31 August 2024 be received.

That the Accounts Paid by WEROC Inc. for the period 1 July to 31 August 2024 totalling \$21,737.63 be approved.

That the Balance Sheet as of 31 August 2024 be noted.

RESOLUTION: **Moved:** Mr. Craig Watts **Seconded:** Mr. Ram Rajagopalan

That the WEROC Inc. summary of income and expenditure for the period 1 July to 31 August 2024 be received.

That the Accounts Paid by WEROC Inc. for the period 1 July to 31 August 2024 totalling \$21,737.63 be approved.

That the Balance Sheet as of 31 August 2024 be noted.

CARRIED

7. MATTERS FOR DECISION

7.1 Financial Statements for Approval

Author: Rebekah Burges, Executive Officer

Disclosure of Interest: No interest to disclose.

Attachments: **Attachment 1:** Draft Financials for signing

Attachment 2: Representation letter

Consultation: Audit Partners Australia

Financial Implications: Nil

Voting Requirement: Simple Majority

Background:

At the WEROC Inc. Annual General Meeting held on 29 November 2023, Audit Partners Australia were appointed to undertake the financial audit for WEROC Inc. for the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024.

Executive Officer Comment:

Audit Partners Australia have prepared a draft financial report and representation letter for the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2023. These documents are presented for endorsement.

Recommendation:

That the WEROC Inc. Board approve the Draft Financial Report and Representation Letter and authorise the WEROC Inc. Chair and Executive Officer to sign the documents.

Comments from the meeting:

- As an improvement to our existing financial management practices, it was suggested that in future the audit report be sent directly from the auditors to the WEROC Inc. Chair, Executive Officer and the Chair of WEROC Inc. CEO Committee rather than being forwarded on by the Executive Officer.

RESOLUTION: **Moved:** Ms. Emily Ryan **Seconded:** Mr. Wayne Della Bosca

That the WEROC Inc. Board approve the Draft Financial Report and Representation Letter and authorise the WEROC Inc. Chair and Executive Officer to sign the documents.

CARRIED

7.2 WEROC Inc. Term Deposit

Author: Rebekah Burges, Executive Officer

Disclosure of Interest: No interest to disclose.

Attachments: Nil

Consultation: NA
Financial Implications: Funds will either be reinvested or released depending on the Boards decision.
Voting Requirement: Simple Majority

Background:

At the WEROC Inc. Annual General Meeting held on 4 September 2023 resolved to establish a Term Deposit and invest \$100,000 for a term of 12 months. The Term Deposit account was created and the agreed amount of \$100,000 was invested on 8 September 2023 at a rate of 4.85% per annum. The interest earned at maturity was \$4,863.29 and this has been transferred into the Westpac Community Solutions One Account.

Executive Officer Comment:

The Term Deposit matured on 8 September 2024 and maturity instructions must be provided within 6 business days of this date. The options available to us are:

- 1) Reinvest the closing balance (i.e., the original investment of \$100,000) for an agreed term. Rates are as follows:
 - 12 months 4.3%
 - 11 months 4.8%
 - 10 months 4.2%
 - 6 – 9 months 4.10 – 4.15%
- 2) Reinvest a different amount for an agreed term.
- 3) Close the account and transfer all funds back to the Westpac Community Solutions One Account and not reinvest.

Recommendation:

That WEROC Inc. reinvest the closing balance of \$100,000 for a term of 11 months at 4.8%.

RESOLUTION: **Moved:** Mr. Ross Della Bosca **Seconded:** Mr. Ram Rajagopalan

That WEROC Inc. reinvest the closing balance of \$100,000 for a term of 11 months at 4.8%.

