

SHIRE OF
MERREDIN
INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT

AGENDA

Ordinary Council Meeting

To be held in Council Chambers
Corner King & Barrack Street's, Merredin
Tuesday, 20 October 2020
Commencing 4.00pm



Notice of Meeting



Dear President and Councillors,

The next Ordinary Meeting of the Council of the Shire of Merredin will be held on Tuesday, 20 October 2020 in the Council Chambers, corner of King and Barrack Streets, Merredin. The format of the day will be:

2.00pm Briefing Session

4.00pm Council Meeting

MARK DACOMBE
TEMPORARY CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

15 October 2020

DISCLAIMER

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING IMPORTANT DISCLAIMER BEFORE PROCEEDING:

Statements or decisions made at this meeting should not be relied or acted on by an applicant or any other person until they have received written notification from the Shire. Notice of all approvals, including planning and building approvals, will be given to applicants in writing. The Shire of Merredin expressly disclaims liability for any loss or damages suffered by a person who relies or acts on statements or decisions made at a Council or Committee meeting before receiving written notification from the Shire.

The advice and information contained herein is given by and to Council without liability or responsibility for its accuracy. Before placing any reliance on this advice or information, a written inquiry should be made to Council giving entire reasons for seeking the advice or information and how it is proposed to be used.

Common Acronyms Used in this Document	
WEROC	Wheatbelt East Regional Organisation of Councils
GECZ	Great Eastern Country Zone
WALGA	Western Australian Local Government Association
CEACA	Central East Aged Care Alliance
T/CEO	Temporary Chief Executive Officer
DCEO	Deputy Chief Executive Officer
EMDS	Executive Manager of Development Services
EMES	Executive Manager of Engineering Services
EMCS	Executive Manager of Corporate Services
MCO	Media and Communications Officer
EA	Executive Assistant to CEO
LPS	Local Planning Scheme
LGIS	Local Government Insurance Services
SRP	Strategic Resource Plan
CBP	Corporate Business Plan
CSP	Community Strategic Plan
MRCLC	Merredin Regional Community and Leisure Centre
CWVC	Central Wheatbelt Visitors Centre
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding

Shire of Merredin
Ordinary Council Meeting
4:00pm Tuesday, 20 October 2020



1. Official Opening

2. Record of Attendance / Apologies and Leave of Absence

Councillors:

Cr JR Flockart	President
Cr MD Willis	Deputy President
Cr AR Butler	
Cr LN Boehme	
Cr PR Patroni	
Cr MJ McKenzie	
Cr RA Billing	
Cr RM Manning	
Cr PM Van Der Merwe	

Staff:

M Dacombe	T/CEO
C Brown	EMCS
A Prnich	DCEO
P Zenni	EMDS
C Shotter	EMES
K Hall	MCO

Members of the Public:

Apologies:

Approved Leave of Absence: Nil

3. Public Question Time

Members of the public may submit questions up to 2pm on the day of the meeting by emailing ea@merredin.wa.gov.au

4. Disclosure of Interest

5. Applications of Leave of Absence

6. Petitions and Presentations

7. Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meetings

7.1 [Ordinary Council Meeting held on 15 September 2020](#)

8. Announcements by the Person Presiding without discussion

9. Matters for which the Meeting may be closed to the public

10. Receipt of Minutes of Committee Meetings

10.1 [Local Emergency Management Committee Meeting held on 3 September 2020](#)

10.2 [Great Easter District Operations Advisory Committee Meeting held on 7 September 2020](#)

10.3 [WEROC Inc. Special Meeting held on 1 October 2020](#)

11. Recommendations from Committee Meetings for Council consideration

12. Officer's Report – Development Services

Nil

13. Officer's Report – Engineering Services

Nil

14. Officer's Reports – Corporate and Community Services

14.1 [List of Accounts Paid](#)

14.2 [Statement of Financial Activity](#)

14.3 [Community Funding Applications for 2020/21 – Round 2](#)

15. Officer's Reports - Administration

15.1 [Councillors and Staff Christmas Function](#)

15.2 [Merredin Regional Community and Leisure Centre User Group Fees and Contributions](#)

- 15.3 [COVID-19 Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program - To be circulated under separate cover](#)

16. Motions of which Previous Notice has been given

17. Questions by Members of which Due Notice has been given

18. Urgent Business Approved by the Person Presiding of by Decision

19. Matters Behind Closed Doors

- 19.1 [Preparation of Brief for CBD Revitalisation Project](#)

