

# SHIRE OF MERREDIN



**“Heart of the Wheatbelt”**

**MINUTES OF ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING**

**21 May 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 21 May 2013 commencing at 3.10pm.**

**ATTENDANCE:**

Councillors:	D Crook	Shire President
	M Morris	Deputy Shire President
	BJ Anderson	
	RM Crees	
	DN Hayes-Thompson	
	KA Hooper	
	T McFarlane	
	D Morris	
	W Wallace	
Apologies:	Nil	
Staff:	G Powell	Chief Executive Officer
	L Wyatt	Executive Assistant to Chief Executive Officer

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**1.0 OFFICIAL OPENING**

The Shire President declared the meeting open at 3.10 pm.

**2.0 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

**3.0 APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

- 31119** Moved: Cr McFarlane                      Seconded: Cr Crees  
***That Cr Wallace be granted a leave of absence for the June ordinary meeting and Cr Crook be granted leave of absence for all June to September meetings inclusive.***

**CARRIED 9/0**

**4.0 DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

Cr Crees declared a Financial Interest in item 13.5, Differential Rating.  
Cr Crook declared a Proximity Interest in item 11.1, Bitumen Rural Roads  
Cr Wallace declared a Proximity Interest in item 10.1, Urban Development Plan

**5.0 PETITIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

Nil

**6.0 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

6.1 Ordinary Council Meeting  
**Attachment 6.1A**

Confirmation of the minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 16 April 2013.

**31120** Moved: Cr Hayes-Thompson                      Seconded: Cr D Morris  
**Officer's Recommendation**  
*That the minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 16 April be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.*

**CARRIED 9/0**

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

Nil

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

Nil

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

9.1 Great Eastern Country Zone Meeting held 22 April 2013  
**Attachment 9.1A**

9.2 WE-ROC Council Meeting held 24 April 2013  
**Attachment 9.2A**

- 9.3 Central Wheatbelt Visitors Centre MOU Working Group Meeting held 13 March 2013  
**Attachment 9.3A**

**31121** Moved: Cr Hooper                      Seconded: Cr McFarlane  
**Officers Recommendation**  
*That the minutes of the Great Eastern Country Zone meeting held 22 April 2013, WE-ROC Council Meeting held 24 April 2013 and the Central Wheatbelt Visitors Centre MOU Working Group Meeting held 13 March 2013 be received.*

**CARRIED 9/0**



## 11.0 **ENGINEERING SERVICES**

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Cr Crook declared a proximity interest and left the meeting at 3.15pm.

Cr M Morris assumed the chair.

Greg Powell left the meeting at 3.17pm

Greg Powell returned to the meeting at 3.19pm

Kevin Paust entered the meeting at 3.19pm

### 11.1 **RURAL BITUMEN ROADS**

<b>Reporting Department:</b>	Engineering Services
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Kevin Paust
<b>Legislation:</b>	Local Government Act 1995
<b>File Reference:</b>	09/05
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Attachments:</b>	Photos of bitumen road surface conditions. <b>(Attachment 11.1A)</b>

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#### **Background**

At the Council meeting held on the 19<sup>th</sup> of March a petition from rate payers within the Nokaning area expressed concern about the poor road condition of Nokaning West Road.

Council requested that the Executive Manager of Engineering Services conduct a road inspection of all similar bitumen roads within the Shire and provide a road condition and costing report on these roads.

#### **Comment**

The EMES undertook an inspection of the following roads within the Shire and has compiled a report on their condition and costing for various treatments.

#### **Burracoppin South Road**

The 10 kilometre section from Dulyalbin Road to Tandegin East Road has moderate cracking, extensive sub-base subsidence and rutting in the trafficable area, along with various areas of edge breakage.

The Road traffic count on this section is 32 vehicles per day.

This road is in Council's 2025 and 2030 RRG roads plan.



There are a number of options open to Council:

**Option 1:**

Remove the bitumen seal and return the 10km section to a formed gravel road.

Total cost \$330,000. Because of the low vehicle count, the road does not warrant sealing however this solution may not be supported by road users.

**Option 2:**

Reconstruct and seal to 7m width at the rate of 2 km section per year over 5 years.

Total cost \$145,000 per kilometre.

Total project cost of \$1,450,000.

**Nukarni East Road**

The 3.4 kilometre section between Knungajin/Merredin Road and Goomalling/Merredin Road has severe cracking, potholes, edge breakage and rutting within trafficable area.

The road traffic count on this section of road is 28 vehicles per day.

There are a number of options open to Council:

**Option 1:**

Remove the bitumen seal and return the 3.4 km section to a formed gravel road.

Total cost \$112,200. Because of the low vehicle count, the road does not warrant sealing however this solution may not be supported by road users.

**Option 2:**

Remove the bitumen from the 3.4 km section to make the road safe and reconstruct and seal to 7m width at the rate of 1.2 km section per year over 3 years.

Total cost \$145,000 per kilometre.

Total project cost of \$493,000.

**Nukarni West Road**

The 4.4 kilometre section between Goomalling/Merredin Road and Willis Road has severe cracking, potholes, edge breakage and rutting within trafficable area especially through the 3 kilometre section area affected by salt. The road traffic count for this section of road is 40 vehicles per day.

There are a number of options open to Council:

**Option 1:**

Remove the bitumen seal and return the 4.4 km section to a formed gravel road.

Total cost \$145,200. Because of the low vehicle count, the road does not warrant sealing however this solution may not be supported by road users.

**Option 2:**

Remove the bitumen from the 4.4 km section to make the road safe and reconstruct and seal to 7m width at the rate of 1.1 km section per year over 4 years.

