

# SHIRE OF MERREDIN



**“Heart of the Wheatbelt”**

**MINUTES OF ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING**

**19 November 2013**

MINUTES OF THE SHIRE OF MERREDIN COUNCIL MEETING  
TUESDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2013

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**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Shire of Merredin held in the Council  
Chambers, Corner King and Barrack Streets, Merredin on  
Tuesday 19 November 2013 commencing at 3.00pm.**

**ATTENDANCE:**

Councillors:	KA Hooper	President
	RM Crees	Deputy President
	BJ Anderson	
	C Blakers	
	J Flockart	
	DN Hayes-Thompson	
	T Thomas	
	M Willis	
	M Young	
Staff:	G Powell	Chief Executive Officer
	L Wyatt	Executive Assistant to Chief Executive Officer
	S Lowe	Media and Communication Officer

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**1.0 OFFICIAL OPENING**

The Shire President welcomed everyone and declared the meeting open at 3.05 pm.

**2.0 SWEARING IN OF COUNCILLORS-ELECT**

In accordance with Section 2.29 of the Local Government Act 1995 the CEO swore in the Councillors Caroline Blakers and Trent Thomas.

**3.0 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Nil

**4.0 APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Nil

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**5.0 DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

Cr Willis declared an Proximity Interest in item 12.2 and an Interest Affecting Impartiality in item 13.3.

Cr Flockart declared an Interest Affecting Impartiality in item 12.1.

**6.0 PETITIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

Nil

**7.0 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

6.1 Ordinary Council Meeting held 22 October 2013

[Attachment 6.1A](#)

Confirmation of the minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 22 October 2013.

- 81252 Moved: Cr Young                      Seconded: Cr Anderson  
**Officer's Recommendation**  
*That the minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 22 October 2013 be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.*

**CARRIED 9/0**

**8.0 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE PERSON PRESIDING WITHOUT DISCUSSION**

Nil

**9.0 MATTERS FOR WHICH THE MEETING MAY BE CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC**

Nil

**10.0 RECEIVAL OF MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD SINCE THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF COUNCIL**

10.1 WE-ROC Council Meeting held 23 October 2013

[Attachment 9.1A](#)

- 81253 Moved: Cr Young                      Seconded: Cr Crees  
**Officers Recommendation**  
*That the minutes of the WE-ROC Council Meeting held 23 October 2013 be received.*

**CARRIED 9/0**

**11.0 DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

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Nil.

Cr Flockart declared an Interest Affecting Impartiality in this item.

## 12.0 ENGINEERING SERVICES

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### 12.1 STANDPIPES

<b>Reporting Department:</b>	Engineering Services
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	CEO
<b>Legislation:</b>	Local Government Act 1995
<b>File Reference:</b>	R10/01
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Attachments:</b>	Map and supporting information

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#### **Background**

At its last meeting, Council considered the matter of rationalising standpipes throughout the Shire because of a requirement from the Water Corporation to install non-return apparatus on every standpipe. Because of the need for additional information it was resolved:

81242 Moved: Cr Anderson                      Seconded: Cr Young  
Resolution

*That the matter lay on the table until the November meeting of Council.*

CARRIED 7/0

#### **Comment**

Since the October meeting, a map identifying the location of each standpipe and its usage has been prepared and can be found at [Attachment 12.1A](#). The information tabled at the October Council meeting supporting the map is also at [Attachment 12.1B](#).

A copy of the map has been provided to the Chief Fire Control Officer, Mr Stephen Crook although comment has not been specifically provided.

Other than allowing Council some additional time, nothing substantive has changed in the last month. However, it would appear that the imposition of this arrangement has yet to be accepted by a number of Councils and the matter will be considered further at the next GECZ meeting to be held later in November. The recommendation has been altered accordingly from that at the last meeting.

#### **Statutory/Policy Implications**

Nil

#### **Financial Implications**

The financial implications remain unaltered. Nineteen standpipes will incur a cost of approximately \$10,000 for installation. Rationalisation of the number

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of standpipes will reduce the installation and ongoing costs of annual inspection and rates although savings in water usage will be minimal.

Cr Anderson left the meeting at 3.54pm.

Cr Anderson returned to the meeting at 3.56pm.

**81254** Moved: Cr Anderson Seconded: Cr Young

**Officer's Recommendation**

- 1. That the number of standpipes in the Shire of Merredin be reduced based on the information provided on the attached map.***
- 2. That further communication with the Water Corporation be delayed until after the GECZ meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2013.***

**CARRIED 9/0**

**81255** Moved: Cr Young Seconded: Cr Anderson

***That consultation with the relevant FCO's be sought by 15 December 2013 on the black and blue standpipes indicated prior to their removal, and the installation of a card system be investigated.***

**CARRIED 8/0**

Councillor Young left the meeting at 4.02pm and was not in attendance when the motion was put. Cr Young returned to the meeting at 4.07pm.