20. Closure

7. Confirmation of Minutes of the Previous Meetings

7.1 Ordinary Council Meeting held on 15 September 2020

[Attachment 7.1A](#)

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation / Resolution

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 15 September 2020 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

10. Receipt of Minutes of Committee Meetings

10.1 Local Emergency Management Committee Meeting held on 3 September 2020

[Attachment 10.1A](#)

10.2 Great Eastern District Operations Advisory Committee Meeting held on 7 September 2020

[Attachment 10.2A](#)

10.3 WEROC Inc. Special Meeting held on 1 October 2020

[Attachment 10.3A](#)

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation / Resolution

That the Minutes of the following Committees be received:

- **Local Emergency Management Committee Meeting held on 3 September 2020**
- **Great Eastern District Operations Advisory Committee Meeting held on 7 September 2020**
- **WEROC Inc. Special Meeting held on 1 October 2020**

11.	Recommendations from Committee Meetings for Council consideration
------------	--

Nil

12.	Officers' Reports - Development Services
------------	---


Nil

13.	Officers' Reports - Engineering Services
------------	---

Nil

14. Officers' Reports – Corporate and Community Services

14.1 List of Accounts Paid

<h2 style="margin: 0;">Corporate Services</h2> 	
Responsible Officer:	Charlie Brown, EMCS
Author:	Charlie Brown, EMCS
Legislation:	<i>Local Government Act 1995, Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996</i>
File Reference:	Nil
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Attachment 14.1A - List of Accounts Paid

Purpose of Report

- Executive Decision
 Legislative Requirement

Background

The attached List of Accounts Paid during the month of September under Delegated Authority is provided for Council's information.

Comment

Nil

Policy Implications

Nil

Statutory Implications

As outlined in the *Local Government Act 1995 and the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*

Strategic Implications

- [Strategic Community Plan](#)

Zone: Zone 4 – Communications & Leadership
 Zone Statement: Merredin Council engages with its Community and leads by example.

Key Priority: 4.1 – Ensuring all planning, reporting and resourcing is in accordance with the best practice, compliance and statutory requirements.

➤ **Corporate Business Plan**

Key Action: 4.1.1 – Continue to update the Integrated Planning Framework, meet statutory requirements of the Local Government Act and regulations and regulatory obligations required under other regulations.

Directorate: Corporate Services

Timeline: Ongoing

Sustainability Implications

➤ **Strategic Resource Plan**

Compliance with the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996* and to also give Council some direction regarding its management of finance over an extended period of time.

➤ **Workforce Plan**

Directorate: Nil

Activity: Nil

Current Staff: Nil

Focus Area: Nil

Strategy Code: Nil

Strategy: Nil

Implications: Nil

Risk Implications

Council would be contravening the *Local Government Act 1995* and *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* should this item not be presented to Council.

Financial Implications

All liabilities settled have been in accordance with the Annual Budget provisions.

Voting Requirements


Simple Majority

Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation

That the schedule of accounts paid as listed, covering cheques, EFT's, bank charges, directly debited payments and wages, as numbered and totalling \$658,392.52 from Council's Municipal Fund Bank Account and \$634.55, from Council's Trust Account be endorsed by Council.

14.2 Statement of Financial Activity

<h2 style="margin: 0;">Corporate Services</h2> 	
<p>Responsible Officer:</p> <p>Author:</p> <p>Legislation:</p> <p>File Reference:</p> <p>Disclosure of Interest:</p> <p>Attachments:</p>	<p>Charlie Brown, EMCS</p> <p>Charlie Brown, EMCS</p> <p><i>Local Government Act 1995, Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996</i></p> <p>Nil</p> <p>Nil</p> <p>Attachment 14.2A - Statement of Financial Activity Attachment 14.2B - Detailed Statements Attachment 14.2C - Investment Statement Attachment 14.2D - Capital Works Progress Attachment 14.2E - Variances by Sub Program</p>

Purpose of Report

- Executive Decision
 Legislative Requirement

Background

The Statement of Financial Activity, which includes the Detailed Schedules, Statement of Financial Activity, Current Ratios, Capital Expenditure Report, and Investment Register, are attached for Council’s information.

Comment

The statements are in a slightly different format this year, with a more detailed summary sheet on page 3. Included as a separate attachment is Variances by Sub Program. This is in place of note 15 Variance by Program. It is felt a more meaningful explanation can be given at sub program level than at program.

Income reports a 1.57% increase above anticipated budget expectations, whilst Operating Expenditure shows a 9.06% deficit on anticipated expenditure. This should flatten out over the coming months as projects get started.