Total cost \$145,000 per kilometre.

Total project cost of \$638,000.

**Fewster Road**

The 3.2 kilometre section between Baandee South Road and Goodier Road has minor cracking and potholes but has severe sub-base subsidence, especially through area of tall timber and rutting on trafficable area. This road also requires shoulder and drainage works.

Road traffic count for this road is 12 vehicles per day.

There are a number of options open to Council:

**Option 1:**

Remove the bitumen seal and return the 3.2 km section to a formed gravel road.

Total cost \$105,600. Because of the low vehicle count, the road does not warrant sealing however this solution may not be supported by road users.

**Option 2:**

Remove the bitumen from the 3.2km section to make the road safe and reconstruct and seal to 7m width at the rate of 1.1 km section per year over 3 years.

Total cost \$145,000 per kilometre.

Total project cost of \$464,000.

**Baandee South Road**

The 4.8 kilometre section between Great Eastern Highway and Fewster Road has extensive potholes, cracking, rutting in trafficable area and edge breakage.

The bitumen seal has had gravel placed over the top to help with the filling of severe potholes.

The road traffic count on this section is 7 vehicles per day.

There are a number of options open to Council:

**Option 1:**

Remove the bitumen seal and return the 4.8 km section to a formed gravel road.

Total cost \$158,400. Because of the low vehicle count, the road does not warrant sealing however this solution may not be supported by road users.

**Option 2:**

Remove the bitumen from the 4.8 km section to make the road safe and reconstruct and seal to 7m width at the rate of 1.2 km section per year over 5 years.

Total cost \$145,000 per kilometre.

Total project cost of \$696,000.

**Nokaning West Road**

The first 5 kilometre section west of Goomalling/Merredin Road has potholes, severe cracking & rutting, along with edge breakage and in some parts the road is down to a width of 3.4 metres. This road also requires shoulder and drainage works.

There are a number of options open to Council:

**Option 1:**

Remove the bitumen seal and return the 5km section to a formed gravel road.

Total cost \$165,000. Because of the low vehicle count, the road does not warrant sealing however this solution may not be supported by road users.

**Option 2:**

Remove the bitumen from the 5km section to make the road safe and reconstruct and seal to 7m width at the rate of 1 km section per year over 5 years.

Total cost \$145,000 per kilometre.

Total project cost of \$725,000.

The earliest that any work can be undertaken is in the 2014/15 financial year as the program funded by external sources for next year has been committed. If Council is not to commit any of its own resources to the work, Roads to Recovery funding could be utilised. Whether the road complies with funding guidelines is yet to be determined.

It should be noted that the forward capital works road programme will require amendment should Council resolve that this work be undertaken.

**Statutory/Policy Implications**

Local Government Act 1995

**Financial Implications**

As per attachments in option 1, 2 & 3

Option 1: Funding from own resources.

Option 2: Subject to R2R2 funding.

Option 3: Funding from RRG. (Burracoppin South Road Only)

**Officer's Recommendation**

- 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 Burracoppin South Road be returned to a 10 metre stabilised gravel formation as per Regional Road Group regulations.**
- 3. That the road construction programme be amended accordingly; and**
- 4. That residents in the vicinity of these roads be advised accordingly.**

**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**

Cr Crook returned to the meeting at 3.31pm.

11.2 **REMOVAL OF DEAD WOOD FROM ROADSIDES**

<b>Reporting Department:</b>	Engineering Services
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	EMES: Kevin Paust
<b>Legislation:</b>	Local Government Act 1995
<b>File Reference:</b>	EM/10/02
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Attachments:</b>	Nil

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**Background**

For some years a practice has existed of granting approval to individuals to collect dead wood for domestic purposes from roadsides in the Shire. It is conditional that only dead wood be taken and primarily from where recent road works have occurred.

This matter was presented to the 18 September 2012 ordinary Council meeting and the following resolution was reached.

30980            Moved: Cr D Morris            Seconded: Cr Anderson  
Officer's Recommendation

*That the practice of granting approval to collect wood from roadsides cease until a survey of roads is undertaken with a view to issuing approvals on an annual basis based on the estimated tonnage of wood available.*

CARRIED 8/1

**Comment**

The Natural Resources Management Officer has concluded his investigations of sustainability of firewood collection within the Shire road reserves and his recommendations are listed below:

- a) *I would suggest that the Shire issue no more than 8 firewood collection permits this year considering most of the road verges where the recent work has been completed have already been cleared. While at the same time it should be considered that further road works will be carried out during rest of the year. Here I mention that the calculation was based much on the visual inspection of Shire road verges where the recent road work has been completed, where the road works are still in progress and also where there are no road works being done at the moment.*
- b) *The number of firewood collection permit is subject to change next year based on the Shire road works and the amount of the firewood available on the road verges.*
- c) *The "Roadside Vegetation and Conservation Values in the Shire of Merredin", June 2011 highlights the number of roadsides within the Shire boundaries determined as having high conservation values or potential to be declared as a flora road. Aware of the need to conserve the roadsides, I would suggest*

*these roadsides be declared as environmentally sensitive areas for firewood collection irrespective of any recent roadwork. The roadsides determined as having high conservation values within the shire boundaries are:*

*Spring Well Valley Road, Davies Road, Cahill Road, Clarke Road, Burke Road, Thiel Road, Old Nukarni Road, Clarke Road, Giles Road, Hearles Road & Gigney Road.*

