Shire of Dardanup

12.1 Executive Directorate

APPENDICES

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

TO BE HELD

26th August 2026

Commencing at 5:00pm

AT

ADMINISTRATION CENTRE EATON

1 Council Drive - EATON

This document is available in alternative formats such as:

~ Large Print

~ Electronic Format [disk or emailed]

Upon request.

(Appendix ORD: 12.1.1A)

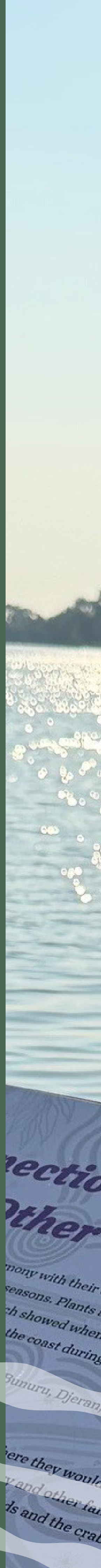
Shire of Dardanup

Strategic Community Plan

2026 - 2036

Contents

The Shire of Dardanup acknowledges the Noongar people as the traditional owners of the land upon which the Shire is situated. In doing this, we recognise and respect their continuing culture and contribution they make to the life of this region and pay our respects to their elders, past, present and emerging. The Shire of Dardanup also respects and celebrates all cultures of all our residents and visitors to our Shire.



01. Plan summary

Our vision for the future of our Shire

The Shire of Dardanup is a healthy, self-sufficient and sustainable community, connected and inclusive, and where our culture and innovation are celebrated.

Our mission

The Shire aims to provide effective leadership in encouraging balanced growth and development of the Shire while recognising diverse community needs.

Guiding aspirations

- Healthy.
- Self-sufficient.
- Sustainable.
- Connected.
- Innovative.

Key priority areas

- Leadership.
- Environment.
- Community.
- Prosperity.
- Amenity.

(Appendix ORD: 12.1.1A)

"As a local government we will continue to work in partnership with the community, and other key stakeholders, to deliver these outcomes.“

02. Introduction

We are pleased to present the Shire of Dardanup's Strategic Community Plan 2026-2036.

This Plan is part of our continued commitment and focus on a positive and productive future for our Shire. Sharing our vision and strategic objectives aligned to the feedback received from our community, this Plan outlines how we will continue to work towards achieving this vision long term.

This Plan has been developed after a comprehensive review of the Shire's strategic planning efforts over recent years, and most importantly with consideration of the valued input of the local community, and we want to express our appreciation for the response and input received.

The Shire actively manages an extensive road network and community infrastructure, essential to our connectivity and economy, along with the visitors and transient workforce. Maintaining these assets remains a key focus for Council.

Our community engagement results highlight a strong sense of community, appreciation for the natural beauty of the area and local residents are highly invested in seeing our Shire progress and be strengthened.

With a growing resident population and limited ratepayer base, Council is mindful of resource limitations and seeks whenever possible to advocate for and leverage external funding opportunities for the benefit of our district.

We will continue to work in partnership with the community, and other key stakeholders, to deliver these outcomes.

As part of developing this plan, we reflected on the progress of our overall long term strategic planning. We recognise the need to continue planning with a long-term focus to ensure the Shire has the required resources to maintain our infrastructure, as well as the capacity to provide appropriate levels of services to our community into the future.

As a Council we look forward to continue progressing our district and supporting our community.

Cr Tyrrell Gardiner
Shire of Dardanup President

03. Our Shire

525.8km² land area

16,280 population (June 2025)

301km sealed road
124km unsealed road

9 council members

185kms to Perth

119 Shire employees

$18.4M rates raised 2025-2026

10,575 electors

$62.5M property, plant and equipment asset value (June 2025)

$209.9M infrastructure asset value (June 2025)

4 state primary schools
1 state senior high school
1 private primary school

5,845 dwellings

Fast growing and forward thinking

The Shire of Dardanup is a fast-growing, future-focused local government in Western Australia's South West, located approximately 185 kilometres south of Perth and covering 526 square kilometres. Home to around 17,000 residents, the Shire continues to grow rapidly, driven by an enviable regional lifestyle, expanding employment opportunities and major residential development within the Greater Bunbury region.

Our diverse communities include established townsites, emerging urban areas and productive rural landscapes. Council is committed to managing balanced growth that respects local character while planning for the future needs of a growing population. Eaton is the Shire's largest population centre and commercial hub, anchored by the award-winning Library, Administration and Community Building and significant investment such as the Eaton Fair expansion.

The townsites of Dardanup and Burekup retain strong rural identity, while future growth will be shaped by the development of Wanju. With high-quality community facilities, extensive parks and open spaces, and natural attractions such as the Ferguson Valley and surrounding forests, the Shire of Dardanup offers a vibrant, connected community and a high quality of life.

Eaton

Eaton forms the largest part of the Shire of Dardanup's rate base and commercial hub with a population of about 10,000. The Shire's main Administration building is located at 1 Council Drive, Eaton. The area boasts beautifully maintained parks, picnic facilities, reserves, ovals and public open spaces plus a variety of picturesque natural wonders like the Collie River Valley, which draw people to the outdoors. This has attracted a diverse population made up of young people, couples, retirees, families and seniors.

Dardanup

Surrounded by a stunning hinterland of rolling green farm hills and vineyards, the town offers an attractive semi-rural lifestyle.

Dardanup enjoys a wonderful sense of heritage and history, deeply important to its community identity. As a result, many local family names have been connected to the area for generations. In more recent times, the quiet, semi-rural lifestyle within close proximity to larger urban areas and infrastructure has attracted many more families, who are supported by excellent schools and lovely local shops, community spaces and recreation facilities.

Burekup

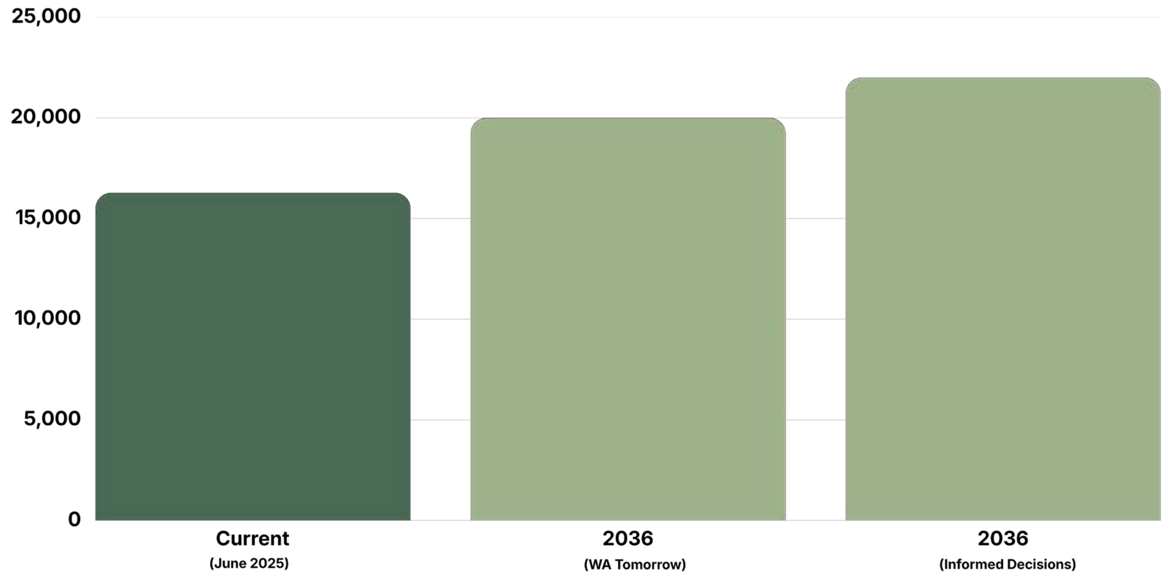
Burekup was originally developed as a timber town in the early part of the 20th Century. More recently it attracts residents of all ages seeking a treechange who commute to nearby employment centres but enjoy the village charm and country character of their town. Burekup's small townsite includes a busy store, town hall, a small school and is located adjacent to the Perth to Bunbury railway and South Western Highway.

Council engaged consultants to provide a report detailing the socio-economic profile of the Shire of Dardanup. The report provides a comprehensive analysis of the Shire's population, economy, demographics and social indicators to inform future planning. The following key matters are included here:

Population growth and distribution

Dardanup's population reached 16,280 in June 2025, with a 1.7% annual increase. Population growth has slowed from 1.9% (2009-2019) to 1.6% (post-Covid). Population projected to reach from 20,000 (WA Tomorrow) to 22,000 (Informed Decisions) by 2036, with a 1.8%2.4% annual growth rate.

Population projections for the Shire of Dardanup to 2036

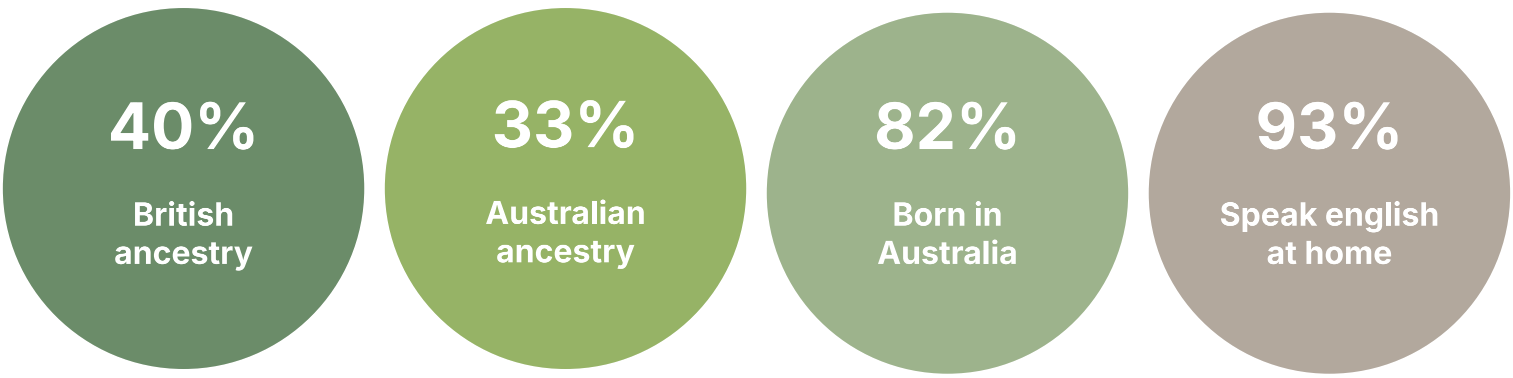


Where growth is happening

- Main residential areas are Eaton and Millbridge; Millbridge has seen significant growth.
- Population is younger than surrounding Local Government Areas (LGA), with more young families.
- Population aging: median age increased from 35 (2011) to 40 (2021); seniors comprise 19%.
- Population is lower than other LGAs but expected to grow due to demand and land availability.