Capital Expenditure

A detailed look at capital expenditure can be found in note 8, as well as Attachment 14.2D showing levels of expenditure.

Policy Implications

Nil

Statutory Implications

As outlined in the *Local Government Act 1995* and the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*

Strategic Implications

➤ Strategic Community Plan

Zone: Zone 4 – Communications & Leadership
Zone Statement: Merredin Council engages with its Community and leads by example.
Key Priority: 4.1 – Ensuring all planning, reporting, and resourcing is in accordance with best practice, compliance, and statutory requirements.

➤ Corporate Business Plan

Key Action: 4.1.1 – Continue to update the Integrated Planning Framework, meet statutory requirements of the Local Government Act and Regulations and regulatory obligations required under other regulations.
Directorate: Corporate Services
Timeline: Ongoing

Sustainability Implications

➤ Strategic Resource Plan

Compliance with the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996* and to also give Council some direction regarding its management of finance over an extended period of time.

➤ Workforce Plan

Directorate: Nil
Activity: Nil
Current Staff: Nil
Focus Area: Nil
Strategy Code: Nil
Strategy: Nil
Implications: Nil

Risk Implications

The Financial Activity report is presented monthly and provides a retrospective picture of the activities at the Shire. Contained within the report is information pertaining to the financial cost and delivery of strategic initiatives and key projects.

To mitigate the risk of budget over-runs or non-delivery of projects, the Chief Executive Officer has implemented internal control measures such as regular Council and management reporting and a quarterly process to monitor financial performance against budget estimates. Materiality reporting thresholds have been established at half the adopted Council levels, which equate to \$10,000 for operating budget line items and \$10,000 for capital items, to alert management prior to there being irreversible impacts.

It should also be noted that there is an inherent level of risk of misrepresentation of the financials through either human error or potential fraud. The establishment of control measures through a series of efficient systems, policies and procedures, which fall under the responsibility of the CEO as laid out in the *Local Government (Financial Management Regulations) 1996* regulation 5, seek to mitigate the possibility of this occurring. These controls are set in place to provide daily, weekly, and monthly checks to ensure that the integrity of the data provided is reasonably assured.

Financial Implications

The adoption on the Monthly Financial Report is retrospective. Accordingly, the financial implications associated with adopting the Monthly Financial Report are nil.

Voting Requirements


Simple Majority

Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation

That in accordance with Regulation 34 of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*, the Statement of Financial Activity and the Investment Report for the period ending 30 September 2020 be received.

14.3 Community Funding Applications for 2020/21 – Round 2

<h2>Community Services</h2>		 SHIRE OF MERREDIN INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT
Responsible Officer:	Andrina Prnich, DCEO	
Author:	Andrina Prnich, DCEO	
Legislation:	<i>Local Government Act 1995</i>	
File Reference:	FM	
Disclosure of Interest:	DCEO, Andrina Prnich – Member of Merredin College Parents and Citizens Association Inc.	
Attachments:	Attachment 14.3A – Applications Received Attachment 14.3B – Community Submission Evaluation	

Purpose of Report

Executive Decision

Legislative Requirement

Background

Council adopted Policy 3.19 – Community Funding at its March 2012 meeting (CMRef 30277) which coordinates Council’s response to community requests for financial support. It also ensures that Shire funding resources are allocated in a way that is transparent, compliant, equitable and that funded projects further the aims and objectives of the Shire and represent responsible use of public monies.

The aims of the Shire of Merredin’s Community Funding Program are to:

1. encourage the development of services, facilities and events that meet identified community needs;
2. promote active participation of local residents in community initiatives and the development of skills, knowledge and opportunities;
3. provide assistance to the community to develop initiatives and services that support the Shire of Merredin’s own objectives;
4. link to the community vision and strategic goals for a liveable, inclusive, naturally resourceful and developing Merredin; and
5. enhance the image of the Shire of Merredin within the community.

The following groups are eligible for funding support:

1. incorporated non-for-profit organisations based within the Shire of Merredin;
2. incorporated non-for-profit organisations undertaking projects for the benefit of the Shire of Merredin's residents and whose primary aim is the improvement of the quality of life of the community; and
3. non-incorporated community groups under the auspices of an incorporated organisation.