**Statutory/Policy Implications**

Nil

**Financial Implications**

Nil

**Officer's Recommendation.**

***That the collection of roadside firewood be approved on a permit basis with up to 8 permits being issued annually for roads where recent construction/heavy maintenance has occurred and not on roads having a high conservation value.***

**31124**

Moved: Cr D Morris

Seconded: Cr Hooper

**Resolution**

***That the collection of roadside firewood be approved on a permit basis with up to 8 permits being issued in 2013 to Shire residents only for roads where recent construction/heavy maintenance has occurred or where storm damage has occurred, subject to EMES approval, and not on roads having a high conservation value.***

**CARRIED 8/1**

Kevin Paust left the meeting at 3.41pm

**12.0 CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES**

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**12.1 LIST OF ACCOUNTS PAID**

<b>Reporting Department:</b>	Finance and Administration
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Evelyn Arnold
<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 12.1A**) 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 \$322,817.61.

**31125** Moved: Cr D Morris                      Seconded: Cr McFarlane

**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 \$1,169,907.01 from Council's Municipal Fund Bank Account and \$3,542.30 from Council's Trust Account.*

**CARRIED 9/0**

12.2 **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 12.2A)**

**Statutory/Policy Implications**

Local Government Act 1995 and Financial Management Regulations.

**Financial Implications**

As outlined in **Attachment 12.2A**.

**31126**

Moved: Cr Hooper

Seconded: Cr Wallace

**Officer's Recommendation**

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

**CARRIED 7/2**



12.3 **FEES AND CHARGES 2013/14 FINANCIAL YEAR**

<b>Reporting Department:</b>	Finance and Administration
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Evelyn Arnold
<b>Legislation:</b>	Local Government Act 1995
<b>File Reference:</b>	
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Attachments:</b>	Schedule of Fees and Charges <b>(Attachment 12.3A)</b>

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**Background**

Historically fees and charges are adopted as part of the budget process. However, this usually occurs after the new financial year has commenced. Reviewing the fees and charges for the new financial year now allows them to be ready for implementation on 1 July 2013.

**Comment**

In reviewing the fees and charges input was sort from managers and staff as a result the following changes have been made:

- Visitors Centre, Theatre, Library, Swimming Pool and MRCLC – minimal changes in line with requests/recommendations from the respective managers.
- Inclusion of a section covering the new Synthetic Sports Surface.
- Domestic Refuse Charges increased by 5%.
- Commercial Refuse Charges – cost plus 10%.
- Private Works charges increased by 5%.
- Most other fees have been increased by 5% (rounded to the nearest dollar) which is consistent with assumptions made in the Long Term Financial Strategic Plan.

These fees and charges have been reviewed not only on the basis of cost recovery but also to allow for clear application by staff and not to be cost prohibative to use by the community.

Attached is the complete list of the fees and charges applied in the last two years as well as the proposed fees for the coming year.

**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**

Any increase in fees will be reflected in the budgeted revenue.

**31127**

Moved: Cr Crees

Seconded: Cr Anderson

**Officer's Recommendation**

***That Council adopt the fees and charges to be effective from 1 July 2013.***

**CARRIED BY ABSOLUTE MAJORITY 9/0**

12.4 **COMMUNITY FUNDING APPLICATIONS FOR 2013/2014 BUDGET CONSIDERATION**

<b>Reporting Department:</b>	Administration
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Evelyn Arnold – Executive Manager of Corporate and Community Services
<b>Legislation:</b>	Local Government Act 1995
<b>File Reference:</b>	Council Policy Manual 3.21
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Attachments:</b>	Applications Received

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**Background**

Council often receives requests for funding from local groups for a variety of projects. Council seeks to support these groups and in doing so acknowledges the contribution made by local volunteers and not for profit groups to the social, cultural and economic fabric of our community.

As a consequence, Council adopted policy 3.21 Community Funding at its March 2010 meeting (**CMRef 30277**) which coordinates Council's response to community requests for financial support. It also ensures that the Shire funding resources are allocated in a way that are transparent, legal and 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:

1. to encourage the development of services, facilities and events that meet identified community needs;
2. to promote active participation of local residents in community initiatives and the development of skills, knowledge and opportunities;
3. to provide assistance to the community to develop initiatives and services that support the Shire of Merredin's own objectives; and
4. to enhance the image of the Shire of Merredin within the community.

The following groups are eligible for funding support:

1. incorporated not-for-profit organisations based within the Shire of Merredin;
2. incorporated not-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.

**Comment**

The Shire advertised in the Merredin Mercury in March for expressions of interest from not-for-profit, incorporated community groups and organisations with project and program funding needs which will be considered by Council when developing the 2013/2014 Annual Budget. The following applications (**Attachment 12.4A**) were received:

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Amount \$</b>
Wheatbelt Agcare	Provide free family counselling.	990
Merredin Senior Centre Inc	2014 Senior Games in Merredin	Venue hire of MRCLC 24 <sup>th</sup> and 25 <sup>th</sup> March 2014 up to 1,000
Merredin Cricket Association	Re-wiring Cricket Nets	3,250

Copies of the completed applications are attached for Council's consideration.

**Statutory/Policy Implications**

This contribution meets the requirements of Council Policy 3.21 – Community Funding.

**Financial Implications**

A provision for \$5,240 can be made in the 2013/2014 budget from E041170 – Public Relations and Donations.