Cr Willis declared a proximity interest in this item and left the meeting at 4.08pm

**81256** Moved: Cr Hayes-Thompson                      Seconded: Cr Blakers  
*That Cr Willis be permitted to return to the meeting and participate in the discussion but not be permitted to vote.*

LOST 3/5

**12.2 RURAL BITUMEN ROADS**

**Reporting Department:** Engineering Services  
**Reporting Officer:** CEO  
**Legislation:** Local Government Act 1995  
**File Reference:** R09/02  
**Disclosure of Interest:** Nil  
**Attachments:** May Agenda item  
Objectionable Correspondence Received.

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**Background**

At its May 2013 meeting, Council considered a strategy to deal with a number of old sub-standard sealed rural roads throughout the Shire. The following was resolved:

31123 Moved: Cr Hooper Seconded: Cr Wallace

- 1. That Nukarni East Road, Nukarni West Road, Baandee South Road, Fewster Road and Nokaning West Road be returned to a gravel condition commencing in the 2014/15 financial year with funding being provided from the Roads to Recovery program;*
- 2. That the existing 3.8m sealed section of the Burracoppin South Road be returned to a 10 metre stabilised gravel formation as per Regional Road Group regulations in 2019/20.*
- 3. That the road construction programme be amended accordingly; and*
- 4. That residents in the vicinity of these roads be advised accordingly.*

CARRIED 8/0

In order to provide the rationale behind the resolution, a copy of the agenda item and attachments to the May 2013 meeting are at [Attachment 12.2A](#).

**Comment**

Subsequent to the meeting, landowners directly affected by the decision were advised and provided with a copy of the supporting documentation as attached. Generally, little comment was received except for those who use the Nokaning West Road. A number of letters objecting to the proposal have been received and can be found at [Attachment 12.2B](#).



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The EMES attended a community meeting attended by a number of people living in the locality who expressed dissatisfaction with the decision.

Council has a number of options open to it:

- It can confirm its previous position and revert the road to a gravel standard.
- It can allow the road to remain in its current condition.
- It can widen the road by adding a strip to one or both sides similar to the treatment recently done on the Nungarin Road although it should be noted that the road required a reseal in order to retain the surface integrity and prevent it from breaking up. It should also be noted that should Council adopt this option it will be funded from Council's own resources and not grant funding as the road does not warrant this treatment.
- A further option is to increase routine maintenance on the road which may extend its life.

The financial implications are significant should the road upgraded and this is beyond Council's current financial capacity. As the residents using the Nokanning West Road would prefer a bitumen surface to gravel it is suggested that Council take no further action in relation to this road other than routine maintenance and shoulder preservation.

**Statutory/Policy Implications**

Nil

**Financial Implications**

This will depend on what option is adopted. Please refer to the attached previous agenda item for additional information.

**81257** Moved: Cr Anderson                      Seconded: Cr Young

**Officer's Recommendation**

***That the Nokanning West Road not be reverted to a gravel surface and that routine maintenance be continued.***

**CARRIED 7/1**

Cr Willis returned to the meeting at 4.32pm.

**13.0 CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES**

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**13.1 LIST OF ACCOUNTS PAID**

<b>Reporting Department:</b>	Finance & Administration
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Evelyn Arnold
	Finance and Administration
<b>Legislation:</b>	Local Government Act 1995 & Financial Management Regulations
<b>File Reference:</b>	Nil
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Attachments:</b>	List of Accounts Paid

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**Background**

The attached List of Account Paid ([Attachment 13.1A](#)) during the month under Delegated Authority is provided for Council's information.

**Statutory/Policy Implications**

Local Government Act 1995 and Financial Management Regulations.

**Financial Implications**

All liabilities settled have been in accordance with the Annual Budget provisions. It should be noted that outstanding creditors total \$181,746.67.