At its ordinary meeting held 19 May 2020, Council resolved to provide financial support to a number of community projects being a cash and in-kind allocation of \$30,000 in the 2020/21 Draft Budget which also included a Second Round Placeholder as per the following criteria :

- a) provide support of a further \$16,573 for a second round of community submissions and;
- b) instruct the CEO to advertise the second round of applications, assess and report back to Council by the October Ordinary Council Meeting; and
- c) request that applicants provide additional criteria which addresses the project/events ability to support the resilience and/or economic development of the local community or specific hardship endured as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Furthermore, in its adoption of the 2020-21 financial year budget, Council extended its support for a second round of community grant funding by acknowledging the likelihood that the Merredin Show would seek funding from the Shire during Round 2. As such, Council set aside a further \$10,000, acknowledging that it wished to maintain its support for the annual Merredin Show, particularly given the hardship that the Show faced during the COVID-19 pandemic, having to cancel at very late notice after substantial expenditure had been outlaid.

Comment

The Shire advertised the second round of expressions of interest for the community grant funding in the Phoenix Community Newspaper (7 July 2020 edition/s) along with its Community Newsletter, Social Media Channels and website.

The second round of funding included an additional guideline which stated that:

16. Special Consideration will be given to applicants that provide additional justification which addresses the project/events ability to support the resilience and/or economic development of the local community or specific hardship endured as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This messaging was also communicated through the public notice issued on the Shire's website.

The Shire received a total of seven eligible applications. The SES submitted the eighth application however, the program guidelines state that:

1. *only one application should be submitted for each organisation/group in any financial year.*

Further, the SES has since been advised by the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) that the project funds sought have been approved through the DFES Local Government Grant Scheme.

The following is a brief summary of the projects outlined within the applications received, along with the funding sought and staff recommendation. The staff recommendation is based on a weighted scoring method. Applicants were scored on their ability to meet the objectives of Shire of Merredin Policy 3.19 – Community Funding, and whether they have been funded in previous financial years. The scoring system used also gave specific emphasis to the Shire’s Strategic Community Plan (2018-28). Where required, the weighted funding allocation was then rounded to the nearest hundred dollars.

Given that the funding sought was higher than what has been allocated within the Annual Budget 2020-21, staff liaised with each applicant to determine whether the project would be able to proceed, should the organisation not receive the full amount of funding requested. As such, further discretion was given to A Choired Taste, as they indicated that it would be difficult for the project to go ahead in the absence of the full amount requested, given they had not yet pursued other funding sources.

Staff have recommended the full special budget allocation of \$10,000 to the Merredin Show (\$1,680 short of what was requested), given Council’s previous decision to allocate \$10,000, pending receipt of their community grant application.

Organisation	Project	Amount Requested \$	Recommended Support \$
Merredin Military Museum Inc	Uniform Display Case: To construct a glass display case to better display 'Vietnam to Today' dressed mannequins, protecting the uniforms and equipment against dust, insects and human interference.	\$2,000	\$1,900
A Choired Taste (Merredin Community Singers)	2021 Merredin SongFest: Designed to bring lovers of choral singing from all over Western Australia	\$3,489	\$3,489

	to Merredin for the weekend of 14-16 May 2021 for a program of singing in a wide range of styles that members of the community of Merredin and surrounding town could not easily see otherwise.		
Merredin Museum & Historical Society	Railway Museum - Ticket Office 'Starting to tell the Railway stories': Engagement of Design Consultant to design and print Ticket office with three interpretation panels	\$4,750	\$2,400
Merredin Show Inc	Merredin Show: Held once a year, the show attracts people from all over the Wheatbelt (as well as visitors from elsewhere) and is one of the biggest annual events in the Wheatbelt.	\$11,680	\$10,000
Merredin Bootscooters	Bootscooting Classes: Funding will pay for the hire of Cummins Theatre for 12 months	\$2,200	\$2,200
Merredin College Parents and Citizens Association Inc. (P&C)	School Pavement Painting: Pavement is to be painted with different games and activities such as snakes and ladders, four square, hopscotch, alphabet caterpillar, number grids and will include a sensory path - all of which to be used for	\$4,000	\$3,200

	maths, sport and recreational purposes.		
Avon Community Employment Support Centre T/as Essential Personnel	My Favourite Place in Merredin: A photography program that will highlight what people with a disability love about Merredin	\$3,533	\$3,200
Total value:		\$31,652	\$26,389

A copy of each application and the evaluation matrix is included as Attachment 14.A and 14.B respectively.

Policy Implications

The consideration of these submissions are under the guidance of Council Policy 3.19 – Community Funding.