**Officer's Recommendation**

*That Council fund the all the community projects, as per the applications received, being an allocation of \$5,240 from the 2013/2014 Budget.*

**31128**

Moved: Cr D Morris

Seconded: Cr M Morris

**Resolution**

*That Council fund the all the community projects, as per the applications received being cash of \$4240 with a contribution of venue hire as requested by Merredin Senior Citizens Inc. and provision be included in the 2013/2014 Budget.*

**CARRIED BY ABSOLUTE MAJORITY 9/0**

12.5 **CENTRAL WHEATBELT VISITOR CENTRE RESOURCING AND OPERATION**

<b>Reporting Department:</b>	Corporate & Community Services
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Evelyn Arnold/Robyn McCarthy
<b>Legislation:</b>	Local Government Act 1995
<b>File Reference:</b>	Nil
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Attachments:</b>	Minutes from the CWVC MOU Working Group Meeting ( <b>Attachment 12.5A</b> )

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**Background**

In February 2013 Council was requested to consider recruiting additional staff to assist in the operation of the Central Wheatbelt Visitors Centre. Council resolved to:

*“That the matter lay on the table until the April Council meeting pending investigation of staffing options, opening hours and the potential for recruiting additional volunteers.”*

**Comment**

Currently we are attempting to operate the Central Wheatbelt Visitors Centre (CWVC) 7 days per week 9:00am to 4:00pm – with staff paid for hours worked Monday to Friday, time in lieu accumulated for hours worked on Saturday and volunteers opening the centre on Sunday.

There are a number of reasons why it is believed that this current method of operation may not be sustainable;

- Availability of Volunteers – in the preceding 2 months the number of available trained volunteers has reduced to 2. This is making it increasingly difficult to guarantee consistent visitor servicing on a Sunday.
- Recruitment of Volunteers - the recruitment of new volunteers is still proving challenging.
- Cost of Training and Recruiting Volunteers - to recruit a volunteer requires the same training and staff involvement as recruiting an additional member of staff. In addition, the requirement to provide a National Police Certificate before commencement has put at least one prospective volunteer off.
- Staff Concerns – a large amount of time in lieu is being accumulated, but the current work load does not always allow for this time to be taken. As it is a long term requirement to work Saturdays, the current staff have made a request to be paid overtime for hours worked.
- Weekend Hours – the requirement to open from 9:00pm to 4:00pm on the weekend means there is no weekend break and this may be contributing to the challenge of attracting volunteers.
- Regional Volunteers - no support from regional partners to volunteer in the CWVC due to the hours required and distances to travel.

- Regional Partners – below is an extract from the March CWVZ MOU Working Group meeting regarding future funding from the member shires. The complete minutes from the meeting are attached. This would indicate that our regional tourism partners are unable to contribute any significant additional funds towards operational costs.

### **“3. Future funding from the ROC’s.**

#### **Comments for New Travel and NEWROC by Trevor Smith, CEO, Shire of Mukinbudin**

- Tourism is bringing some positive effects to the region and the Wheatbelt Way can only improve on these benefits.
- NEWROC and Newtravel are considering a secretary/project officer position to provide support to Newtravel and manage the Wheatbelt Way.
- Collectively NEWROC currently contributes about \$30,000 to Newtravel and the CWVC in cash plus each Shire finances other tourism activities such as caravan parks, signage, information bays etc.
- Changes to the MOU should reflect more of a fee for service approach with no funding for the operations of the CWVC facilities or day to day operations.

#### **Comments for Roe Tourism and RoeROC by Caroline Robinson**

- Roe Tourism acknowledges the importance of the CWVC to tourism in the region.
- RoeROC Shires are still happy to contribute \$2,500 pa + CPI
- Roe Shires investing in their CRC as VIP’s.

#### **Comments from Kaye Crafter, Southern Cross community member**

- Kaye indicated that the Shire of Yilgarn have a similar outlook to RoeROC

#### **Comments from Avril Parker, Merredin B & B**

- Local Govt’s often overlook the value of professional regional Visitor Centre staff and what goes into visitor servicing at that level.

#### **Comments from Jamie Criddle, CEO Westonia**

- MOU should reflect the funding required by the CWVC Tourism Group.
- Regional projects should be funded by state government.

#### **Comments from Greg Powell, CEO Shire of Merredin WE-ROC**

- The comments on funding could be considered at the next WE-ROC Executive Meeting. “

There are a number of options available to Council which include:

#### **Option 1: Status Quo**

This is the easiest option, but does not address the need for staff support nor how do provide a consistent provision of visitor services. Nor does it address the fact that as the cost of the service increases, our regional partners are reluctant to increase their contribution.

**Option 2: Close the Visitors Centre**

This would indeed resolve the cost, staffing and volunteer concerns. However, it would also remove the valuable services that the CWVC provides to the town of Merredin as well as the surrounding areas. The staff at the CWVC make a significant contribution to “putting Merredin on the map” by lifting the positive profile of the Wheatbelt as a visitor destination. In addition, the CWVC contributes to the “liveability” of the shire by welcoming and providing information to new residents.

**Option 3: Reduce the Opening Hours on Weekends, Public Holidays and Use Volunteers.**

The suggestion here is that the hours are reduced to 10:00am to 2:00pm for weekends and public holidays. This would place less demands on staff and possibly improve the chances of recruiting more volunteers. However, this does not address the issue of consistency with the prospect that some Sundays the CWVC would be closed if more volunteers cannot be found. It also does not recognise the time, money and effort that are invested in training a volunteer. The success of this option also assumes that more volunteers can be recruited.