CARRIED

7.3 Community Benefit Sharing Framework

Author: Rebekah Burges, Executive Officer
Disclosure of Interest: No interest to disclose.
Attachments: **Attachment 3:** *A Guide to Benefit Sharing Options for Renewable Energy Projects*
Attachment 4: *Community Benefit Sharing Discussion Paper*
Attachment 5: *Mingenew Community Benefit Sharing Prospectus*
Attachment 6: *Shire of Mingeneew Energy & Resource Industry – Community Benefits Policy*
Consultation: Nil
Financial Implications: Nil
Voting Requirement: Simple Majority

Background:

There have been ongoing discussions about the need for a community investment/partnership policy or framework to guide Councils in their negotiations with corporates (particularly renewable energy companies)

entering or expanding in the region. Mr. Nic Warren has been investigating options including developing something similar to the [Local Planning Policy – Wind Farm/Turbines](#), that was developed by the Shire of Narrogin.

Executive Officer Comment:

The Executive Officer suggests that rather than pursuing a policy, the Board consider the development of a Community Benefit Sharing framework. Community Benefit Sharing is becoming an increasingly commonplace means of sharing the benefits of renewable energy developments with local communities.

In October 2019, the Clean Energy Council released a research report on benefit sharing options for renewable energy projects. The research report (refer to Attachment 3) provides an overview of the various community benefit sharing options available to the proponents of large-scale renewable energy projects and provides guidance on how to develop a benefit sharing strategy or framework. The benefit sharing options identified in this report include:

- Neighbourhood benefit programs - developed to address concerns about fairness that can arise when neighbours receive no direct benefits from a development which alters their experience of their place and community.
- Sponsorship, grant and legacy initiatives - monetary contributions to groups, initiatives, projects and causes in the local community.
- Local jobs, training and procurement - prioritising local jobs and procurement and providing opportunities for training.
- Employee volunteerism - providing labour and equipment free of charge on an in-kind basis to assist the local community with projects.
- Innovative products - development of products that serve the local community (e.g., new tourism product).
- Innovative financing and co-ownership - a public offering for co-investment or co-ownership in a portion of a renewable energy project.

The recommended steps to establish a benefit sharing strategy are detailed in the report. The Tasmanian Government are in the process of developing a regional community benefit sharing framework. The approach that they are taking largely mirrors the recommended steps from the report:

1. They sought feedback through a Stakeholder Reference Group (SRG) and industry engagement.
2. Distributed a discussion paper for community feedback (provided as Attachment 4). Feedback was provided through an online survey or written submissions.
3. Put a call out for nominations to be a part of a Community Advisory Board. This group will be responsible for identifying priorities, determining how the benefits should be delivered and determining the financial division of benefits across the region.
4. Engage with the broader community – targeted consultation to test the identified regional focus areas/priorities.
5. Identify funding sources and delivery pathways including appropriate community involvement in governance and management of a fund.
6. Deliver community benefit initiatives.

The Shire of Mingenew have recently undertaken a similar [process](#) and have released a Community Benefit Sharing Prospectus, which details the types of support they are looking for. They have also developed a Policy which details how they will govern their community benefit fund. Both documents are provided as attachments.

Recommendation:

That the Board consider the option of developing a Regional Community Benefit Sharing framework and fund.

Comments from the meeting:

- Mr. Raymond Griffiths advised that Tier 4 Local Governments recently met with the Minister for Local Government and this issue was discussed as something that should be raised with the Minister for Energy.
- Mr. Ram Rajagopalan advised that the Shire of Bruce Rock have developed a local planning policy for wind farms.
- Mr. Wayne Della Bosca noted that the Shire of Yilgarn are finding that regardless of what conditions they try to impose on developers, the State government overrules it.
- Mr. Mark Furr commented that his experience in Narrogin has been similar. Narrogin Shire have found that when they put their policy in front of developers, they omit Local Government and go straight to the State for approval. Mr. Furr also noted that in their policy the Shire of Narrogin has detailed what they think is a fair approach to developers giving back through community benefit funds and have had varied responses from each company.
- It was noted that even though the State can overrule local laws, it is important to have a local planning policy to hand to developers when they approach Local Government even if they ultimately don't have to abide by it because it provides a foundation for negotiation and discussion.
- Mr. John Merrick suggested that any planning policy or framework needs to address three key things – community consultation, setbacks in terms of proximity to residential properties, and remediation at end of life.
- Mr. Stephen Strange noted that WALGA, at its September State Council meeting adopted three advocacy positions on the energy transition, one of which relates to a call for State Government to develop a comprehensive framework that ensures local engagement and the realization of community benefits from energy transition projects. Mr. Strange indicated that WALGA's Executive Manager, Policy, Nicole Matthews could give a presentation to WEROC to provide further detail.
- Mr. Wayne Della Bosca advised that Mr. Nic Warren has done a lot of work in this space. Mr. Della Bosca will talk with Mr. Warren when he returns from leave, to get an update.
- It was requested that the Executive Officer:
 - a) Contact Ms. Matthews and request an overview of the work being done by WALGA.
 - b) Request a copy of the local planning policies that have been or are in the process of being developed by the Shires of Yilgarn and Bruce Rock
 - c) Consolidate the information and present it at a meeting of the WEROC CEOs for further discussion.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Mr. Ram Rajagopalan

Seconded: Mr. Craig Watts

That the Executive Officer consolidate available information and arrange a meeting of the WEROC Inc. CEO Committee to discuss further.

CARRIED

7.4 McCusker Centre Internship

Author:	Rebekah Burges, Executive Officer
Disclosure of Interest:	No interest to disclose.
Attachments:	Nil
Consultation:	NA
Financial Implications:	Nil
Voting Requirement:	Simple Majority

Background:

At the WEROC Inc. Board Meeting held on Thursday 9 May 2024, discussion was held over priority projects for UWA’s McCusker Centre Internship Program. Five options were presented:

- 1) Pest bird control and management
- 2) Social impact assessment
- 3) Regional worker housing analysis
- 4) Tourism activation
- 5) Public health planning.

It was resolved that the public health planning and social impact assessment were the priorities, and these were put forward and matched to students who completed their internships in June/July 2024.

Executive officer comment:

The tourism activation project was focused on development of a marketing plan and branding guide for the Eastern Wheatbelt self-drive trail, and both of these have now been completed so this project is no longer relevant. The social impact assessment and public health planning projects, whilst having already been assigned to students through this program, could be expanded upon if they are still deemed the priority.

The Executive Officer suggests that the Board consider and discuss what project(s) they would like to put forward for the summer internship round. Are there any emerging issues or projects that could be considered, or should an intern be appointed to continue the work commenced by one of the previous interns?

Recommendation:

That the Board consider and discuss project options for the McCusker Centre summer internship round.

Comments from the meeting:

- Mr. Craig Watts provided an update on a situation that has arisen with one of the previous interns. It was noted that this is likely an exception and not the norm so should not be a deterrent to continued engagement with the program.
- Mr. Watts advised that the Shire of Merredin are happy to host an intern for the summer program. It was suggested that the students be asked to complete some of the leg work (i.e., desktop research) before they come to the region so that when they are here their focus is on ground truthing and building on what they have already found rather than starting from scratch.
- There was consensus that given the public health planning work was not completed, a continuation of this project should be put forward for consideration in the summer internship round.
- Mr. Ram Rajagopalan suggested that a tourism project should also be put forward. The focus on this would be on activating the “shoulder” seasons.
- Mr. Raymond Griffiths suggested that a focus for the tourism project could be on tapping into the caravan and camping clubs. The student could investigate how many of these groups exist, what their primary interests are and the best way to engage them. The end product could be a prospectus that we can put out to encourage these groups to travel out to WEROC communities following the Eastern Wheatbelt self-drive trail.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Mr. Ram Rajagopalan

Seconded: Ms. Emily Ryan

That the continuation of the public health planning project and a new scope of works for a tourism project be submitted for the McCusker Centre summer internship round.