Statutory Implications

As outlined in the *Local Government Act 1995* and *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* with regards to the 2020/21 Annual Budget. Council Policy 3.19 – Community Funding applies to this process. All submissions require to be incorporated bodies or “auspicing” under an incorporated association.

Strategic Implications

➤ Strategic Community Plan

Zone: Community & Cultural
 Zone Statement: Merredin is rich in cultural diversity, performing and fine arts and a variety of sports available for both residents and visitors
 Key Priority: 1.6 – Supporting and strengthening community groups, organisations, and volunteers.

➤ Corporate Business Plan

Key Action: 1.6.1 – Support community groups to deliver activities and services to the community effectively and sustainably.
 1.6.2 – Support community groups that recognise and celebrate positive community achievements.
 Directorate: Community Services
 Timeline: 2020/21 Budget timeframe

Sustainability Implications

➤ Strategic Resource Plan

Nil

➤ **Workforce Plan**

Directorate: Nil
Activity: Nil
Current Staff: Nil
Focus Area: Nil
Strategy Code: Nil
Strategy: Nil
Implications: Nil

Risk Implications

There is minimal risk to the Shire. If the submissions are not considered there is a risk that the outlined events may not progress unless the organisations can identify another source of financial assistance.

Financial Implications

The \$26,389 sought is budgeted for within the Annual Budget 2020-21, with \$148 of unallocated funds remaining.

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation

That Council provide financial support to the following community projects, being cash and in-kind allocation of \$26,389 in the Annual Budget 2020-21, for the following amounts and under the following conditions;

- 1. Merredin Military Museum Incorporated;**
 - a. provide support of \$1,900;
 - b. acknowledges the support provided by the Shire of Merredin in all promotional material; and
 - c. provides to Council a report upon completion of the event.
- 2. A Choired Taste (under the auspices of the Merredin Repertory Club Incorporated);**
 - a. provide support of \$3,489;
 - b. acknowledges the support provided by the Shire of Merredin in all communication and media material; and
 - c. provides to Council a report upon completion of the event.
- 3. Merredin Museum and Historical Society Incorporated;**
 - a. provide support of \$2,400;
 - b. acknowledges the support provided by the Shire of Merredin in all promotional material; and

- c. provides to Council a report upon completion of the event.

4. Merredin Show Incorporated;

- a. provide support of \$10,000;
- b. acknowledges the support provided by the Shire of Merredin in all promotional material; and
- c. provides to Council a report upon completion of the event.

5. Merredin Bootscooters (under the auspices of the Merredin Community Resource Centre Incorporated);

- a. provide support of \$2,200;
- b. acknowledges the support provided by the Shire of Merredin in all promotional material; and
- c. provides to Council a report upon completion of the event.

6. Merredin College Parents and Citizens Association Incorporated;

- a. provide support of \$3,200;
- b. acknowledges the support provided by the Shire of Merredin in all promotional material; and
- c. provides to Council a report upon completion of the event.

7. Avon Community Employment Support Centre Incorporated T/as Essential Personnel;

- a. provide support of \$3,200;
- b. acknowledges the support provided by the Shire of Merredin in all promotional material; and
- c. provides to Council a report upon completion of the event.

15. Officers' Reports – Administration

15.1 Councillors and Staff Christmas Function

<h2>Administration</h2>		 SHIRE OF MERREDIN INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT
Responsible Officer:	Mark Dacombe, T/CEO	
Author:	Mark Dacombe, T/CEO	
Legislation:	<i>Local Government Act 1995</i>	
File Reference:	Nil	
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil	
Attachments:	Nil	

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

Background

Each year Council provides a Christmas function for Councillors and staff to celebrate the season and acknowledge the work achieved throughout the year.

Council policy 1.12 – Annual Christmas Function States that an agenda item be presented to council by no later than November each year requesting Council confirm the date and venue of the function

Comment

Last year the function was held at Merredin Palace Chinese Restaurant, the year prior at the Commercial Hotel, and previously been held at MRCLC, Cummins Theatre, and the Northside Tavern.

The Council at its September 2019 briefing session indicated that the function should be “shared around” for the benefit of other businesses in town.

The Merredin Bowling Club provided a quote of \$35 per head with a traditional Christmas menu or platters. Dates available for a private function include Saturday, 5 & 12 December 2020.

Policy Implications

Policy 1.12 Annual Christmas Function states:

“That council provide a joint Christmas Function for Councillors, employees and the partners/spouses. The Chief Executive Officer is to place an item on the Council agenda no later than November of each year requesting Council to confirm a date and location for the function.”