**Option 4: Reduce the Opening Hours on Weekends, Public Holidays and Staff Weekends and Public Holidays with Casual Staff.**

The option here is that the hours are reduced to 10:00am to 2:00pm for weekends and public holidays and that weekends are staffed by casual paid staff. Employing casual staff at a level 2/4 (under the Local Government Award) would cost \$24.0640 per hour equating to \$192.51 for an 8 hour weekend. This is more cost effective than paying the current staff overtime. This solution would also provide a consistent, complete service where we could guarantee hours of operation and maintain Transwa and Cummins Theatre ticketing service.

**Option 5: Reduce the Opening Hours on Weekends, Public Holidays and Staff Weekends with Casual Staff and Existing Museum and CWVC Volunteers and Collocate the CWVC at the Railway Museum.**

The option is a more a medium to long term solution. It would give the CWVC a higher visibility with a highway position. It would allow the Railway Museum to extend their opening hours improving visitor access to this tourist attraction. This option could also better utilise the limited volunteer base by pooling resources. More traffic could also create a revenue stream. In addition, the existing CWVC building could be leased to a community group or business or demolished creating an additional revenue stream or reducing Council’s asset management costs.

**Option 6: Reduce the Opening Hours to Week Days Only**

This option would cut costs below those currently incurred and would still leave the option to staff the CWVC by volunteers available. A variance on this option could be to open Monday to Friday and four (4) hours on Saturday with the equivalent number of hours being taken off in the following week.

None of the above options address the increasing challenge of securing additional funding from our regional partners to support the operating costs of the CWVC. It is suggested that a new strategy needs to be developed so that the services provided by the CWVC are recognised and valued by the Working Group members. This may result in the CWVC operating more regionally than on a direct visitor servicing basis. This direction would need to be explored more fully before it is considered further.

**Statutory/Policy Implications**

Nil.

**Financial Implications**

The employment of casual staff would require an additional \$10,100 staff costs per annum; based \$24.06 per hour (including 25% casual loading) working 8 hours a week.

Some Councillors have informally suggested that the overall cost of the CXVC should be reduced or increased costs curtailed or recouped. Should this be the wish of Council, Option 6 would achieve this in the short term with Option 5 appearing to be a worthwhile long term objective.

**Officer's Recommendation**

*That Council adopt option 6 as a short term solution from 1 July, 2013 with support given to conducting a feasibility study and consultation on the practicalities of co-locating the Central Wheatbelt Visitor Centre with the Railway Museum as outlined in Option 5.*

31129                      Moved: Cr M Morris                      Seconded: Cr C Wallace  
*That Council adopt Option 1.*

LOST 4/5

31130                      Moved: Cr Crees                      Seconded: Cr Hooper  
**Resolution**  
*That Council adopt option 6 as a short term solution from 1 July, 2013 with support given to conducting a feasibility study and consultation on the practicalities of co-locating the Central Wheatbelt Visitor Centre with the Railway Museum as outlined in option 5 or any other suitable business/organisation.*

CARRIED 8/1



Moved: Cr McFarlane                      Seconded: Cr Hayes-Thompson  
**31131 That the meeting adjourn at 4.39pm**

**CARRIED 9/0**

Moved: Cr McFarlane                      Seconded: Cr Hayes-Thompson  
**31132 That the meeting resume at 4.45pm**

**CARRIED 9/0**

12.6 **FAIR VALUATION OF PLANT, FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT**

**Reporting Department:** Finance and Administration  
**Reporting Officer:** Evelyn Arnold  
**Legislation:** Nil  
**File Reference:** Nil  
**Disclosure of Interest:** Nil  
**Attachments:** Valuation Proposals

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**Background**

Changes to the Local Government Act require that over a succession of years all Council assets are reviewed to ensure they are “fair valued”. By the 30 June 2013 all plant and equipment and furniture and equipment owned by the Shire of Merredin must be reviewed and revalued to reflect the market value of the each asset.

**Comment**

As this is quite a significant undertaking and staff resources are already limited quotes have been sort to engage a valuation consultant. This will assist with the revaluation process and also ensure that the methodology adopted meets the auditory and statutory requirements.

As per Councils Purchasing Policy 3.12 four consultant firms were contacted, three written proposals were received and are summarised below. The complete proposals can be found at **Attachment 12.6A**.

AssetVal	\$12,000
Liquid Pacific	\$8,566
JRA Valuations	\$9,680

It is recommended that Liquid Pacific be engaged for a number of reasons:

1. Competitively priced
2. Office in Western Australia
3. High degree of confidence that the report and valuations will comply with audit requirements – they have already consulted with UHY Haines Norton.

**Statutory/Policy Implications**

Local Government Act 1995.

**Financial Implications**

An additional budgetary spend of \$9,000 for consultants which can be allocated against strategic planning.

**31133**

Moved: Cr Crees

Seconded: Cr Anderson

**Officer's Recommendation**

*That Council approve the appointment of Liquid Pacific to produce a report to review the current valuation of Plant, Furniture and Equipment in accordance with the legislative requirements to the cost of \$9,000.*

**CARRIED BY ABSOLUTE MAJORITY 9/0**

12.7 **FILM PRODUCTION HIRE OF CUMMINS THEATRE**

<b>Reporting Department:</b>	Corporate and Community Services
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Evelyn Arnold
<b>Legislation:</b>	Nil
<b>File Reference:</b>	Nil
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Attachments:</b>	Project Proposal <b>(Attachment 12.7A)</b>

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**Background**

Merredin Shire was recently contacted by a two film producers hoping to make a film in Merredin. The project won a producer's award from ScreenWest, so that they can film it. The intention is to complete an 8-part web series (each episode is 10 minutes), entitled *Greenfield*—the name of a fictional small town in regional Western Australia. The film is a drama, following a young man from the city that relocates to the country to be with his girlfriend, and the resulting frictions, surprises, discoveries, and heartaches that follow.