CARRIED

8. PROJECT UPDATES

8.1 Collaborative Marketing Initiatives

Attachment 7: AGO Wildflower Guide 2024

WEROC Inc. as a partner organisation to the Wheatbelt Co-operative Marketing Group, have committed \$3,000 + GST in the 2024-25 financial year to cooperative marketing initiatives in conjunction with Roe Tourism, NEW Travel, Pioneers Pathway and Australia's Golden Outback. A wildflower activity campaign is planned for September 2024. This campaign will involve engaging a photographer to generate new content for this and future wildflower campaigns and radio advertisements to promote the four self-drive trails. AGO have released their 2024 wildflower guide, which now includes the Eastern Wheatbelt self-drive trail.

8.2 Town Team Movement

WEROC were offered free tickets to attend the Town Team Movement conference in Northam on Friday 13 September.

Ms. Vanessa King has advised that information sessions have now been conducted in all WEROC Shires that were interested in hosting one.

Ms. King will be out of the country for a month from 4 November.

The current contract with the Town Team Builder expires in January 2025. It may be timely for the Board to consider and discuss the future of this partnership and expectations for the remainder of the contract term.

Comments from the meeting:

- Ms. King ran a town teams' session in Tammin, which went very well. The Tammin Community Development Officer is going to the conference on Friday 13 September and will provide feedback.
- Ms. Emily Ryan noted that the Kellerberrin meeting was productive and there are a couple of representatives from Kellerberrin going to conference as well.
- The focus for the next couple of months should be on continuing to support the groups who have shown interest.
- The contract will not be renewed when it expires in January 2025.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Mr. Ram Rajagopalan

Seconded: Mr. Wayne Della Bosca

That Town Team Movement be advised that WEROC will not be renewing the contract for WEROC Town Team Builder services beyond January 2025.

CARRIED

8.3 Housing

Disclosure of Interest:

Mr. Darren Mollenoyux noted a potential conflict due to his role as RoerOC Executive Officer and his knowledge of their intention to make a submission for the Department of Communities funding.

Mr. Alex Mackenzie has indicated that he will travel out to the WEROC region in late September to discuss housing issues/solutions with each Shire. Mr. Mackenzie advised that they (WDC) have completed demand analysis, development capacity assessments of townsites and site prioritisation, and feasibility testing of housing options, including a cost-benefit analysis presented in a business case for 16 Shires. This has enabled these Shire's to present competitively for various funding streams and they now have costed plans of action to deliver >600 houses across some 20 towns to 2031. Mr. Mackenzie advised that while he can assist the WEROC Shires with the same type of approach, at some point the Shire's will have to commit funds (in the vicinity of \$8,000 - \$10,000) to do the work.

On 2 September 2024, the State Government announced that the eligibility for the \$50 million in grants available under a Call for Submissions process for registered community housing providers to help increase the supply and diversity of new and refurbished social housing projects in regional WA, has been expanded to

include local governments. Funding is available for housing projects in the South West, Great Southern, Wheatbelt, Goldfields-Esperance, Mid-West, Gascoyne, Pilbara and the Kimberley Regions.

The new call for submissions seeks to identify ways in which local governments can work with the State (through the Department of Communities) to deliver social housing, affordable rental housing, Government Regional Officers housing, local government officer housing and key worker accommodation. Submissions will be considered for requests for support for capital grant funding, land leases and land contributions and the State Government is also open to exploring other innovative funding models and partnerships.

Submissions can be made to the Department of Communities until 2 September 2025.

The pre-requisites for a submission include:

Phase 1A: Local Governments to consider potential housing needs and projects that may be relevant, identify suitable project sites, compile preliminary information, ideas or concepts for the potential project.

Phase 1B: It is mandatory that Local Governments contact the Department of Communities to arrange a meeting to present initial project ideas or concepts. From this meeting the local government with the Department may develop a clearer project definition, potentially with the assistance of consultants to define scale, form, yield, composition, financial structure and management.

Submissions can only be lodged after the Department of Communities has agreed to the high-level project parameters. Further information is available on the Department's [website](#).

Given that there is now a potential pool of funding to support a housing solution, the Board might like to re-consider the WDC proposal for assistance.