It should be noted that in previous year children were not able to attend the event, it is anticipated that this will be the same.

Statutory Implications

Council’s Code of Conduct applies

Strategic Implications

➤ Strategic Community Plan

Zone: Nil
Zone Statement: Nil
Key Priority: Nil

➤ Corporate Business Plan

Key Action: Nil
Directorate: Nil
Timeline: Nil

Sustainability Implications

➤ Strategic Resource Plan

Nil

➤ Workforce Plan

Directorate: Nil
Activity: Nil
Current Staff: Nil
Focus Area: Nil
Strategy Code: Nil
Strategy: Nil
Implications: Nil

Risk Implications

Nil

Financial Implications

An allocation is included in the 2020/21 Annual Budget for the function.

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation

That the Shire of Merredin 2020 Christmas function for Councillors, staff and their partners be held at Merredin Bowling Club on _____ December 2020.

15.2 Merredin Regional Community and Leisure Centre User Group Fees and Contributions

<h2>Administration</h2>		
Responsible Officer:	Mark Dacombe, T/CEO	
Author:	Mark Dacombe, T/CEO	
Legislation:	<i>Local Government Act 1995</i>	
File Reference:	Nil	
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil	
Attachments:	<p><u>Attachment 15.1A</u> – Correspondence with Sports Council 11 June</p> <p><u>Attachment 15.1B</u> – Correspondence with Sports Council 9 July</p>	

Purpose of Report

- Executive Decision
 Legislative Requirement

Background

The Council adopted a revised user fee schedule in January 2015. This applied from the winter season that year. The new fee structure from that date was effectively a flat fee for each user group or organisation. The starting point for the new structure was the fee paid by each user group in the previous year plus a reasonably substantial increase. The Council adopted at the same time, a strategy to increase the fees by 5% per annum for a period of five years.

The report to the Council recommending the new structure does not address consultation with the Clubs regarding the fee structure, however, it is noted that the Merredin Junior Cricket Club (MJCC) and the Merredin Netball Association (MNA) asked the Council to review the fees it was proposed to charge those two clubs. The MNA identified that the new fee structure was not affordable due to a decline in membership. The MJCC highlighted the parameters set around the new flat base fee structure were not correct. The Council reduced the fees by \$860 (MJCC) and \$500 (MNA) respectively.

When Belgravia Leisure was contracted to manage the Merredin Regional Community and Leisure Centre (MRCLC) the revised fee structure was included in the tender specifications so that the contract that was negotiated with Belgravia included receipt of the user group fees with the 5% per annum escalation also

being included. In April 2018, the Council resolved to extend the contract with Belgravia Leisure and the fee structure was built into the extension.

In July 2015, the Council adopted a policy determining guidelines to outline how future development and renewals of sporting infrastructure is to be managed. Significantly for the clubs that play on surfaces that require renewal or replacement, the Council policy requires a contribution towards identified projects on the basis of one third (1/3) of the total development costs subject to the project being included in the relevant annual budget. The report to Council notes, *“The draft policy has been provided to the MSC (Merredin Sports Council) and distributed to the Sporting Associations and/or Clubs for comment with a closing date of 26 June 2015. The MSC advised that the policy was a fair expectation from the sporting bodies.”*

In October 2019 in setting the fees for the 2019/20 year, the Council considered a request from the Merredin Sports Council for the user group fees to remain unchanged for the 2019/20 financial year. The Council agreed to the request to allow for Belgravia Leisure and Merredin Sports Council to work towards a revised user group fee structure for adoption for the 2020/21 financial year.

No agreement has been reached between Belgravia Leisure and the Merredin Sports Council on a revised user group fee structure although as noted below, Belgravia Leisure has agreed to a 50% reduction in the fees for the winter sports codes. Belgravia has also proposed the fees remain at the same level as 2019/20, i.e. forgoing the 5% increase for a second year. This reflects the Council's leadership in holding rates, and fees and charges at a 0% increase this year.

The Merredin Sports Council has submitted that the fee structure should revert to \$50 per person per sport and that a flat fee of \$500 should be charged for Junior Associations. They have also requested the Council to waive the balance of the fees owing by the winter sports being in total \$17,016.67.

Correspondence from the Merredin Sports Council on the issue of the fees is attached.

In discussion with the Merredin Sports Council and Belgravia Leisure, it is agreed that there are other matters that also need to be addressed. These include:

1. Shared understanding of the respective operational responsibilities of Belgravia, the Shire and the Clubs,
2. Clarity around lines of communication between Belgravia, the Shire and the Clubs,
3. Falling participation rates in the sports and difficulties in attracting volunteers to run the sports,
4. Club contribution to sports infrastructure.