**Comment**

Their plan is to film for approximately 3 ½ weeks, beginning on 15 July 2013. Greenfield wants to make the Cummins Theatre their "headquarters" for the duration of their shoot, which will generally be 6 out of every 7 days. After filming during the day and evening, some of the crew will be reviewing / editing footage, rewriting scenes, etc. They are also requesting to use the Theatre for their cast and crew of 20-25 people during this time. Currently, there is no major booking over this period.

There are number of positive outcomes should this project go ahead:

- Filmed on location in Merredin, with an untold number of viewers on an 8-part web-series, is terrific advertising that we can use long after the crew has wrapped shooting.
- The director is an award-winning filmmaker from Copenhagen, Denmark—adds international cache.
- During the filming, the producers are happy to offer film-production workshops for the community and the local schools on their day off each week, as a way of "giving back".
- The film will also require the use of "extras" (actors with fewer than 5 lines of dialogue) from the local community.
- There will be a "making of" documentary made of the experience, which will include interviews with key people in Merredin. Again, great promotion for the community.
- We will have 20-25 people in town for 3 ½ weeks—contributing money to the local businesses.

- The 8-part web-series will also be re-edited into a feature-length film in 2014, which they would like to have the Premiere screened here at the Cummins Theatre, making it a red carpet event.
- A great public relations opportunity for not just local news media outlets, but nationwide news.
- Could attract other (larger & commercial, as well as independent) filmmakers to come to Merredin, as we could be a more viable option than Perth.
- Revenue and an event at the theatre in an otherwise relatively quiet period.

The producers have requested that the normal fee hiring the Cummins Theatre for this period of time be reduced to \$1,000 to allow for this great project to go ahead. Attached is the proposal from the producers.

**Statutory/Policy Implications**

Nil.

**Financial Implications**

\$1,000 booking fee for a period when the Theatre would not have generated income.

**Officer's Recommendation**

***That Council approve the hiring of the Cummins Theatre by the Greenfield Producers for the amount of \$1,000.***

**31134**

Moved: Cr Crees

Seconded: Cr Hayes-Thompson

***That Council approve the hiring of the Cummins Theatre by the Greenfield Producers for the amount of \$1,000 subject to suitable and satisfactory arrangements being finalised in relation to cleaning of the venue, any damage that may occur and termination of the arrangement should unsuitable unforeseen circumstances arise.***

**CARRIED 8/1**

12.8 **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING – MERREDIN REPERTORY CLUB**

**Reporting Department:** Finance and Administration  
**Reporting Officer:** Evelyn Arnold  
**Legislation:** Nil  
**File Reference:** Nil  
**Disclosure of Interest:** Nil  
**Attachments:** Final Draft MOU  
(Attachment 12.8)

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**Background**

In order to foster continuing clear communications and a good working relationship a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was drafted. This MOU ratified by Council in June 2012, is now due to be reviewed.

**Comment**

This MOU is not materially different from the one reviewed by Council in June 2012, except the ticketing fee has been increased from \$3.50 to \$3.70 to reflect an increase in administration charges.

**Statutory/Policy Implications**

Nil.

**Financial Implications**

Nil.

**31135** Moved: Cr D Morris Seconded: Cr Hooper

**Officer's Recommendation**

***That Council adopt the Memorandum of Understanding between the Shire of Merredin and the Merredin Repertory Club.***

**CARRIED 9/0**

**13.0 ADMINISTRATION**

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**13.1 MRC&LC – MERREDIN COLLEGE – INDIGENOUS ATTENDANCE INITIATIVE**

<b>Reporting Department:</b>	MRC&LC
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Rebecca Hutton
<b>Legislation:</b>	Local Government Act 1995
<b>File Reference:</b>	
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Attachments:</b>	Correspondence from Merredin College

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**Background**

The Merredin College has written to Council with regard to a proposed 'Indigenous Attendance Initiative' it has developed in conjunction with Cliffs Asia Pacific Iron Ore (Koolyanobbing operations). The letter outlines **(Attachment 13.1A)** indigenous attendance rates and the commitment by Cliffs and the College toward the proposal as well as other programs already in place at the College which have been designed specifically for the purpose of increasing indigenous student attendance rates.

The Merredin College is requesting support from the Shire of Merredin for the initiative in the form of free (or discounted) use of the MRC&LC in terms 2 & 3 and the Merredin Pool in terms 1 & 4 for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who would qualify under a reward system for school attendance.

**Comment**

In 2012/13 the MRC&LC approved approx 30% of its budgeted 'fee waiver' allowance toward the holiday programs run by *Nyoongar Sports* and the *David Wirrapunda Foundation*, designed specifically to improve sporting opportunities for local indigenous children.

The Shire of Merredin has a current and ongoing commitment to the Department of Sport and Recreation's 'Sport 4 All' KidSport funding program which MRC&LC staff administer on behalf of the entire Eastern Wheatbelt. This program provides up to \$200 to eligible youth (aged 5 – 17) annually toward participation in registered sporting clubs. This program has approved \$6000 (over 50%) worth of funding specific to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children over the last 14 months in Merredin.

Once the new 'user pays' fee structure adopted by Council is in place from October 2013 this will mean that 'individual' memberships and usage is not a factor, unless it is occurring on a casual basis (ie. outside of fixtured sport times).

The admission fee to the Pool will of course still remain.