Demographics and social characteristics

Dardanup's residents are predominantly of British and European heritage, with higher rates of Australian-born and English-speaking residents than the wider region.



Age structure

The median age rose from 35 in 2011 to 40 in 2021, slightly above the WA median of 38. Seniors now make up 19% of the population, a growing share, while children (20%) and young adults (11%) make up a declining share.

Income and education

Median weekly household income in 2021 was below the WA average, though it grew by 2.5% a year between 2016 and 2021, outpacing inflation over that period.

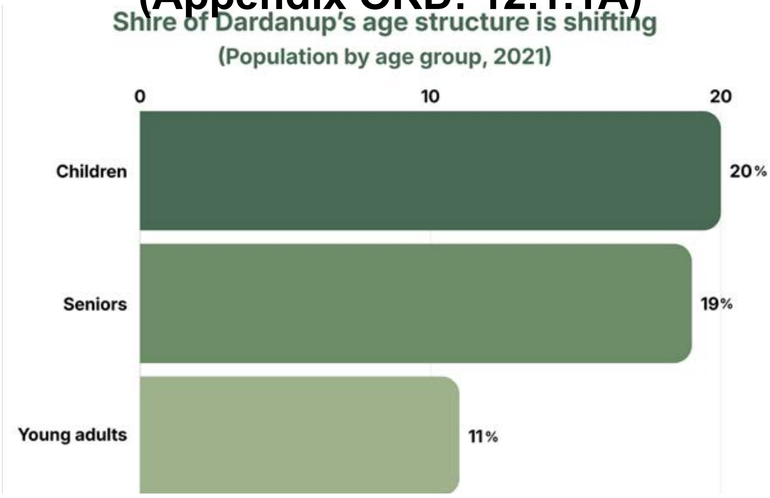
Educational attainment skews toward secondary and certificate-level qualifications, with comparatively lower rates of bachelors degrees.

Health and wellbeing

Health indicators are broadly in line with the WA average.

Arthritis affects 10% of residents, asthma 9%, and mental health conditions 10%.

The median age at death is 82.



Median age rose from 35 (2011) to 40 (2018). The WA median age is 38.

Socio-economic status

Socio-economic status is mixed across the shire, some areas show relative disadvantage, others relative advantage, pointing to the value of place-based responses in the Community Strategic Plan rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.

Income support

About 64% of income-support recipients in Dardanup are on the age pension, consistent with a growing senior population. Broader health and welfare indicators remain comparable to the WA average.

Economic structure and industry profiles

The Shire of Dardanup's Gross Regional Product was $788.7 million in 2023-24, with slight decline (-0.5%) from the previous year.

Economic volatility due to agriculture, manufacturing, tourism, construction, health sectors.

Pre-pandemic growth averaged 5.3% annually; post-pandemic growth has slowed.

Key industries: manufacturing (18% of Industry Value-Add (IVA), health care (12%), agriculture, construction, retail.

Public sector: significant contribution, including health, education, safety, and utilities.

Business landscape: predominantly small businesses (97.1%), with 63.7% having 1-19 employees.

Major industries by number of businesses: construction, agriculture, professional services.

Business counts may underestimate total due to exclusion of sole traders and unregistered businesses.

Land use and future growth opportunities

Dardanup's economy benefits from its proximity to Bunbury and diverse sectors.

Future growth sectors: agriculture, advanced manufacturing, logistics, tourism, professional services, residential services.

Housing demand is high; shortages could hinder growth.

Population growth driven by demand for affordable housing, especially in Eaton and Millbridge.

Land availability and housing approvals are critical for sustaining growth.

The regionls economic and social indicators support ongoing development and diversification.

Key industries and value-add

Manufacturing is the largest industry by IVA (18%) and employment (13%), followed by agriculture (9% IVA, 6% employment); manufacturing includes timber and wood products, while agriculture focuses on sheep, grains, beef, and cattle.

Tourism sector growth

Tourism attracted over 90,000 visitors in 2024, mainly domestic day-trips and overnight stays; tourism contributes 2.9% of IVA and 5.8% of employment, with increasing visitation post-Covid-19 pandemic.

Agriculture industry trends

Agriculture's IVA grew at about 15% annually since the Covid-19 pandemic, with traditional crops and emerging fruit, nut, and vegetable crops; wine grape production declined significantly; key commodities include sheep, grains, beef, and forestry.

Manufacturing industry insights

Manufacturing recovered post Covid-19 pandemic, with key sub-industries like sawmill and wood products; employs around 500 people; future growth linked to softwood plantation investments and timber supply.

Regional economic overview

The Shire of Dardanup's economy has experienced stagnation since the Covid-19 pandemic, but key industries like agriculture and healthcare have shown growth, with opportunities for future development.

Industry composition and business counts: The region hosts diverse industries, with manufacturing, agriculture, and retail trade being prominent; in 2024, business counts vary across sectors, with nonemploying and small businesses (1-4 employees) being common.

Employment and labour market

Unemployment rate was 2.4% in June 2025, below WA and Bunbury averages; employment increased by 5.5% over the year, with a participation rate rising sharply; labour force and employment are growing faster than population.

Employment by industry: In 2021, retail trade, accommodation and food services saw the highest growth; these sectors now account for over a quarter of total employment, higher than regional and state averages; public sector employment is also significant.

Journey to work patterns: 75% of residents leave Dardanup for work, mainly to Bunbury (45.9%) and Harvey (10.7%); 38% of local jobs are filled by residents; 61.7% of workers commute outside the LGA.

Skills and occupation profile: Lower proportion of professionals compared to WA; higher share of labourers, machinery operators, and sales workers; in 2021, employment was concentrated in these occupations, with professionals underrepresented.

Economic value of employment: Mining and financial services are the highest value-adding sectors; tourism-related industries like accommodation and retail are low in value-adding but vital for employment; industry value-add per employee varies, with mining and finance at the top.

Trade and export opportunities

Manufacturing dominates trade, with key exports in timber, agriculture, and mineral products; imports include construction and machinery; opportunities exist to strengthen local supply chains and replace imports.

Property market and housing

Median house price in 2025 is $710,000, up 26.8% from 2024; prices have risen faster than Perth over the past five years; housing shortage persists, limiting population growth and economic expansion.

Building approvals and housing supply: Residential building approvals have increased sharply in recent years, with higher values reflecting rising housing demand; housing availability remains limited, impacting population growth.

Property structure and demographics: Over 91% of dwellings are separate houses; average household size is 2.57 persons, slightly above regional averages; vacancy rates are low, indicating tight housing supply.

Competitive advantage and growth opportunities

Dardanup has natural advantages in agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism; cluster mapping highlights growth potential in these sectors; future opportunities include advanced manufacturing, agribusiness, and professional services.

Strategic development opportunities

Priority industries for growth include beef and livestock, food processing, timber products, tourism, and professional services; focus on leveraging existing strengths and attracting investment to expand highvalue jobs and industries.

04. Our journey

The Shire regularly seeks input from our community, this includes ratepayers, residents, local business and commercial operators, visitors and key stakeholders, as part of ensuring the Shire of Dardanup continues to progress and develop over the long term in a considered and strategic manner, reflecting our communities big picture vision for the district.

The following timeline is a snapshot of our strategic planning development, considerable input and feedback is sought regularly, through varied methods including annual town hall meetings and bi-annual community satisfaction surveys, along with specific subject area feedback sought to provide input to support guide the development of the Shire.

When	Jan-Mar 2017	2019-2020	May-Jun 2021	Jan-Feb 2023	Feb-Mar 2025	May 2025
Milestone	Strategic Community Plan 2018-2028	2050 Vision	Strategic Community Plan 2022-2032	Strategic Community Plan 2024-2034	Strategic Community Plan 2025-2035	Strategic Community Plan 2026-2036
Input	Community input sought as part of setting the Shire's strategic direction.	Community input sought as part of reviewing and further developing the Shire's strategic direction.	Community input sought as part of setting the Shire's strategic direction.	Community input sought as part of setting the Shire's strategic direction.	Community input sought as part of setting the Shire's strategic direction.	Community input sought as part of setting the Shire's strategic direction.

Key achievements and milestones for the Shire over the past five years.

2020-2021

Developed the Shire of Dardanup's 2050 Vision, it's biggest forward-thinking exercise yet.

Hosted the WA Emergency Management Conference on climate-driven weather risks.

2021-2022

Established a Designated Area Migration Agreement with the Commonwealth.

Opened the new Eaton Bowling and Social Club and Senior Citizen's Centre.

2022-2023

Embraced timber and environmentally friendly materials in key infrastructure projects.

Lit up Eaton's new skatepark with a flagship digital art installation.

2023-2024

Completed and opened the Library, Administration and Community Building.

Adopted the Coastal Hazard Risk Management and Adaptation Plan.

2024-2025

Released the *Keeping It Local* book-let to support local biodiversity.

Delivered significant upgrades to Eaton Recreation Centre.

WAPC approved Local Planning Scheme No. 9 (LPS9).

As the Shire continues to strive to progress our district for the benefit of our community, local business and industry, we regularly review our priority objectives, projects and advocacy areas in consultation with our community and our Strategic Community Plan. Each year the Shire releases our annual advocacy plan and key community projects.

Advocacy Plan

The Advocacy Plan identifies projects with the biggest impact on our community and region. It's built on five guiding aspirations from the Shire's 2050 Vision, the largest forwardthinking initiative in our history, shaping how we plan and invest for the next 30 years. The Advocacy Plan highlights transformational projects aimed at achieving our aspirations, which will be delivered in three primary precincts:

Wanju: A proposed new city unlocking thousands of homes, education and health facilities, sporting hubs, and employment opportunities – creating a vibrant, connected community at the heart of regional growth.

Waterloo: Driving economic growth through the Intermodal Terminal (IMT) to become a futureready freight hub supporting advanced manufacturing and renewable energy initiatives.

Dardanup: Upgrading essential water pressure and wastewater infrastructure to unlock housing development while strengthening the town's core community facilities as the Shire continues to grow.

The Shire of Dardanup are committed to continue pursing the best outcomes for current and future generations.

Strategic Community Projects

The Strategic Community Projects document identifies priority projects that present opportunities for State and Federal Government co-investment. It showcases the Shire's strong track record of planning for and delivering major community infrastructure, while outlining future projects, their scope, estimated costs and funding requirements. Key projects include:

Burekup: Development of the Burekup Community and Sporting Precinct, including oval upgrades, new change rooms, a skate park, pump track, sports courts, improved parking and a nature play area.