While the management contract is between the Council and Belgravia Leisure, the Sports Council and the Clubs have a keen interest in how the facility is run, and Belgravia and the Shire have a keen interest in encouraging an active sporting facility with growing participation.

The table below shows the base fees established in 2015, the fees charged in 2019/20 and the fees as they would be **if there were no change in how they are set**.

Club	Restructured Flat Base Rate (Implemented Winter 2015)	2019/20 (charged rate)	2020/21 (Indicative If no change in the basis of setting fees)
Burracoppin Football Club	\$4,500.00	\$5,209.31	\$2,604.66*
Burracoppin Ladies Hockey Club	\$2,500.00	\$2,894.06	\$1,447.03*
Civic Bowls Club	\$6,000.00	\$6,945.75	\$6,945.75
Merredin Basketball Association	\$12,500.00	\$14,470.31	\$14,470.31
Merredin Districts Lawn Tennis Club	\$2,500.00	\$2,894.06	\$2,894.06
Merredin Golf Club	\$2,000.00	\$2,315.25	\$2,315.25
Merredin Junior Cricket	\$1,360.00	\$1,574.37	\$1,574.37
Merredin Junior Football	\$2,000.00	\$2,315.25	\$1,157.62*
Merredin Junior Hockey Association	\$2,500.00	\$2,894.06	\$1,447.03*
Merredin Little Athletics	\$2,500.00	\$1,039.50	\$1,039.50
Merredin Men's Hockey Club	\$2,500.00	\$2,894.06	\$1,447.03*
Merredin Netball Association	\$8,000.00	\$9,261.00	\$4,630.50*
Merredin Social Hockey	\$2,000.00	\$2,315.25	\$0.00
Merredin Volunteer Fire Brigade	\$500.00	\$578.81	\$578.81
Merredin Women's Hockey Club	\$2,500.00	\$2,894.06	\$1,447.03*
Nukarni Cricket Club	\$1,600.00	\$1,852.20	\$1,852.20
Nukarni Football Club	\$4,500.00	\$5,209.31	\$2604.66*
TOTAL	\$59,960.00	\$67,556.63	\$48,455.81

*50% reduction agreed to by Belgravia Leisure

Comment

The purpose of this report is primarily to address the requests of the Merredin Sports Council and establish the fees for the current year.

User Group Fees

The basis for the current user group fees was established in 2015. The structure was set on a “user pay” basis determined by:

1. The number of members.
2. The number of times they use the facilities.

3. The time they use the facility for.
4. Other factors such as lighting or sole use of the Centre.

Once established the fee became a flat annual which was to be escalated by 5% per year for five years. The escalation was subsequently applied for three years. In 2019/20, at the request of the Sports Council the 5% was not applied and it is also proposed by Belgravia Leisure not to apply it this year.

The fee structure put in place in 2015 was migrated into the contract with Belgravia Leisure and the fees are paid to Belgravia along with a management fee paid by the Council. The User Group Fees charged under the contract must be approved by the Council and this is done on the recommendation of Belgravia.

The Merredin Sports Council has submitted that the fee structure should revert to \$50 per person per sport and that a flat fee of \$500 should be charged for Junior Associations.

Winter Sports Fee Waiver

In July 2020 the Merredin Sports Council made a submission to Belgravia Leisure for a reduction in fees for those winter sports (hockey, football, netball, golf, junior football and hockey juniors) affected by the COVID-19 shut down. They requested a 50% reduction which amounted to \$17,016.67, based on only being able to play half of a normal season's fixtures. The Sports Council also requested in July that the Council waive the other 50%. The Council has not formally considered this request as the T/CEO was of the view it would be preferable that all the concerns being raised by the Sports Council were dealt with as a package.

The winter sports did play a truncated season and have received a substantial concession, with Belgravia meeting the financial cost.

Contributions to Sports Infrastructure

The Council's policy adopted in July 2015, as noted above, provides for the clubs that play on surfaces that require renewal or replacement to contribute towards identified projects on the basis of one third (1/3) of the total development costs.