As part of the MRC&LC policies, children under the age of 12 are not permitted to be on site unless under the supervision of a parent/carer or coach. MRC&LC staff and user clubs are experiencing behavioural issues with some unsupervised indigenous children utilising the facility for sport or just to loiter.

**Statutory Implications**

Nil

**Financial Implications**

Should Council decide to allow free or discounted use of MRC&LC or Pool there will be unknown financial implications due to a reduction in revenue.

**31136**

Moved: Cr D Morris

Seconded: Cr McFarlane

**Officer's Recommendation**

***That the Merredin College be advised of Council's inability to offer any further discounted facility usage for indigenous students as it holds the view the commitment already provided to this sector of the sporting community is well catered for.***

**CARRIED 7/2**

13.2 **RATES REDUCTION REQUEST – CHARITABLE ORGANISATION**

<b>Reporting Department:</b>	Administration
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	CEO
<b>Legislation:</b>	Local Government Act 1995
<b>File Reference:</b>	RCS/04/41
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Attachments:</b>	Correspondence from Merredin Lodge of Renown

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**Background**

Correspondence was received from the Merredin Lodge of Renown requesting reduction of rates payable on the basis that they are a “not for profit” charitable organisation. A copy of the correspondence can be found at **Attachment 13.2A**.

**Comment**

The Grand Lodge of Western Australia is the governing body and administration centre of the Western Australian Constitution of Freemasonry and is a sovereign body, which celebrated its centenary in 2000.

All individual Freemasons lodges in the Western Australian Constitution are subordinate to, and operate under a warrant from The Grand Lodge of Western Australia.

Charity is an integral part of the Freemason’s and the practice of charity is high on the agenda of the lodge. In Western Australia large sums of money are raised by the members for all kinds of charitable work. Disaster relief, donations to hospitals and community care organisations, medical research and care for the young and old through housing and educational grants are all ongoing programs for the fraternity.

The rates assessment notice 2812 for the 20012/13 year was comprised of the following:

Rates:	979.07
Refuse maintenance:	32.00
Rubbish (commercial)	63.00
Emergency services levy:	57.00
<b>Total amount payable:</b>	<b>\$1131.07</b>

All payments have been made in full and no arrears owed.



**Statutory/Policy Implications**

Under Part 6, Financial Management; Rates and Charges section 2.26 (g) Council has the discretion to exempt the payment of rates “for land that is used for charitable purposes”.

**Financial Implications**

Reduction in rates collection.

**31137**

Moved: Cr M Morris

Seconded: Cr Crees

**Officers Recommendation**

*That Council endorse an exemption in rates payable by The Merredin Lodge of Renown based on Part 6 – Financial Management; Rates and Charges, section 6.26 Rateable Land from 1 July 2013 but that all other service charges remain payable.*

**CARRIED BY ABSOLUTE MAJORITY 7/2**

13.3 **REGIONAL LIBRARY ACTIVITY PLAN**

<b>Reporting Department:</b>	Administration
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	CEO
<b>Legislation:</b>	Local Government Act 1995
<b>File Reference:</b>	CS/07/05
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Attachments:</b>	Regional Activity Plan 2013/14 <b>(Attachment 13.3A)</b>

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**Background**

The provision of public library services in Western Australia is a joint partnership between State Government and Local Government under the terms of the *Library Board of Western Australia Act 1951*.

The Library Board has a formal agreement with each of the 138 local governments for provision of a public library services. In total, there are 232 public libraries in the State and the relationship between State and Local Government for the provision of Public Library services is managed by the Strategic Library Partnership Agreement Steering Committee (SPLASC).

In 2010 a review of the Regional Model was undertaken to evaluate the need and effectiveness of the Regional System. The decision was made to continue with a Regional Model, based on certain principles. These principles were developed in line with recommendations made in the *Enhancing the Regional Model* report and by considering the following factors:

1. **Equity** - what is the Regional need?
2. **Effectiveness** - how will services provided deliver high level support/outcomes for the community and all participating Local Governments?
3. **Efficiency** - to what extent are efficient practices employed for delivering services across the Region?

The activity planning process encourages Regional Libraries to consider other initiatives and projects that will enhance the level of services provided to each community. The State Library is committed to assisting the Regions to deliver strategic projects of direct benefit to their clients and set aside funding for support of such initiatives. The Regional Librarians, projects such as the implementation of technology to support library training and services, learning and literacy programs and local history initiatives are examples of those projects that might be suitable for additional funding support in the coming year.

**Comment**

The Activity Plans for 2012/2013 were developed late in the Local Government Budgeting Schedule and as such did not include a financial component for each of the 9 Shires in the Wheatbelt library region. Due to the changes in funding by the Library Board, the Shire of Merredin absorbed the cost.

The 2013/2014 Library Activity Plan requires a financial contribution from each of the 9 participating shires. Each shire can opt out of participating however their Library will not receive operational help, advice, bulkloans or visits from the Regional Library. Explanatory notes of each of the areas being funded are on page 2 of the activity plan.

**Statutory/Policy Implications**

Nil

**Financial Implications**

Funding implications for 2013/14.

**31138**

Moved: Cr D Morris

Seconded: Cr Anderson

**Officer's Recommendation**

***That the Merredin Regional Library, Activity Plan for 2013/14 as attached, be adopted.***

**CARRIED 9/0**

13.4 **WORKFORCE PLAN - ADOPTION**

<b>Reporting Department:</b>	Administration
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	CEO
<b>Legislation:</b>	Local Government Act 1995
<b>File Reference:</b>	
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Attachment:</b>	Workforce Plan

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**Background**

Council is required to adopt an integrated planning strategy by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2013. The core documents in the strategy are the Community Plan and the Corporate Business Plan with a number of informing strategies including an Asset Management Plan and a Workforce Plan.