Eaton: Expansion of the Eaton Recreation Centre and ongoing renewal and enhancement of community infrastructure and assets.

Dardanup: Delivery of community and recreation improvements, including a skate park and pump track, new playground and public toilets, pathway and landscaping upgrades, drainage improvements, hall renovations, administration building upgrades, and enhancements at the Wells Recreation Precinct including sporting hard courts, oval and court lighting, and a multi-use pavilion.

The Shire has undertaken detailed planning to support the delivery of these projects through a range of adopted place plans, concept plans and community facilities plans, including the Eaton and Dardanup Place Plans, Eaton Foreshore Concept Plan, Dardanup Heritage and Community Precinct Concept Plan, Burekup Community and Sporting Precinct Concept Plan, and community facilities plans.

05. Community engagement

In May 2026, the Shire invited the community to help shape the review of the Strategic Community Plan. A total of 193 people contributed through community surveys and town hall meetings held in Eaton, Dardanup, Ferguson Valley and Burekup. The engagement process provided valuable insights into community priorities, aspirations and concerns for the future of the Shire.

Managing growth

The community supports growth but wants infrastructure, services and planning to keep pace with future demand.

Preserving local character

Residents value the unique identity of the Shire and want to maintain the character and lifestyle of local communities, like Burekup and the Ferguson Valley.

Infrastructure and services

Key priorities included: local roads, footpaths, trails and cycleways, parks and playgrounds, sporting and recreation facilities, community infrastructure.

Environment and sustainability

Residents identified these priorities: waste management, landfill impacts, water sustainability, environmental protection, practical and affordable sustainability initiatives.

Housing and community safety

The community highlighted: housing affordability and availability, community safety and crime prevention, and services for families, young people and seniors.

Local economy

Residents want: more local employment opportunities, support for local businesses, tourism growth, planning for emerging growth areas.

Communication and engagement

A strong and consistent message was the need for: clearer communication, greater transparency, more opportunities to engage with Council and Shire staff and better information about projects and decisions.

How this feedback has shaped the Strategic Community Plan

The feedback received has directly informed the priorities, objectives and actions within the Strategic Community Plan 2026-2036. The result is a plan reflecting the aspirations of the community and supports a future balancing growth, liveability, sustainability and economic opportunity.

06. Strategic planning structure

Background

The Shire of Dardanup has made a significant long-term investment in strategic planning, culminating in the development of the 2050 Vision during 2019-2020. The vision provides a clear and enduring framework to guide the Shire's growth, prosperity and liveability through to 2050.

Informed by community engagement, previous consultation and the contributions of staff and elected members, this Plan reflects a shared vision for the Shire's future and the priorities that will guide its next chapter.

The Strategic Community Plan 2026-2036 builds on the 2050 Vision, translating long-term aspirations into priorities and actions for the decade ahead.

Further information on the plan's structure, strategic context and legislative requirements is provided throughout the document.

Strategic community plan snapshot of regulatory requirements

- Covers a period of 10 years: Shire of Dardanup Strategic Community Plan 2026-2036.
- Sets out vision, guiding aspirations and key priority area objectives.
- Undergoes major review at least once every four years.
- Major review is developed/modified with community engagement.
- Prepared with regard to resource capacity (current and future), performance measurement and demographic trends.

Vision and aspirations

Broad, long-term statements articulating the community's desired future for the district, informed by community engagement and documented in the Strategic Community Plan.

Mission

A clear statement of the Shire's purpose and role in working toward the community's vision and aspirations.

Priority area

Key themes identified through community engagement that reflect the Shire's core areas of responsibility and align with the Local Government Act 1995 requirement to promote economic, social and environmental sustainability. The Shire of Dardanup's priority areas are: Leadership, Environment, Community, Prosperity and Amenity.

Priority area objective

A clear statement describing what the Shire seeks to achieve within each priority area over the long term.

Activation

Specific initiatives and activities delivered through the Corporate Business Plan which give effect to responding strategies over the short term (typically four years) and progress achievement of the objectives.

Responding strategy

Statements describing how the Shire will work toward achieving each priority area objective over the life of the Strategic Community Plan. Multiple responding strategies may support a single objective.

Performance measures

Clear indicators used to assess progress toward achieving objectives and implementing strategies, with results reported in the Annual Report of the local government. The following indicators have been identified in line with our strategic objectives. The Shire will monitor and report our progress using these measures:

- Community satisfaction with Council services, infrastructure and facilities.
- Development status and implementation of Council's Plans and Strategies.
- Level of legislative compliance.

Terminology

The Shire may undertake different roles, as detailed below, and some initiatives and activities may require more than one role. The role the Shire intents to take will be identified for each activity in the Corporate Business Plan.

- **Advocate:** We lead and represent the community on key issues.
- **Facilitate:** We coordinate local groups and agencies to achieve positive community benefits.
- **Partner:** We form strategic alliances in the interests of the community.
- **Provide:** We provide community infrastructure, essential services and community engagement activities to meet local needs.
- **Fund:** We help to fund organisations to deliver essential community services.
- **Regulate:** We enforce statutory requirement.

07. Guiding aspirations

The Shire will be guided by these aspirations in all our strategic planning.

Healthy

The health and wellbeing of the Shire of Dardanup community is cultivated and supports a positive and balanced lifestyle. Residents benefit from the Shire's location and natural environment, strong community connections, sustainable practices, and access to reliable and appropriate services, all of which contribute to improved health outcomes.

A focus on healthy living, supported by accessible health services, recreation facilities, and locally produced food, helps build a connected and supportive community. By reducing barriers to maintaining good health, the Shire fosters a vibrant and healthy population. People choose to live and remain in the Shire because of the availability of health services, strong community connections, and the overall quality of life it offers.

Self-sufficient

Residents of the Shire of Dardanup have access to a reliable supply of locally produced food and materials, with a strong preference for locally sourced products over imports.

This is supported by the continued growth of traditional farming, the development of local processing and value-adding opportunities, and investment within the Waterloo Industrial Park. Together, these activities strengthen local supply chains and support a resilient local economy.

A strong reputation beyond the Shire for sustainably produced goods helps maintain consistent demand for local products. This demand supports tourism, construction, forestry, manufacturing, and export industries, creating employment opportunities and reinforcing the Shire's long-term self-sufficiency.

Sustainable

The Shire of Dardanup is recognised across Western Australia for its commitment to sustainable living. Sustainability is embedded in the way we plan, build and live. This commitment is reflected in the built environment, particularly in the future City of Wanju, where renewable and low-impact construction materials such as timber are to be widely used.

Sustainable practices are further supported through the uptake of alternative energy sources and a circular economy model reducing waste and enabling materials to be processed locally for reuse and recycling. The Shire's natural environment plays a central role in supporting a sustainable lifestyle. Its ongoing protection and conservation are valued, actively managed, and celebrated as part of the community's identity.

Connected

The Shire of Dardanup offers a range of welcoming and active community spaces and programs designed to bring people together and support strong community connections.

Community spaces, facilities, and programs play a central role in daily life across the Shire. They are thoughtfully designed to support multiple uses, encourage interaction, and build community spirit. Inclusive and creative programs ensure participation is open to everyone, regardless of age, income, ability, location, or cultural background. All residents have the opportunity to feel valued and contribute to their local community. The Shire's diverse townsites and neighbourhoods are physically connected through a modern transport network. Extensive walking and cycling paths, help people stay connected to places, services, and each other.

Innovative

The Shire of Dardanup is recognised as a leader in research, development, and innovation across food production, energy, and advanced manufacturing. A forward-thinking and adaptable approach enables the community to respond quickly to change and confidently adopt new technologies. Innovation is evident across communication, transport, energy, waste management, food production, and construction, supporting more efficient and sustainable ways of living and working.

The Shire's reputation for innovation is strengthened through industry clusters and strong partnerships encouraging collaboration, skill-sharing, and learning. These opportunities attract investment, support local businesses, and deliver positive economic outcomes for the region. Innovation and collaboration are further supported through the use of Smart City technologies, data, and digital tools. This includes accessible platforms, such as online community dashboards, providing timely feedback on environmental performance, including water and energy use, water quality, and carbon emissions, helping the community make informed and responsible decisions.

(Appendix ORD: 12.1.1A)

08. Priority Areas

Community:
Objective: Support a healthy, inclusive and valued community.

Deliver inclusive community services and support where they're needed most:
Deliver and facilitate accessible services and supports that improve wellbeing and reduce barriers to participation, with a focus on families, young people, seniors and people of all abilities.
Focus: inclusive service design, targeted programs and events, partnerships that extend reach, removing access barriers (cost, transport, information, physical access).

Strengthen belonging and connection through places, programs and participation:
Foster connection and a sense of belonging by activating community spaces and enabling events, volunteering and local participation reflecting the diversity and identity of our townsites.
Focus: vibrant townsite activation, community-led events, volunteer pathways, welcoming public spaces, cultural expression and learning opportunities.

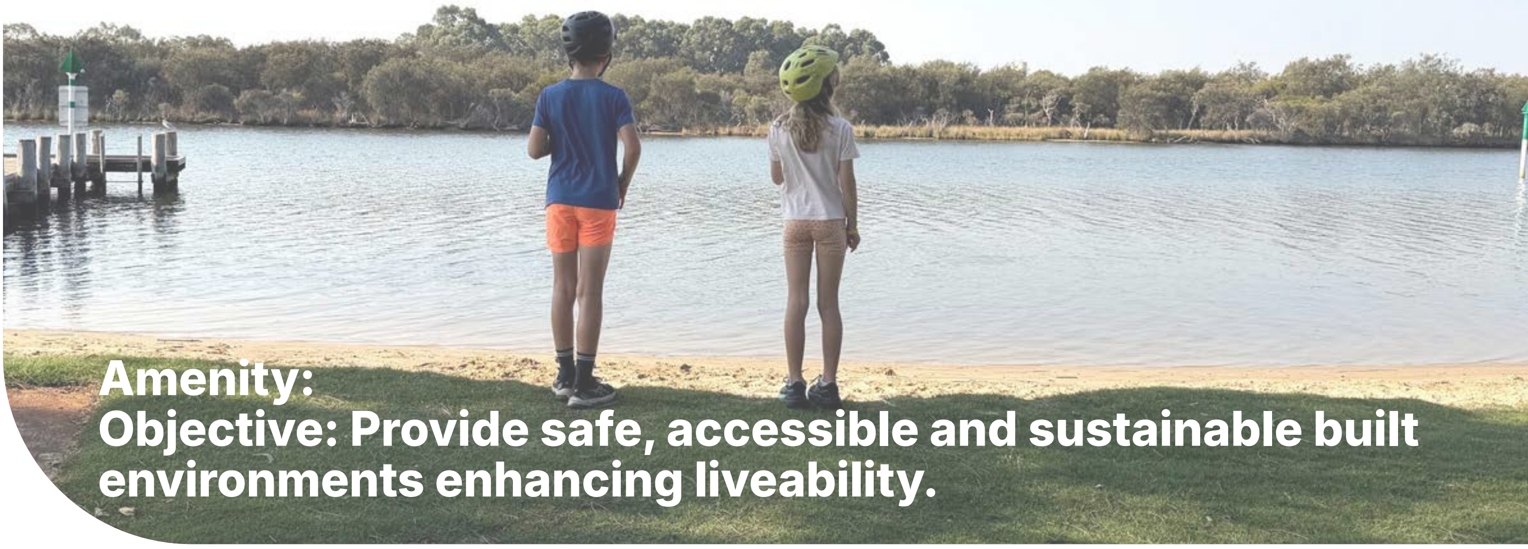
How do we measure our performance?