Comments from the meeting:

- Mr. Raymond Griffiths commented that six Councils submitted a joint application to round one of the Growing Regions program for a housing initiative. This included three of the six WEROC Shires. Mr. Griffiths asked if the three Shires not previously involved would like to now be included in a joint submission for the State funding.
- It was determined that the three Councils not previously involved will take this to their October Ordinary Council Meetings for a decision and report back at the WEROC meeting in November.
- The Executive Officer will contact Whitney Consulting to request a quote for the three additional WEROC Shires to be included in the original business case that was developed for the growing regions application and to formalise a proposal to put to State Government.
- It was agreed that the three non-WEROC Shires involved in the Growing Regions business case/application would be invited to be included in the submission.

8.4 ERP Software Solution

An ERP software demonstration was held in Kellerberrin on 6 August. Demonstrations were given by MAQIC Software, Ready Tech, Datacom and Council First. NEWROC, RoeROC and the Shire of Cunderdin were invited to participate. The Executive Officer is now working with Ready Tech and Datacom to schedule more detailed product demonstrations.

Comments from the meeting:

- Mr. Raymond Griffiths advised that the Shires of Irwin and Chapman Valley are well into developing their own solution. They are ready to go out to RFQ and are happy to meet with WEROC Shires during the WALGA conference to discuss their Consolidated Service Project.

9. EMERGING ISSUES

9.1 Privacy & Responsible Information Sharing Bill 2024

The Western Australian Government have introduced new legislation aimed at protecting personal information held by Government. The Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing Bill 2024, provides a framework to protect the privacy of personal information handled by public entities, Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries and contracted service providers to public entities; and to provide a framework to authorise the responsible sharing of information held by public entities.

Law firm Clayton UTZ released an article on 27 August, detailing the task facing the WA public sector in preparing for the new laws:

[WA privacy and responsible information sharing laws: the new Information Privacy Principles | Clayton Utz](#)

10. OTHER MATTERS (FOR NOTING)

10.1 PetsWA

The contract to develop WA's new centralized registration system for cats and dogs was awarded on 2 August 2024. PetsWA, which is expected to launch in late 2025, will replace the dog and cat registers managed by individual local governments with a single online system, used state-wide. DLGSC will be working with local governments to manage data transfer from existing systems during PetsWA's development.

This item is included for noting as it may impact on decisions relating to ERP systems and modules.

10.2 Regional Education Strategy

The Minister for Education, Hon Dr. Tony Buti MLA, has released a draft regional education strategy for comment. Feedback on the draft strategy can be submitted by email up to Friday 20 September 2024.

- Mr. Darren Mollenoyux questioned if WEROC will be putting in a submission, noting that both NEWROC and RoeROC will be.
- Mr. Wayne Della Bosca noted that the Shire of Yilgarn have prepared a response. It was asked if the Yilgarn submission could be shared with the group.
- Comments on the strategy from the group are summarised below:
 - It has entirely missed the mark on housing.
 - There are no clear measurable outcomes.
 - No mention of the transition to boarding school or the adverse impacts on Year 11 and 12 students.
- The Executive Officer will ask Mr. Nic Warren for a copy of the Shire of Yilgarn's submission and circulate it to the other Shires for additional comment to assist in preparing a WEROC submission.

10.3 Local Government Sustainability

- Mr. Raymond Griffiths advised that he and Mr. Nic Warren attended the standing committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport inquiry into local government sustainability on 28 August 2024. The Shire's of Yilgarn, Kalgoorlie Boulder and Kellerberrin attended as part of a roundtable.

10.4 Rising audit costs

- Mr. Ross Della Bosca noted that the Shire of Westonia are concerned about the rising cost of audits.
- Mr. Stephen Strange commented that the bigger issue is actually around process as audits are becoming increasingly onerous on Shire staff.

11. FUTURE MEETINGS

The final general meeting for 2024 and the Annual General Meeting will be held in Tammin on 28 November.

12. CLOSURE

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 11.35am.