**81258** Moved: Cr Young                      Seconded: Cr Blakers

**Officer's Recommendation**

*That Council receive the schedule of accounts as listed, covering cheques, EFT's, bank charges, directly debited payments and wages, as numbered and totalling \$1,400,137.17 from Council's Municipal Fund Bank Account and \$3,320.44 from Council's Trust Account.*

**CARRIED 9/0**

13.2 **MONTHLY FINANCE REPORT**

<b>Reporting Department:</b>	Finance and Administration
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Evelyn Arnold
<b>Legislation:</b>	Local Government Act 1995
<b>File Reference:</b>	Nil
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Attachments:</b>	Monthly Finance Report

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**Background**

The Monthly Finance Report is attached for Council's information.  
([Attachment 13.2A](#))

**Statutory/Policy Implications**

Local Government Act 1995 and Financial Management Regulations.

**Financial Implications**

As outlined in [Attachment 13.2A](#).

**81259** Moved: Cr Young                      Seconded: Cr Blakers

**Officer's Recommendation**

***That Council receive the Monthly Finance Report for October 2013.***

**CARRIED 9/0**

Cr Willis declared an Interest Affecting Impartiality in this item.

13.3 **STATE GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE GRANT**

<b>Reporting Department:</b>	Corporate and Community Services
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Evelyn Arnold
<b>Author:</b>	Marilyn Sayers
<b>Legislation:</b>	Local Government Act 1995
<b>File Reference:</b>	
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Attachments:</b>	Applications for funding from: Merredin Senior Centre Merredin Youth Voice Burracoppin CWA Nukarni Christmas Tree Organisers Merredin and Districts Farm Businesses <a href="#">Attachment 13.3A</a>

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**Background**

The \$10,000 State Government Assistance Grant has been received and following community consultation, four further applications for funding have been received.

The funds have been awarded because of the bleak economic outlook in the Wheatbelt and community groups can apply for this funding. This money has been allocated to improve the community spirits during the difficult times and cannot be spent on alcohol or buying infrastructure.

\$3,500 has already been allocated in the August ordinary meeting of Council - \$1,000 to the Burracoppin Daffodil Day and \$2,500 to the AWWWE group.

Further advertising of the fund was completed in October with a closing date of 31 October for applications.

**Comment**

The Merredin Senior Centre is requesting \$1000 for a day tour or perhaps 2 half day tours.

The Merredin Youth Voice group are requesting \$2000 towards the cost of the bands for the planned music festival in December. A second request for support for an adventure trip to Perth in November has now been withdrawn.

Burracoppin CWA are requesting \$1500 as a combined request for them starting up a community support hub and the 2013 Burracoppin Christmas Tree.

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Merredin and Districts Farm Businesses are requesting \$3,000 for the establishment of a local farm improvement group.

The Nukarni Christmas Tree Organisers are requesting \$150 towards the running costs of their Christmas event.

**Statutory/Policy Implications**

Nil

**Financial Implications**

Of the initial grant of \$10,000, \$6,500 remains. The total of the applications listed above is \$7,650. It could be argued that funding for the senior citizens tour does not meet the eligibility criteria as the funds would only serve a discrete sector of the community and not the wider community as required by the guidelines. It could also be argued that as Burracoppin has already received funding from this source, Council may wish to redirect funding elsewhere.

In summary, \$1,150 will have to be removed from the applications received.

**Officer's Recommendation**

***The Council consider the applications on a case by case basis to a total of \$6,500.***

Cr Anderson left the meeting at 4.40pm.

Cr Anderson returned to the meeting at 4.42pm.

**81260** Moved: Cr Hayes-Thompson    Seconded: Cr Young  
***That Council suspend standing orders at 4.42pm.***

**CARRIED 9/0**

Cr Young left the meeting at 4.53pm.

Cr Young returned to the meeting at 4.55pm.

**81261** Moved: Cr Crees                      Seconded: Cr Flockart  
***That Council resume standing orders at 5.08pm***

**CARRIED 9/0**

**81262** Moved: Cr Young              Seconded: Cr Hayes-Thompson

**Resolution**

***The Council award grant funding as follows:***

***Merredin Senior Centre                      \$1000.00***

***Merredin Youth Voice                      \$1000.00***

***Burracoppin CWA                      \$1500.00***

***Merredin and Districts Farm Businesses      \$3000.00 and,***

***should any of the above events not proceed or be required, the funds be directed to Gala Night.***

**CARRIED 9/0**

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**13.4 WRITE-OFF OF RATES AND INTEREST CHARGES**

**Reporting Department:** Finance & Administration  
**Reporting Officer:** Evelyn Arnold  
**Legislation:** Local Government Act 1995  
**File Reference:**  
**Disclosure of Interest:** Nil  
**Attachments:** Nil

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**Background**

A review of Council's outstanding rates have highlighted some charges that were raised in error. In order to correct our data base Council approval is required to write off these transactions.