- High level of community satisfaction for the Shire as a place to live (MARKYT Community Scorecard 2025).
- High level of community satisfaction for access to inclusive local programs and services (MARKYT Community Scorecard 2025).
- High level of community satisfaction for the Shire's emergency preparedness (MARKYT Community Scorecard 2025).

Create safe, supportive communities through prevention and coordinated responses:
Support community safety through safe public places, early intervention initiatives and coordinated responses with relevant agencies and community groups to strengthen protective factors and reduce risk.
Focus: safety-by-design principles, community safety initiatives, information sharing protocols (where appropriate), support networks for vulnerable groups.

Build community resilience and emergency preparedness:
Improve resilience by strengthening emergency preparedness, communications and community response capability in partnership with emergency services, local groups and neighbouring stakeholders.
Focus: preparedness education, local emergency readiness networks, clearer alerts and recovery information, community support during and after incidents.

Ensure facilities and spaces are accessible, welcoming and fit for purpose:
Provide and facilitate well-planned, inclusive community facilities and public spaces supporting recreation, wellbeing and social connection designed to be accessible, welcoming and safe for all ages and abilities.
Focus: universal access upgrades, inclusive play and recreation, programming in community hubs, improved wayfinding and amenity.



Amenity:
Objective: Provide safe, accessible and sustainable built environments enhancing liveability.

Prioritise renewal and upgrade to keep assets fit for purpose:
Focus investment on renewing, upgrading and maintaining existing infrastructure and facilities to meet adopted service levels and ensure assets remain safe, reliable and fit for purpose over their lifecycle.
Focus: condition assessments, lifecycle planning, renewal programs, targeted upgrades, risk-based prioritisation.

Plan and manage assets to agreed service levels and affordability:
Use asset management planning to set, monitor and deliver adopted levels of service within sustainable funding limits, balancing community expectations with affordability and long-term financial responsibility.
Focus: service level reviews, long-term financial alignment, transparent trade-offs, performance monitoring.

Deliver accessible, inclusive and well-designed public places:
Provide and maintain accessible, inclusive and well-designed public spaces and facilities improving liveability, support community use and reflect the Shire's distinct character and local identity.
Focus: universal access improvements, safety-by-design (where relevant), place-based design, amenity upgrades.

Embed sustainability and resilience in design, build and operations:
Integrate sustainability, climate resilience and resource-efficient design into infrastructure planning, construction and maintenance to reduce operating costs, protect natural values and improve long-term asset performance.
Focus: waterwise landscaping, energy efficiency, durable materials, stormwater and heat mitigation, low-maintenance design.

Coordinate infrastructure delivery with growth and planning controls:
Align infrastructure planning and delivery with land-use planning and development controls to ensure growth is supported by appropriate, connected infrastructure without unnecessary expansion or unsustainable service demands.
Focus: developer contributions interfaces (where applicable), place plans, integrated transport/paths, demand forecasting.

How do we measure our performance?

- High level of satisfaction for the provision of parks, community facilities and public spaces (MARKYT Community Scorecard 2025).
- Improved community satisfaction for the maintenance and upkeep of Council assets (MARKYT Community Scorecard 2025).
- Improved perception of community safety and security across the Shire (MARKYT Community Scorecard 2025).

Environment:
Objective: Protect and improve our environment for current and future generations.

Protect and enhance natural assets and landscape character:
Safeguard biodiversity, waterways and valued rural and urban landscapes by applying sound environmental management practices that enhance natural systems, protect landscape character and balance ecological value with community use.
Focus: biodiversity protection, waterway management, landscape character, low-maintenance and high-value design.

Embed sustainability and climate resilience in planning and operations:
Integrate climate-resilient and sustainable principles into planning, development, asset management and operations to ensure the Shire is prepared for climate impacts and long-term environmental change.
Focus: climate adaptation, sustainable design, planning controls, operational sustainability.

How do we measure our performance?

- Improved community satisfaction for the Shire's provision of waste management services (MARKYT Community Scorecard 2025).
- High level of community satisfaction for the Shire's management of the natural environment (MARKYT Community Scorecard 2025).

Deliver effective waste and environmental health services:
Provide reliable, efficient and compliant waste management and environmental health services protecting public health, reduce environmental impact and supporting responsible resource use.
Focus: waste reduction, circular economy approaches, regulatory services, community safety.

Partner with community and stakeholders to sustain place:
Work with our community, landholders, industry and partners to promote shared responsibility for environmental stewardship through education, collaboration and practical initiatives.
Focus: partnerships, behaviour change, community education, on-ground projects.

Manage growth whilst respecting environmental limits:
Guide growth and development to ensure it is environmentally responsible, protects natural assets and maintains the Shire's valued rural and natural character while supporting liveable communities.
Focus: integrated land-use planning, growth management, natural and built environment integration.

Prosperity:
Objective: Strengthen a diverse, innovative economy building long-term prosperity.

Strengthen partnerships to enable economic opportunity:
Work with industry, government, regional bodies and community stakeholders to coordinate effort, unlock shared opportunities and advocate for initiatives supporting a resilient and diverse local economy.
Focus: regional collaboration, strategic partnerships, leveraging government programs, alignment with growth areas.

Build capability and resilience in local business and rural industries:
Support local businesses, community enterprises and rural industries to build skills, capacity and resilience, enabling them to adapt, innovate and collaborate within a changing economic environment.
Focus: business development, skills and workforce support, local procurement, collaboration across rural and emerging industries.

Promote and grow tourism and the visitor economy:
Strengthen the Shire's tourism profile by supporting destination development, events and experiences showcasing local assets, increase visitation and create flow-on benefits for local businesses and communities.
Focus: place-based tourism, partnerships with tourism operators, events, branding and promotion.

Enable investment, housing and infrastructure supporting growth:
Support sustainable economic growth by planning for and enabling appropriate housing, employment land and infrastructure attracting investment, supports workforce needs and strengthens liveability.
Focus: housing supply and diversity, infrastructure coordination, planning certainty, City of Wanju interface.

Foster innovation and future industries:
Encourage innovation and emerging industries by supporting new ideas, technologies and alternative resources aligning with the Shire's strengths and contribute to long-term economic resilience.
Focus: innovation ecosystems, alternative energy and resources (e.g. hydrogen), pilot projects, partnerships with research and industry.

How do we measure our performance?

- Annual increase in Gross Regional Product (total and sector) for the Shire.
- Annual increase in the total number of tourists/visitors to the Shire.
- Annual growth in the number of new residents (i.e. population growth).

(Appendix ORD: 12.1.1A)

Leadership:
Objective: Provide future-focused leadership for the benefit of current and future generations.

Build leadership and workforce capability:
Invest in our people by developing leadership skills, governance knowledge and professional capability across the organisation and Council to support ethical decision-making, accountability and future-focused planning.
Focus: leadership development, succession planning, clear role clarity, continuous learning.

Strengthen governance, decision-making and accountability:
Maintain robust governance frameworks, clear processes and transparent decision-making practices supporting fairness, accountability and trust in how decisions are made and delivered.
Focus: delegations, policies, reporting, risk management, ethical standards.

How do we measure our performance?

- High level of satisfaction for the Shire's vision for the area (MARKYT Community Scorecard 2025).
- High level of satisfaction for how the Shire engages the community (MARKYT Community Scorecard 2025).
- High level of satisfaction for Council's leadership, strategic planning and decision making (MARKYT Community Scorecard 2025).

Engage the community in meaningful and transparent ways:
Engage the community early and openly in planning and decision-making, using accessible and inclusive approaches to ensure diverse voices are heard, understood and considered.
Focus: engagement frameworks, feedback loops, plain-English communication, inclusive participation.

Enable effective planning through fit-for-purpose systems and data:
Use contemporary systems, data and technology to support informed decision-making, integrated planning and evidence-based governance enabling sustainable growth.
Focus: digital systems, data quality, integrated planning frameworks, performance monitoring.

Foster a culture of trust, responsibility and continuous improvement:
Promote a culture of integrity, openness and continuous improvement reinforcing community trust and ensuring leadership remains responsive, mature and future-focused.
Focus: organisational culture, performance review, learning from feedback, adaptability.

09. Resources

This Strategic Community plan was developed with an understanding of the Shire's current resource capacity, including financial, workforce and asset resources. The Shire has the following estimated current resource profile.

Financial resources:

Income

$18.4M
Rates revenue
2025/26 Adopted Annual Budget

$1.6M
Federal Assistance Grant
2025/26 Allocation

Expenditure

$25.5M
Cash operating
2025/26 Adopted Annual Budget

$7.3M
Depreciation
2025/26 Adopted Annual Budget

$9.1M
Capital initiatives
2025/26 Adopted Annual Budget

$14.3M
Reserves
2024/25 Annual Financial Report

$10.9M
Borrowings
2024/25 Annual Financial Report

Asset resources

$209.9M
Infrastructure
2024/25 Annual Financial Report

$276.6M
Net assets
2024/25 Annual Financial Report

$14.5M
Net current assets
2024/25 Annual Financial Report

$62.5M
Property, plant and equipment
2024/25 Annual Financial Report

Workforce resources

119
Employees
as at 30 June, 2025

Capital projects

There are a number of projects forecast to be undertaken, which result in additional capital expenditure, many reliant on external contributions, should these not be received the project may be deferred until adequate funding is available.

Future resource capacity is estimated in the Shire's long term financial plan however, is partially dependent on other levels of government. The expected future resource capacity and trend was considered in the development of this Council Plan.

A number of capital projects are planned over the next four-year term of the Corporate Business Plan, including new assets, expansions, upgrades and renewals.

Projects are detailed in the Council's annual Strategic Financial Plan. Some projects are reliant on external funding sources, should these not be received the project may be deferred until adequate funding is available.