The current capital works program includes the following upgrade or replacement works (only significant items) that under the current policy would require 1/3 contributions:

Sport/Work	Year	Total	1/3 contribution
Basketball/Netball (Floor patch and repaint)	2021/22	\$ 48,000	\$ 16,000
	2025/26	\$ 48,000	\$ 16,000
	2031/32	\$ 48,000	\$ 16,000
Bowls (Synthetic surface)	2024/25	\$300,000	\$100,000
	2034/35	\$300,000	\$100,000

Hockey/Tennis (Synthetic replacement only) OR (Replacement incl shock)	2027/28	\$399,000 OR \$630,000	\$133,000 \$210,000
--	---------	-------------------------------------	----------------------------

The Merredin Sports Council makes a submission on two key points:

1. This obligation is considered a deterrent to the recruitment of volunteers who are interested in running a sport for the benefit of participants and the encouragement of youth development but do not have the time or interest to be involved in major fundraising.
2. The Shire meets all the costs of maintaining and developing the Oval for the sports that play on that surface. (Note 2020/21 budget allocation for Oval maintenance is \$140,600).

Long term financial modelling undertaken to date indicates that the Council could consider removing or reducing the requirement for the 1/3 contribution. If this were done it would not preclude clubs from contributing to future developments to obtain higher specifications or additional features in renewal or replacement work.

Sports Participation

The Clubs can show significant fall off in participation over the last five years and whilst we do not have figures for 2020 it is expected that the impact of COVID-19 will be significant. The reduction in youth participation is of particular concern. Staff are working with the Department of Local Government, Sport and Recreation and Belgravia Leisure to hold a sports promotion day on 11 November. Funded by the Department it is being called *#Bounce Forward Reset Go!! Summer sports activation*. It is intended to be informal, fun, and encouraging of participants and volunteers. The intention is that Wheatbelt communities re-engage in community summer sport and that sporting infrastructure and spaces are reactivated.

Whilst this is a one-off initiative for now, the issue of arresting the decline and encouraging youth participation is a key objective in structuring a way forward.

The State Minister has also announced a grant program for WA Sport and Recreation to support club development.

2020/21 Fees

It has not been possible to complete discussions in time for the closing of this agenda.

It is proposed to report to the October Council Meeting progress on reaching an agreement on the 2020/21 fees. If that is not possible, it is proposed that a sub-committee be established with power to act to approve an agreement on the fees for 2020/21 financial year.

Policy Implications

The resolution of all matters related to the MRCLC may require new policy development or amendment of existing policies depending on the package of measures required and will be the subject of future discussion and reports.

Statutory Implications

The recommendations are consistent with the Council’s legal obligations under the *Local Government Act 1995*.

Strategic Implications

➤ Strategic Community Plan

Priorities and Strategies for Change	Whilst not yet formally adopted the Council’s draft strategic priorities include “Development of sport and recreation – infrastructure and participation”. This specifically envisages the Shire working with Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries, State sport organisations and local clubs to increase participation at player and Committee level.
--------------------------------------	---

➤ Corporate Business Plan

Key Action: N/A

Directorate:

Timeline:

Sustainability Implications

➤ Strategic Resource Plan

The resolution of the 2020/21 fees will not have a significant impact on the Strategic Resource Plan. Further measures to resolve the issues overall may require an amendment to the plan

➤ Workforce Plan

Directorate: Nil

Activity: Nil

Current Staff: Nil

Focus Area: Nil

Strategy Code: Nil

Strategy: Nil

Implications: Nil

Risk Implications

The main risk is that agreement on the 2020/21 fees cannot be achieved. This will create uncertainty for the summer sports participants.

Financial Implications

The setting of the fees for 2020/21 financial will have a minor impact on this year's budget.

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation

That the Council:

- 1. Notes that discussions on the setting of the 2020/21 sports user group fees have not concluded and that the Council will be provided with an update at the meeting;**
- 2. Notes that should an agreement be reached prior to the October Council meeting, a report will be provided to the Council to enable the proposed fees to be endorsed.**

16.	Motions of which Previous Notice has been given
------------	--

17.	Questions by Members of which Due Notice has been given
------------	--

Nil

18.	Urgent Business Approved by the Person Presiding or by Decision
------------	--

Nil

19. Matters Behind Closed Doors

19.1 Preparation of Brief for CBD Revitalisation Project

Community Services



Responsible Officer:

Andrina Prnich, DCEO

Author:

Andrina Prnich, DCEO

Legislation:

Local Government Act 1995

File Reference:

GS/2/50

Disclosure of Interest:

Temporary CEO, Mark Dacombe – Shareholder Director in Localise Pty Ltd (recommended contractor)

Attachments:

Attachment 19.1A – Confidential – Quotation and Disclosure of Interest

20. Closure

This page has intentionally
been left blank