**Comment**

**Rates and Interest**

Below is a list of the assessment numbers where errors have been found. They range from rates raised incorrectly to interest charged as a result of a delay in processing records. The request for interest write off have been received from the rate payers concerned. Our procedures have been reviewed to ensure the timely updating of the data base to limit a recurrence of this problem.

<b>Assessment Number</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Amount</b>
A9380	Not leased should have been non rateable.	\$700.69
A306, A503	Postal Address not updated	\$20.49
A1566, A3403, A3404, A2022	Transfer of ownership delayed	\$46.02
A289	ESL Raised in Error	\$60.00
A3069	Transfer of ownership delayed	\$10.46
A6004	Interest Raised In Error – Incorrect Billing Address	\$377.08
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$1,214.74</b>

**Statutory/Policy Implications**

S 6.12 (1) (c) of Local Government Act 1995 'Power to defer, grant discounts, waive or write off debts'. Absolute Majority Required.

**Financial Implications**

This will result in a reduction of the revenue by \$1,214.74.

**81263** Moved: Cr Young                      Seconded: Cr Anderson

**Officer's Recommendation**

- 1. That Council approve the write off of \$1,214.74 being rates, ESL or interest charges raised in error.***

**CARRIED BY ABSOLUTE MAJORITY 9/0**

**14.0 ADMINISTRATION**

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**14.1 FEES AND CHARGES – MERREDIN AMATEUR SWIMMING POOL**

<b>Reporting Department:</b>	Corporate and Community Services
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	CEO
<b>Author:</b>	Lorraine Wyatt
<b>Legislation:</b>	Local Government Act 1995
<b>File Reference:</b>	
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Attachments:</b>	Public Question Time Submission

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**Background**

At the October council meeting Robyn Jones and Donna Whisson representing the Merredin Amateur Swimming Club, made representation and enquired as to how Council had arrived at the new \$500 annual fee to the Club for the use of the pool over the 2013/2014 summer season. They proposed several alternatives, including the abolition of the fee entirely, given that all Club members (and members of their families) pay for admission to the facility; or that, if the \$500 fee is to be charged, that the pool be closed to the public sooner on training days.

The President advised that their proposal would be taken on notice and considered by Council.

Their submission can be found at [Attachment 14.1A](#).

**Comment**

In December 2012, Council adopted the “user pays” methodology for fees and charges which is applicable to users of the MRC&LC. The implementation of this was then delayed by Council until October 2013 to coincide with the change in the sporting season (winter sports operate over two financial years – March to October).

Upon completion of the Integrated Planning Framework it was identified that inadequate provision had been made to provide for maintenance and renewals of the various assets currently owned by Council. The various grants which were once available to Council are becoming harder to access if available at all and state and federal grants have changed significantly after recent elections resulting in a substantial loss in the expected revenue in the 2013/14 budget.



Although the current fees and charges structure attempts to address this issue, it is virtually impossible for Council to recoup these costs however, it is possible to reduce the impact over the long term through the use of the user pays methodology.

The Merredin Amateur Swimming Club has requested that Council give special consideration to them when imposing the \$500.00 annual fee on the following basis:

- it's members are already paying the entry fee into the pool
- it's use is restricted to one lane until the pool becomes closed to the public and
- it is suggested during the months of November and December the pool could be closed earlier giving the Club greater access at an off peak time of use.

The club has not given consideration to the additional hours the Pool Manager is required to stay to allow the club this use or the restrictions imposed on the rest of the community when the club is active. There are additional costs incurred by the activities of the Club such as the use of lighting on some occasions.

#### **Statutory/Policy Implications**

The Local Government Act 1995 allows for the imposition of fees and charges as outlined in section 6.16 and 6.17.

#### **Financial Implications**

If Council chooses to abolish the fee then there will be a loss of revenue of \$500.00 annually however if Council upholds the fee structure the effect is nil. It should be noted that the State Government appears to have abolished the annual \$3,000 subsidy on a permanent basis and as such revenue will be reduced by this amount this financial year.

**81264** Moved: Cr Crees                      Seconded: Cr Willis

#### **Officer's Recommendation**

***That Council upholds the current fee structure for the Merredin Swimming Club and advises the Club accordingly.***

**CARRIED 8/1**

**15.0 MOTIONS OF WHICH PREVIOUS NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN**

Nil

**16.0 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS FOR WHICH DUE NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN**

Nil

**17.0 URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE PERSON PRESIDING OR BY DECISION**

Nil

**18.0 MATTERS BEHIND CLOSED DOORS**

Nil

**19.0 CLOSURE**

There being no further business the President declared the meeting closed at 5.17pm.