Additional funding is required to adequately renew and maintain the Shire's infrastructure assets. Capital projects will require further detailed planning within the long term financial planning process.

10. Forecast resources

Long term financial planning

Detailed long term financial planning to support delivery of the objectives in this plan and providing for the long term financial health of the Shire is in development. The long term financial plan (LTFP) is a key element of the Shire delivering services and infrastructure to our community and considering potential risks and developing mitigating strategies.

The LTFP considers internal and external factors influencing the Shire's operating environment and considers trends including population forecasting and assumptions regarding inflators like CPI and the economic forecast for the wider district and state.

Asset management planning

Detailed asset management planning is undertaken to monitor Shire assets current renewal, replacement and upgrade requirements. As the Shire maintains a significant portfolio of assets, this essential planning is pivotal to continuing to deliver appropriate service levels.

External funding is sought for renewal of road infrastructure and is essential to continue to provide appropriate service levels.

Estimated forecast LTFP trend

- Increase reserves funds.
- No new borrowings planned to be taken up.
- Rates income is planned to increase at least in line with forecast CPI of 3.2%.

Estimated forecast AMP trend

- Asset valuation increasing.
- All infrastructure expenditure increasing.
- Property, plant and equipment maintenance required expenditure increasing.
- Building maintenance required expenditure increasing.

Workforce planning

Detailed workforce planning (WFP) is a dynamic process, aligned to this strategic planning to ensure delivery of the strategic objectives identified whilst recognising the competitive employment environment.

Estimated forecast WFP trend

- Assumption of 3.2% CPI increase for the next four years in salaries and wages.
- Continue the employee incentive program.
- Employee numbers remain stable for the next four years.

11. Wider view

Other levels of government and their individual strategies, plans and projects have an impact on how local governments operate. These independent strategies, plans and projects need to be considered when planning for the future of our Shire.

In addition to foreshadowed local government legislative reforms, the following are considered highly relevant due to their potential impact on the Shire's service delivery.

Federal Assistance Grant to Local Government Program

The Financial Assistance Grant has been provided by the Federal Government to Local Government since 1974-1975, administered by the local government grants commissions in each state and the Northern Territory and consists of two components:

- a general purpose component which is distributed between the states and territories according to population (i.e. on a per capita basis), and
- an identified local road component which is distributed between the states and territories according to fixed historical shares.

Both components of the grant are untied in the hands of local government, allowing councils to spend the grants according to local priorities. The quantum of the grant pool changes annually in line with changes in population and the Consumer Price Index (the Act provides discretion to the Treasurer to alter this annual indexation).

State Planning Strategy 2050

A guide from which public and local authorities can express or frame their legislative responsibilities in land-use planning, land development, transport planning and related matters. In the context of the Shire, this is relevant to achieving growth, ensuring economic advancement, social equity and ecological protection and enhancement.

State Infrastructure Strategy 2022

Identifies the whole-of-government consideration to deliver future infrastructure needs and priorities to support Western Australia's growing population.

Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy 2030

Western Australia's Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy 2030 (waste strategy) sets out goals and priorities for transitioning the state towards a circular economy. The waste strategy contains a vision for Western Australia to become a sustainable, lowwaste, circular economy in which public health and the environment are protected from the impacts of waste.

Local health plans

The WA State Government introduced the Public Health Act 2016 for Western Australia which requires local governments to develop local public health plans.

The Shire's Local Health Plan itself is unlikely to have any significant impact on the Shire's resources, however the actions and projects contained within the plan could.

Western Australian Climate Change Policy November 2020

Sets out the State Government's plan for a climate-resilient community and a prosperous low-carbon future. The policy highlights their commitment to adapting to climate change and working with all sectors of the economy to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

Department of Premier and Cabinet DPC Strategic Plan 2023-2026

This Plan sets whole-of-government priorities and strategic direction that all WA agencies, including those regulating or supporting local governments, must align to. The Plan identifies the Department's reach as our communities, our state and our future with the role of providing trusted policy advice, fostering effective partnerships and delivering high quality strategic services to achieve whole-of-Government priorities.

Department of Education WA - Strategic Directions and Associated Plans

While focused on public education, these plans shape local government collaboration on community infrastructure, multicultural engagement, staff wellbeing, regional education, and shared service planning.

WALGA Strategic Plan 2025-2029

Although not a State Government plan, this Plan is critical to local government operations as the peak body influences sector priorities, advocacy, shared services, policy alignment, and capacity building across all WA local governments.

WA 2025-2026 State Budget (key investment strategies)

Budget initiatives directly affecting local government planning and operations include:

- Housing Innovation Fund.
- Local Battery Manufacturing Program.
- Strategic Industries Fund.
- Royalties for Regions Program.
- Regional health, mental health and infrastructure pipeline.
- Aboriginal Ranger Program.

These influence infrastructure planning, economic development, housing supply, climate response, and regional growth strategies of councils.

Commonwealth Closing the Gap Implementation Plan 2026

Defines national targets, priority reforms, and annual commitments that require coordinated action between Commonwealth, states, and local governments, particularly in:

- Community infrastructure.
- Early childhood
- Employment.
- Health and wellbeing.
- Housing and land.
- Justice.

(Appendix ORD: 12.1.1A)

12. From strategy to delivery

How the Strategic Community Plan will be delivered

This Strategic Community Plan reflects the medium term, 10 years, key priority areas aligned to the Shire's long term 2050 Vision. The Corporate Business Plan will be developed to provide further detailed activities to be undertaken in the initial four years of the Strategic Community Plan.
The Annual Budget process involves considering and further detailed planning of these activities for the relevant year, ensuring alignment of our annual delivery program to our long term strategic objectives. We will regularly monitor progress against the detailed activities, and keep our community informed.

The annual review of the Corporate Business Plan and the Annual Budget processes, allow for the review of current prioritsation and resource availability. The Strategic Community Plan and Corporate Business Plan include a number of partnerships, collaboration opportunities and priority advocacy areas Council will pursue.

Responding strategies and activities

The responding strategies included in this Strategic Community Plan will guide development of detailed activities through the corporate business planning process. Activities we will continue to do, new initiatives and our role in progressing these along with our planned timing will be detailed within the Corporate Business Plan.

Some initiatives, service, programs and activities may be delivered over multiple years or possibly be ongoing. Where additional funding is required, financial analysis and planning will be undertaken prior to the action commencing.

The activities listed may refer to other adopted plans and strategies of Council and will be implemented in accordance with further detailed planning, and will be subject to the annual budget process and resource availability. As the Shire strives to achieve these outcomes, our community will be kept informed of the progress by means of the Shire's Annual Report.

Identified key priority service gaps

Residential accommodation is in short supply, attracting and retaining residents is severely restricted due to the lack of appropriate housing within the townsites. This is a significant issue for key service providers and commercial operators within the Shire. Medical and health services are also an increasing area of demand, with limited access to adequate health professionals and services. Waste management is of keen concern to our community and is a priority advocacy area for Council to ensure appropriate waste management services are available to our community.

(Appendix ORD: 12.1.1A)

13. Service delivery

Services and facilities provided by the Shire are linked with the relevant priority area of the Strategic Community Plan in the following table. The table provides a connection between the services and facilities and the desired outcomes and community vision for the Shire of Dardanup.

Services/facilities	Key priority area	Directorate
Community Development	Community	Community and Economic Development
Community Events	Community	Community and Economic Development
Eaton Recreation Centre	Community/Amenity	Community and Economic Development
Economic Development	Prosperity/Leadership	Community and Economic Development
Library	Community	Community and Economic Development
Place and Community Development	Community/Amenity	Community and Economic Development
Customer Service	Leadership/Community	Corporate and Governance
Financial Services	Leadership	Corporate and Governance
Governance	Leadership	Corporate and Governance
Information Services	Leadership	Corporate and Governance
Information Technology	Leadership	Corporate and Governance
Business Solutions	Leadership	Corporate and Governance
Building Services (Regulatory)	Leadership/Amenity	Sustainable Development
Community and Emergency Management Services	Leadership/Environment/Community	Sustainable Development
Environmental Health Services (Regulatory)	Leadership/Environment/Amenity	Sustainable Development
Planning (Statutory and Strategic)	Leadership/Amenity/Prosperity	Sustainable Development
Ranger and Emergency Services	Leadership/Environment/Community	Sustainable Development
Asset Management	Amenity	Infrastructure
Cemeteries	Amenity	Infrastructure
Collie River Foreshore	Amenity	Infrastructure
Community Buildings	Community/Amenity	Infrastructure
Drainage, Storm Water and Bridges	Amenity/Environment	Infrastructure
Infrastructure Planning and Design	Amenity	Infrastructure
Mick Bennett Make-It Space	Community	Community and Economic Development
Parks and Environment	Community/Environment/Amenity	Infrastructure
Playgrounds	Community/Amenity	Infrastructure
Recreation Facilities	Community/Amenity	Infrastructure
Roads, Verges and Footpaths	Amenity/Environment	Infrastructure
Trails and Pathways	Amenity/Environment	Infrastructure
Waste Management and Sustainability	Environment	Infrastructure
Works (Operations)	Amenity	Infrastructure
Communications and Marketing	Leadership/Community	Office of the CEO
Human Resources	Leadership	Office of the CEO
Regional Collaboration	Leadership/Prosperity	Office of the CEO
Work Health and Safety	Leadership	Office of the CEO

14. Legislative requirements

All Western Australian local governments are required by current legislation to prepare a Plan for the Future for their district, under Section 5.56 of the Local Government Act 1995.

The Plan for the Future is defined in the Local Government (Admin) Regulations 1996 (19BA) as the combination of a Strategic Community Plan and a Corporate Business Plan. With the Local Government Act reform process currently underway and the Local Government Amendment Bill 2023 being passed in May 2023, consideration was given during the development of this plan to the pending change to Section 5.56 of the Local Government Act 1995.

When the amendments to the Local Government Act 1995 come into effect, Section 5.56(2) will define a council plan as a plan for (a) the future services and facilities for the district that are to be provided by the local government; and (b) any prescribed matters. At this time, regulation amendments are being drafted regarding the Council Plan and will provide further detail for the requirements of the Council Plan when released.

Currently the Local Government (Admin) Regulations 1996 (19C) detail what should be included in a Strategic Community Plan and the Local Government (Admin) Regulations 1996 (19DA) detail what should be included in a Corporate Business Plan.

15. Strategic Planning

Strategic community planning is underpinned by community engagement to provide the community's vision and aspirations.

An essential element of the development process is to enable community members and stakeholders to participate in shaping the Shire of Dardanup's future, identifying issues and solutions.