**Comment**

The services of a Department of Local Government panel member were secured to prepare a workforce plan. Council has previously been briefed by the consultants on the plan and its recommendations. A copy of the final Workforce Plan for the Shire of Merredin can be found at **Attachment 13.4A**.

The implications of the Plan, both in a strategic and financial sense have been included in the draft Corporate Business Plan but it is recommended that the workforce plan, given the importance being placed on these plans by the DLG, be adopted as a separate entity.

**Statutory/Policy Implications**

The Workforce Plan together with other documents will underpin Councils strategic direction for at least the next four years.

**Financial Implications**

There are financial implications in this plan including a requirement for a dedicated human resources staff member. These implications will be factored into the Corporate Business Plan.

**31139** Moved: Cr Anderson Seconded: Cr Crees

**Officer's Recommendation**

***That the Shire of Merredin Workforce Plan, as attached, be adopted.***

**CARRIED 9/0**

Cr Crees declared a financial interest and left the meeting at 5.05pm

13.5 **DIFFERENTIAL RATING – 2013/14**

**Reporting Department:** Administration  
**Reporting Officer:** CEO  
**Legislation:** Local Government Act 1995  
**File Reference:**  
**Disclosure of Interest:** Nil  
**Attachments:** Nil

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**Background**

Council introduced differential rating on properties valued on an Unimproved Valuation basis in the 2012/13 financial year. The rating structure as adopted by Council was:

Unimproved Value	Minimum Rate	Rate in \$
UV1 – Rural	\$807	\$0.012317
UV2 – Urban Rural	\$807	\$0.018475
UV3 – Mining	\$200	\$0.024634
UV4 - Special Zone Wind farm	\$1,076	\$0.024634
UV5 – Special Use Airstrip	\$1,076	\$0.024634
UV6 – Merredin Power	\$807	\$0.024634

**Comment**

Concern was expressed by those ratepayers in the wind farm differential area but in the main, the new structure was accepted by ratepayers. Council may wish to review its position on the wind farm category. One option open to Council is to reduce the differential but still maintain the concept. Another option is to remove it in its entirety and impose the same rate as that applying to other rural properties.

Council’s draft long term financial strategy currently requires an annual rate increase of 7.5%.

Although mentioned previously, little or no attention or comment has been directed towards imposing a differential regime in GRV valued properties. This could be done using the zonings under LPS 6 should Council wish to pursue this. Staff are currently ascertaining whether the data base has been modified to allow this to occur.

A further issue for Council to consider is whether it wishes to maintain the nexus between GRV and UV properties with the rate income being split on a 50:50 basis. Although subjective (as is differential rating) this may also provide some flexibility in determining rates for the 2013/14 financial year.

**Statutory/Policy Implications**

Nil

**Financial Implications**

Rate revenue will directly drive budget expenditure in the 2013/14 financial year.

**Officer's Recommendation**

- 1. That Council reviews its position on differential rating of UV properties**
- 2. That Council advises whether it wishes to impose differential rating on GRV rated properties**
- 3. That Council advises whether it wishes to change the nexus between GRV and UV rated properties**
- 4. That should Council wish to adopt a differential rating regime for the 2013/14 financial year, staff advertise the proposal for public comment.**

**31140**

Moved: Cr D Morris

Seconded: Cr McFarlane

**Resolution**

- 1. That the current methodology on differential rating of UV properties be endorsed.**
- 2. That differential rating on GRV rated properties not be adopted in the 2013/14 financial year.**
- 3. That the existing 50:50 nexus of the total rates levied between GRV and UV rated properties remain.**
- 4. That a differential rating regime for the 2013/14 financial year, reflecting a 7.5% increase in total rates received be advertised for public comment in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1995.**

**CARRIED 6/2**

Cr Crees returned to the meeting at 5.34pm

13.6 **STATE BROADACRE ASSISTANCE PACKAGE – COMMUNITY SUPPORT**

**GRANTS**

<b>Reporting Department:</b>	Administration
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	CEO
<b>Legislation:</b>	Local Government Act 1995
<b>File Reference:</b>	
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Attachments:</b>	Correspondence and Guiding Principles

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**Background**

Correspondence was recently received from the State Government advising at a community support grant of \$10,000 has been allocated to the Shire of Merredin in recognition of the circumstances surrounding broad acre agriculture at the present time.

A copy of the correspondence together with the guiding principles can be found at **Attachment 13.6A**.

**Comment**

The attachments are self-explanatory on what and how the grant is to be expended. Direction is sought from Council on its views on which groups should be included in the collaboration process and functions and activities that would be of benefit to the broader community.

Please note the restrictions on what the funds can be spent on and the timeframe.

**Statutory/Policy Implications**

Nil

**Financial Implications**

There are no implications as the activity will be funded from the grant although the 10% limitation on administration costs should be noted.

**Officer's Recommendation**

***That Council provide Staff with direction on the community support grant.***

**31141**

Moved: Cr M Morris

Seconded: Cr Hayes-Thompson

**Resolution**

***That staff seek expressions of interest from the wider community about activities to be funded under the State Broad Acre Assistance Package guidelines.***

**CARRIED 9/0**

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

Nil

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

Nil

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

Nil

**17.0 MATTERS BEHIND CLOSED DOORS**

Nil

**18.0 CLOSURE**

There being no further business the Shire President declared the meeting closed at 5.49 pm.