The Shire of Dardanup intends to use the Strategic Community Plan in several ways, including:

- Guide Council's priority setting and decision making.
- Be a mechanism for the ongoing integration of local planning initiatives.
- Inform the decision making of other agencies and organisations, including community and State Government.
- Provide a rationale to pursue grants and other resources by demonstrating how specific projects align with the aspirations of our community, within the strategic direction of the Shire.
- Inform potential investors of our community's key priorities, and the way we intend to grow and develop.
- Engage local businesses, community groups and residents in various ways to contribute to the Shire's future.
- Provide a framework for monitoring progress against our vision and key priority objectives.

Importantly, plans are only effective if adequate resources are dedicated to ensuring objectives can be delivered. The informing plans detailed on the following page provide this more detailed level of service and resource planning. The Shire recognise the need to work collaboratively with other levels of government, neighbouring local governments and stakeholders to provide our region with a positive future.

Corporate business planning

Detailing service delivery activities, aligned to the strategic direction identified during the strategic community planning and accompanied by financial projections is a core component of this planning. Financial projections are undertaken through the long term financial planning process. The strategic activities may refer to other adopted plans and strategies of Council and will be implemented in accordance with further detailed planning, and will be subject to the annual budget process and resource availability.

Asset management planning

Developed for major asset classes, forming a component of an overall asset management strategy, addressing the steps required to continuously improve the management of Shire controlled assets. Capital renewal requirements are detailed and planned for to the extent the financial and workforce resources are available to enable the renewals to occur.

Long term financial planning

Planning for a positive future, seeking to maintain, and where possible, improve service levels while maintaining a healthy financial position. During the development of this Council Plan, the Long Term Financial Plan was considered to ensure integration, resulting in an update to the capital works program.

Workforce planning

Provides the workforce resource strategies necessary to deliver the objectives, outcomes and strategies of this Council Plan.

The Shire continues to carefully plan for the effective and appropriate use of resources to keep progressing our key priority areas.

Specific planning has been undertaken, including community engagement feedback, to support delivery of services and facilities to our community:

Eaton Place Plan 2023

This place plan was developed to ensure all future improvements are enduring and reflect the distinct character of Eaton; telling compelling stories of, and contributing to, the sense of place.

This place plan and masterplan covers north-west and central Eaton from Eaton foreshore to the Civic Centre Precinct and Eaton Drive. Place plans may be developed for other precincts within Eaton in the future.

Dardanup Place Plan 2023

This place plan was developed to ensure all improvements are enduring and reflect the distinct character of Dardanup; telling compelling stories of, and contributing to, the sense of place.

This place plan and masterplan covers Dardanup townsite and Dardanup West, a rural residential lifestyle neighbourhood connecting to the central townsite.

Dardanup Heritage and Community Precinct Concept Plan 2024

This concept plan includes proposed improvements and ranks projects as per outcomes of the Dardanup Community Survey May 2024.

This plan notes that all projects identified are subject to external funding and should funding not be received, the Shire will be unable to implement these projects.

Place and Community Plan 2020-2030

The Place and Community Plan provides a strategic framework to guide the priority programs, projects, and initiatives that the Place and Community team will deliver over the next 10 years, aligning with the Shire's Strategic Community Plan.

This Plan has a focus on community development, demographic insights, and strategic initiatives to enhance social outcomes over the next decade.

The initiatives within this plan aim to create a thriving, inclusive, and connected community while celebrating the unique identity of the Shire of Dardanup.

Shire strategic priorities

The following informing strategies have been developed in recent years to support delivery of strategic priorities:

- Strategic Financial Plan 2025-2026 to 2034-2035.
- Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2023-2028.
- Community Safety and Crime Prevention Plan 2023-2028.
- Shire of Dardanup Library Strategy 2021-2026.
- Public Health Plan 2021-2025.
- Sport and Recreation Plan 2020-2030 – Part A.
- Sport and Recreation Plan 2020-2030 – Part B.
- Local Planning Strategy 2015.
- Biodiversity Strategy Paper.

Eaton Community Facilities Plan 2021

This facilities plan identifies primary existing facilities, proposal and possible future improvements.

Dardanup Community Facilities Plan 2021

This plan lists proposed future expansion and improvement to facilities in the Dardanup townsite.

Burekup Community Facilities Plan 2021

This facilities plan identifies proposed improvements for Burekup.

Ferguson Valley Community Facilities Plan 2021

This plan lists proposed future expansion and improvement to facilities in Ferguson Valley and surrounds.

16. Strategic risk management

The Shire of Dardanup is a fast-growing, future-focused local government in Western Australia's South West. The Shire continues to grow rapidly, driven by an enviable regional lifestyle, expanding employment opportunities and major residential development within the Greater Bunbury region.

Diverse communities include established townsites, emerging urban areas and productive rural landscapes. Eaton is the Shire's largest population centre and commercial hub, anchored by the award-winning Library, Administration and Community Building and significant investment such as the Eaton Fair expansion.

The townsites of Dardanup and Burekup retain strong rural identity, while future growth will be shaped by the development of Wanju. With highquality community facilities, extensive parks and open spaces, and natural attractions such as the Ferguson Valley and surrounding forests, the Shire of Dardanup offers a vibrant, connected community and a high quality of life.

The Shire provides a diverse range of services and facilities to the general public and seeks to manage risks to achieve its strategic outcomes. Understanding the external and internal context in which the Shire operates, as it seeks to achieve its overall strategic objectives is important to understanding the strategic risks the local government is subject to.

The Shire engages experienced and qualified personnel in areas of high risk and provides them with appropriate ongoing training and equipment to ensure they are able to undertake their roles and manage risks to the community and Shire. The following internal and external factors have been recognised in connection to managing risks in delivering the strategic outcomes of this Strategic Community Plan.

Internal factors

- The objectives and strategies contained in the Council's current Strategic Community Plan.
- The timing and actions contained in the current Corporate Business Plan.
- Organisational size, structure, activities and location.
- Human resourcing levels and staff retention.
- The financial capacity of the Shire.
- Maintenance of corporate records.
- Allocation of resources to achieve strategic outcomes.
- Maintenance and renewal of local government assets including heritage assets.
- Line of sight from strategic objectives through to operational activities.
- Increased cost of doing business.

External factors

- Increasing community expectations in relation to service levels and service delivery.
- Rapid changes in AI changing the service delivery environment.
- Increased compliance requirements due to government policy and legislation.
- Cost shifting by federal and state governments.
- Climate change and subsequent response.
- Reducing external funding for infrastructure and operations.
- Increasing risk of cyber attack resulting in compromised or lost data.
- Population growth.
- Changing regulatory requirements.
- Changing global economic environment.
- Increased cost of living and increased cost of delivering projects/services and doing business.
- Increased cost of doing business.

17. Thank you and references

Acknowledgement and our appreciation are expressed to the ratepayers, residents, stakeholders and visitors of the Shire of Dardanup, for their time and effort in being a part of the community engagement processes and invaluable input into the development of our strategic planning.

The Shire of Dardanup Strategic Community Plan 2026-2036 has been developed from the base of our significant work in strategic planning for the Shire over the long term, and by engaging the community and other stakeholders. Council members, management and staff also provided input to the development of the Plan. Much of the information contained in this Plan has been derived from documents in the public domain and liaison with stakeholders and the community.

References

Reference to the following documents or sources were made during the preparation:

- Financial Assistance Grant to Local Government
- State Planning Strategy 2050
- State Infrastructure Strategy 2022
- Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy 2030
- Local Health Plans
- WA Housing Strategy 2020-2030
- Western Australian Climate Change Policy
- Department of Premier and Cabinet – DPC Strategic Plan 2023 - 26
- Department of Education WA – Strategic Directions & Associated Plans
- WALGA Strategic Plan 2025–2029
- WA 2025–26 State Budget (key investment strategies
- Commonwealth Closing the Gap Implementation Plan 2026
- Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021 Census of Population and Housing; Dardanup (LGA52660) 525.8 sq kms, viewed 6 April 2026

(Appendix ORD: 12.1.1A)

Shire of Dardanup

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records@dardanup.wa.gov.au
(08) 9724 000
www.dardanup.wa.gov.au

(Appendix ORD: 12.1.1B)

RISK ASSESSMENT TOOL

REPORT TITLE: Strategic Community Plan - 2026-2036

RISK THEME PROFILE:

3 - Failure to Fulfil Compliance Requirements (Statutory, Regulatory)   4 - Document Management Processes

RISK ASSESSMENT CONTEXT: Strategic

CONSEQUENCE CATEGORY	RISK EVENT	PRIOR TO TREATMENT OR CONTROL			RISK ACTION PLAN (Treatment or controls proposed)	AFTER TREATEMENT OR CONTROL		
		CONSEQUENCE	LIKELIHOOD	INHERENT RISK RATING		CONSEQUENCE	LIKELIHOOD	RESIDUAL RISK RATING
HEALTH	No risk event identified for this category.	Not Required - No Risk Identified	N/A	N/A	Not required.	Not required.	Not required.	Not required.
FINANCIAL IMPACT	The financial implications associated within the elements of the Strategic Community Plan can affect the financial sustainability of Council.	Major (4)	Unlikely (2)	Moderate (5 - 11)	Not required.	Not required.	Not required.	Not required.
SERVICE INTERRUPTION	No risk event identified for this category.	Not Required - No Risk Identified	N/A	N/A	Not required.	Not required.	Not required.	Not required.
LEGAL AND COMPLIANCE	Legislative requirements and compliance determine the need for the production of the Strategic Community Plan	Major (4)	Unlikely (2)	Moderate (5 - 11)	Not required.	Not required.	Not required.	Not required.
REPUTATIONAL	The inclusion of projects and works within the various plans within the Strategic Community Plan build community expectation.	Major (4)	Unlikely (2)	Moderate (5 - 11)	Not required.	Not required.	Not required.	Not required.
ENVIRONMENT	No risk event identified for this category.	Not Required - No Risk Identified	N/A	N/A	Not required.	Not required.	Not required.	Not required.
PROPERTY	No risk event identified for this category.	Not Required - No Risk Identified	N/A	N/A	Not required.	Not required.	Not required.	Not required.

WALGA

WALGA
Annual General Meeting

Agenda

Thursday, 17 September 2026
2:30pm

Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre
21 Mounts Bay Road, Perth WA
Bellevue Ballroom

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1 OPENING

2 RECORD OF APOLOGIES

3 ANNOUNCEMENTS

4 ADOPTION OF AGM STANDING ORDERS

The Annual General Meeting Standing Orders are contained within this Agenda (Attachment 1).

MOTION

That the WALGA Annual General Meeting Standing Orders be adopted.

5 CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

The Minutes of the 2025 WALGA Annual General Meeting are contained within this Agenda (Attachment 2), along with a report on the action taken by WALGA on the 2025 AGM resolutions (Attachment 3).

MOTION

That the Minutes of the 2025 WALGA Annual General Meeting be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.

6 ADOPTION OF ANNUAL REPORT

The 2025-26 Annual Report, including the 2025-26 Audited Financial Statements, will be distributed to Members separately.

MOTION

That the 2025-2026 Annual Report, including the 2025-2026 Audited Financial Statements, be received.

7 CONSIDERATION OF EXECUTIVE AND MEMBER MOTIONS

7.1 REVIEW OF THE NATIONAL CONSTRUCTION CODE TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT ADAPTIVE REUSE PROVISIONS OF COMMERCIAL PROPERTY FOR RESIDENTIAL USES

City of Fremantle to move:

MOTION

That WALGA advocate to the Federal Government for the Australian Building Codes Board to commence a comprehensive review of the National Construction Code to develop and implement adaptive reuse provisions that facilitate the safe, sustainable, and economically viable conversion of underutilised commercial buildings into residential uses.

IN BRIEF

- This report seeks support for WALGA to advocate for targeted amendments to the National Construction Code (NCC) to allow for adaptive reuse of commercial property for residential development.
- Adaptive reuse is the process of repurposing an existing building for a new use.
- The intent of the targeted amendments is to allow for the conversion of a vacant or underutilised commercial space into residential uses.
- This approach will help address housing shortages, promote sustainability, and preserve unique architecture whilst allowing opportunity in dealing with the vacancy and underutilisation challenge with commercial buildings currently being experienced across Western Australia.

MEMBER COMMENT

Over the past few years, the commercial property market has undergone significant change with the increase in remote and hybrid working arrangements and the growth in the online retail market. This has seen a rise in vacancies for commercial property within this time.

Adaptive reuse is the process of repurposing buildings for new uses and offers a sustainable solution in providing diversity for housing options by allowing the transformation of underutilised or vacant commercial buildings into residential accommodation.

Many of these underutilised or vacant commercial buildings cannot economically comply with all of the current residential provisions within the National Construction Code (NCC) because they were originally designed with a different classification. The absence of a dedicated framework for adaptive reuse discourages investment opportunities for residential conversion and often results in the need for demolition for development to occur.

The NCC regulates buildings based on new construction standards and building classifications. Current provisions and standards within the NCC often create substantial technical barriers to converting existing commercial buildings into residential accommodation. When redeveloping commercial building classes into residential, developers will encounter compliance issues involving:

- Building depth and natural light requirements
- Ventilation standards
- Fire separation standards
- Acoustic separation
- Accessibility requirements
- Energy efficiency requirements
- Ceiling height
- Structural loading standards
- Emergency egress requirements.

The NCC does allow for performance solutions to manage these issues, but these require engineering assessments, create additional red tape requirements and can be applied inconsistently across various approval agencies. This creates an environment that then discourages consideration of reuse options due to the time, financial implications and uncertainty of outcomes. This also becomes exacerbated when dealing with multiple and strata property ownership which can typically occur in commercial property and urban situations.

The intention for seeking amendments to the NCC would be to support a reduction to the regulatory barriers to adaptive reuse which would encourage an increase to the housing supply, encourage investment in vacant commercial property, increase urban renewal and maintain embedded energy outcomes.

This could be achieved by seeking a dedicated section within the NCC specifically for adaptive reuse of buildings providing opportunity to demonstrate equivalent safety and amenity outcomes through performance rather than the "deemed to satisfy" requirement.

These could cover areas such as;

- Fire safety
- Structural adequacy
- Acoustic performance
- Natural lighting
- Ventilation
- Accessibility, and
- Energy efficiency.

The benefits of amendments to the NCC are many. They include the ability to deliver more residential stock in urban areas where access to services and facilities such as businesses, transport, hospitality and community services already exist, greater sustainable outcomes through lower energy use in redevelopment, urban regeneration and improved social and economic outcomes with re-activated urban centres. Such reforms could also encourage private investment, increase housing supply, revitalise urban centres, reduce environmental impacts associated with demolition and new construction, and make more efficient use of existing infrastructure.

There is available opportunity of underutilised commercial buildings that could contribute meaningfully to addressing the housing shortage. Current NCC requirements, while essential for ensuring public safety, often impose disproportionate barriers when applied to the conversion of existing commercial buildings into residential accommodation.

Introducing a dedicated adaptive reuse pathway within the NCC could provide a nationally consistent, performance-based framework that preserves standards of safety while recognising the practical limitations of existing buildings.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

WALGA acknowledges the increasing interest in adaptive reuse as a mechanism to support housing supply, urban revitalisation, sustainability outcomes and the more efficient use of existing infrastructure. The proposal is consistent with broader policy objectives aimed at increasing housing diversity and encouraging investment in underutilised commercial centres.

The National Construction Code (NCC) is developed and maintained by the Australian Building Codes Board (ABCB) on behalf of Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments. While the NCC currently provides for Performance Solutions, Members have identified that commercial-to-residential conversions can involve significant cost, complexity and regulatory uncertainty, which may discourage adaptive reuse projects. A dedicated adaptive reuse pathway may provide greater clarity and consistency while maintaining appropriate standards for health, safety, accessibility and amenity.

WALGA notes, however, that Building Ministers have recently agreed to pause further residential changes to the NCC, except for essential safety and quality measures, until at least mid-2029 following the finalisation of NCC 2025. The intent of the pause is to provide greater regulatory certainty for industry and support housing supply and productivity outcomes. In this context, implementation of the intent of this motion may be challenging in the short term.

7.2 RAINFALL DEFICIENCY ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK

Shire of Esperance to move:

MOTION

That WALGA advocate to the Western Australian Government to:

1. **Recognise livestock fodder as an essential agricultural resource during periods of prolonged rainfall deficiency, acknowledging its fundamental role in protecting livestock welfare, sustaining agricultural production and supporting regional communities.**
2. **Develop and implement a Western Australian Rainfall Deficiency Assistance Framework that builds on the principles of the existing Water Deficiency Scheme and provides a practical, transparent and consistent approach to supporting primary producers during prolonged rainfall deficiency.**
3. **Establish a Livestock Fodder Freight Subsidy Scheme as the first initiative under the Western Australian Rainfall Deficiency Assistance Framework to assist eligible primary producers with the extraordinary cost of transporting emergency livestock fodder during periods of prolonged rainfall deficiency and other declared natural hazard events where emergency livestock fodder is required.**

IN BRIEF

- Western Australia already recognises that prolonged rainfall deficiency may justify targeted Government assistance where an essential agricultural resource becomes deficient.
- This motion asks WALGA to advocate to the State Government to recognise livestock fodder as such a resource and build upon an existing policy framework that has served Western Australia well for decades.
- It is a practical proposal, grounded in existing policy, that strengthens livestock welfare, agricultural resilience and regional communities while continuing to build on what already works.

MEMBER COMMENT

Western Australia has a proud history of standing beside primary producers when seasonal conditions create exceptional challenges.

The existing Water Deficiency Scheme recognises that when prolonged rainfall deficiency affects an essential agricultural resource, Government has a role in providing practical assistance. It is a policy that has served Western Australia well and demonstrates that Government already has the legislative authority, administrative capability and policy experience to respond when exceptional seasonal conditions threaten livestock welfare and agricultural production.

Livestock fodder has always been an essential agricultural resource. During prolonged rainfall deficiency, however, access to livestock fodder becomes critical to keeping livestock alive, maintaining breeding herds and allowing farming businesses to continue operating until seasonal conditions improve.

Across regional Western Australia, the issue is often not whether fodder can be found. The issue is getting it to where it is needed. As distances increase, freight costs can quickly exceed the value of the fodder itself, placing enormous financial pressure on producers who are already managing the impacts of prolonged rainfall deficiency.

This proposal recognises the practical realities faced by livestock producers across regional Western Australia. It does not seek to replace existing policy or create an open-ended subsidy. Instead, it builds on a policy principle that has existed in Western Australia for many years: where prolonged rainfall deficiency creates a deficiency in an essential agricultural resource, Government may provide targeted assistance.

Recognising livestock fodder as an essential agricultural resource within the existing rainfall deficiency framework is the next logical step. It reflects the practical realities faced by livestock producers and acknowledges that protecting livestock welfare also means ensuring producers can access the feed their animals need.

The proposed Livestock Fodder Freight Subsidy Scheme provides a practical way to apply that principle. It builds on an existing framework, uses established Government capability and offers a consistent approach that can support producers, strengthen regional communities and improve the resilience of Western Australia's agricultural sector.

This proposal is about practical policy, practical outcomes and continuing to build on what already works.

<u>Why This Matters</u>
Every Western Australian benefits from a strong agricultural sector through food security, export income, regional employment and resilient local communities. Agriculture is one of Western Australia's most important industries and is fundamental to the economic and social wellbeing of regional communities.

- Western Australia's primary industries generate more than $11 billion in annual production value.
- Agriculture is the State's second largest export industry, supporting thousands of regional jobs and businesses.
- Meat and livestock exports contribute approximately $1.3 billion annually to Western Australia's economy.
- The sheep and wool industry alone contribute around $1 billion at the farm gate each year.

Protecting livestock production is not simply about supporting individual farming businesses. It is about protecting regional employment, local economies, food production and one of Western Australia's most significant export industries.

<u>References</u>

- Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, *WA Primary Industries 2023–24 Economic Overview*
- Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, *Western Australian Sheep and Wool Industry Statistics*

The Issue

Western Australia already recognises that prolonged rainfall deficiency may justify targeted Government assistance where an essential agricultural resource becomes deficient.

The existing Water Deficiency Scheme provides assistance when access to water becomes deficient during prolonged rainfall deficiency.

Livestock fodder has always been an essential agricultural resource. During prolonged rainfall deficiency, however, maintaining access to livestock fodder becomes critical to protecting livestock welfare, maintaining breeding stock and sustaining agricultural production.

Across much of regional Western Australia, the challenge is often not sourcing livestock fodder. The challenge is transporting it.

As transport distances increase, freight costs can exceed the value of the livestock fodder itself, placing significant financial pressure on livestock producers during already difficult seasonal conditions.

Why Local Government?

Local Governments understand the impacts of prolonged rainfall deficiency on their communities. They see the effects on local businesses, employment, volunteer organisations, sporting clubs, schools and community wellbeing.

Councils are also frequently called upon to advocate for practical solutions that strengthen regional resilience.

This motion provides WALGA with an opportunity to advocate for a practical, statewide policy response that builds upon an existing Government framework rather than creating an entirely new system.

The Proposal

The motion asks the Western Australian Government to:

1. Recognise livestock fodder as an essential agricultural resource during periods of prolonged rainfall deficiency;
2. Develop and implement a Western Australian Rainfall Deficiency Assistance Framework that builds upon the principles of the existing Water Deficiency Scheme; and
3. Establish a Livestock Fodder Freight Subsidy Scheme as the first initiative under that Framework.

The proposal does not seek to replace existing or create new Government policy. It seeks to build upon a policy framework that has successfully supported regional Western Australian for many years.

Why Support This Motion?

This proposal:

- Builds upon an existing Government policy rather than creating a new one;
- Supports livestock welfare and strengthens regional communities;
- Recognises livestock fodder as an essential agricultural resource during prolonged rainfall deficiency;

- Provides a practical and consistent policy response instead of relying on ad hoc assistance;
- Enables Government to develop the implementation model through consultation with industry, Local Government and relevant agencies; and
- Strengthens one of Western Australia's most significant export industries while supporting regional resilience.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

WALGA has actively engaged with the sector to develop a Water Management Advocacy Position (4.8) and has facilitated Local Government engagement with the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation regarding the Water Deficiency Declaration process and funding. During the consultation on water management the specific matter of fodder for livestock during drought was not raised.

WALGA's Advocacy Position identifies that access to water is critical for economic activity and in broad terms addresses the issue, as every region in WA will have a range of economic activities which are impacted by water deficiency. This issue and advocacy could be addressed by the agricultural industry directly engaging through their peak associations to Government.

7.3 CONTINUATION OF COMMUNITY WATER SUPPLIES PARTNERSHIP AND AGRICULTURAL AREA DAMS PROGRAM

Shire of Chittering to move:

MOTION

That WALGA advocate to the Commonwealth Government and Western Australian Government to renew, continue, and expand rural water security funding from 2027-28 onwards, including the Community Water Supplies Partnership (CWSP) and Agricultural Area Dams (AA Dams) Programs Funding, and any successor program that preserves these outcomes, to:

1. **support emergency water infrastructure, firefighting water supplies, farm and livestock emergency water, agricultural water resilience, agricultural area dams, townsite non-potable supplies, public amenity and reduced reliance on potable scheme water;**
2. **maintain dedicated eligibility for Local Governments and Regional Organisations of Councils that coordinate shared rural water infrastructure outcomes;**
3. **increase the funding pool to reflect demonstrated demand, cost escalation and the number of eligible Local Governments across regional Western Australia;**
4. **retain co-contribution flexibility, including cash and in-kind contributions, so smaller Councils can participate;**
5. **provide a forward funding pipeline that allows Councils to plan, obtain approvals, consult communities, programme co-contributions and deliver works before drought or bushfire conditions become emergencies; and**
6. **engage the Rural Water Council, WALGA, Regional Development Commissions and eligible Local Governments in the design of the next funding phase.**

IN BRIEF

- The updated advocacy position seeks continuation of the Community Water Supplies Partnership (CWSP) and Agricultural Area Dams (AA Dams) funding streams, and related rural water infrastructure funding beyond 2026-27.
- The Rural Water Council and its member Local Governments seek a renewed, multi-year Commonwealth and Western Australian Government funding commitment from 2027-28 onwards.
- CWSP and AA Dams should be treated as complementary streams: CWSP supports local non-potable community water supply projects, while AA support strategic agricultural area water infrastructure.
- The Rural Water Council discussed the matter at its meeting held on 10 July 2026 at Cunderdin and recorded support for coordinated advocacy beyond 2026-27, supported by the Shire of Chittering.
- The motion is broader than a single program title and protects the practical outcomes: firefighting water, farm and livestock resilience, strategic agricultural water infrastructure, local water planning, community water supply points, dam and catchment works and reduced reliance on scheme water.

MEMBER COMMENT

Purpose and sector position

This motion seeks WALGA support for coordinated advocacy for continuation and expansion of the Community Water Supplies Partnership (CWSP) and Agricultural Area Dams (AA Dams) funding streams, and related rural water security funding beyond 2026-27. The Rural Water Council and its member Local Governments seek a renewed, multi-year Commonwealth and Western Australian Government commitment from 2027-28 onwards.

The position is advanced on behalf of the Rural Water Council and its members, recognising that eligible Local Governments across Western Australia rely on these funding streams to deliver practical water infrastructure for rural communities, volunteer emergency response, agricultural areas and public assets. The matter was discussed at the Rural Water Council meeting held on 10 July 2026 at Cunderdin, where continuation beyond 2026-27 and coordinated advocacy by the Rural Water Council and its member Local Governments were supported.

Why CWSP and AA Dams must be included together

CWSP and AA Dams should be treated as complementary programs. Available Commonwealth material identifies CWSP and AA Dams as separate components of the broader Western Australia Water Infrastructure for Sustainable and Efficient Regions package. CWSP develops local non-potable community water supplies, while AA Dams support infrastructure such as pipework, tanks and pumps to increase resilience and water security in farming communities in dryland agricultural regions.

Limiting advocacy to CWSP alone risks excluding strategic agricultural area infrastructure that supports farming districts and emergency livestock water needs. The advocacy should therefore seek continuation of both named streams and any successor rural water infrastructure program, so the Council's position protects the outcomes rather than only one program title.

How the funding streams work together

Funding stream	Explicit focus from available sources	Advocacy relevance
CWSP	Develops new and improved non-potable community water supplies in priority farming areas, including emergency livestock and firefighting needs, townsite amenity and reduced scheme water use.	Retain and expand the Local Government-facing program that has delivered practical community water projects across WA.
AA Dams	Constructs infrastructure such as pipework, tanks and pumps to increase resilience and water security in dryland farming communities; the Connections package also refers to increased dam storage capacity in priority areas.	Include this stream expressly so strategic agricultural water infrastructure remains part of the post-2026-27 funding ask.

Successor rural water infrastructure programs	Any future funding arrangement that continues non-potable water availability, drought resilience, agricultural water security and emergency water access.	Advocate for continuity of outcomes even if government restructures program names or funding streams.

Why this matters for Western Australia

Western Australia needs decentralised rural water infrastructure because regional communities are dispersed, climate conditions are variable and many towns and farming areas sit outside dense reticulated water networks. Water security supports emergency management, public open space, local roads, recreation reserves, agriculture, livestock welfare, townsite amenity and climate adaptation.

The supporting paper records that more than 90 per cent of Western Australia is bushfire prone and that mains water supply and pressure cannot be guaranteed during bushfire events. It also records that water security and resilience in a drying climate are critical to enabling agriculture and sustaining regional communities.

A few examples demonstrating the combined case

Program / example	Works described	Stated or carefully framed impact
AA Dams statewide priority dams	Increased storage capacity of dams in priority areas.	Provided more reliable agricultural and emergency livestock drinking water sources.
Mukinbudin siding tanks	Smaller-scale project delivered as part of AA Dams.	Part of the package intended to increase resilience and water security in dryland farming communities.
Wagin Airport tanks with swipecard	Tanks with swipecard access at Wagin Airport.	Controlled access supports managed access to emergency/community water infrastructure.
Westonia 1930s community water tank	Community water tank repaired and fitted with floating tiles.	Floating tiles were installed to reduce evaporation.
Cranbrook Dam catchment improvement	Replacement of degraded bitumen in Cranbrook Dam 1 catchment.	Increased the volume of water in the dam by up to 15 ML each year for agricultural and primary industry use.
Katanning to Kojonup pipeline enhancement	Replacement of existing pipeline sections between Katanning and Kojonup.	Increased water reliability and supply to farms in the region.

Shire of Chittering Sandown Park	Bore, pump controls, 100kL firefighting tank, 10kL amenity/irrigation tank and upgrades.	Improves water security and supports emergency response.
Wheatbelt East ROC	Long-term water strategies for seven member Shires.	Supports strategic investment in water infrastructure and drought resilience across the Wheatbelt.

These examples show that rural water funding is not a narrow grant activity. Across CWSP and AA Dams, funded or referenced works include tanks, bores, pipelines, pump systems, catchment repairs, dam storage improvements, telemetry, standpipes, water carts, evaporation reduction measures and strategic water planning.

Recommended combined advocacy position
WALGA should support advocacy by the Rural Water Council and its members for continuation and expansion of the CWSP and AA Dams funding streams, and any successor rural water infrastructure funding streams beyond 2026-27. The request should focus on continuity of practical outcomes: firefighting water, agricultural area dams, tanks, pipework, pumps, bores, catchments, water carts, community water points, monitoring systems, local water strategies and non-potable water networks.

Specific requests to Government
- Commit to a renewed multi-year funding program from 2027-28 onwards for the CWSP and AA Dams projects, or a successor program that preserves these outcomes.
- Maintain dedicated eligibility for Local Governments and Regional Organisations of Councils that coordinate shared rural water infrastructure outcomes.
- Recognise agricultural area water infrastructure as a core resilience need, alongside emergency firefighting water, farm and livestock water, public amenity and reduced reliance on scheme water.
- Increase the funding pool to reflect demand, cost escalation and the number of eligible Local Governments across regional Western Australia.
- Retain co-contribution flexibility, including cash and in-kind contributions, so smaller Councils can participate.
- Engage the Rural Water Council, WALGA, Regional Development Commissions and eligible Local Governments in the design of the next funding phase.

<u>Conclusion</u>
CWSP and AA Dams are complementary rural water security mechanisms. Together they support Local Government delivery, farming community resilience, strategic water infrastructure and practical preparedness for drought and bushfire conditions. The current funding commitment should not expire without a successor program that preserves both CWSP-style local projects and AA Dams-style strategic infrastructure.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT
The Rural Water Council position and advocacy is strongly aligned with WALGA's new Water Management Advocacy Position 4.8 (endorsed by State Council in May 2026):

1. *Access to consistent, reliable and adequate water supplies is critical for Local Government operations, emergency response, community health, amenity, environmental sustainability and economic activity.*
2. *WALGA is calling on the State Government to:*
   a. *Modernise water management legislation and regulation, including:*
      i. *undertaking a review of the water licensing and allocation system to ensure equitable access and prioritise high value community use including for public open space*
      ii. *developing a state-wide framework for integrated regional and catchment-scale water planning.*
   b. *Protect and adequately, sustainably and equitably fund critical water infrastructure for Local Government, including:*
      i. *drainage and irrigation upgrades;*
      ii. *alternative water sources (recycled and reused water, stormwater harvesting, desalination and groundwater replenishment) and disused water asset transfer*
      iii. *small-scale sewerage infrastructure headworks and infill sewerage.*
   c. *Expand the Waterwise Council Program statewide and provide:*
      i. *increased support and resources to assist Local Government in delivering water efficiency measures*
      ii. *incentives for Local Governments to undertake water efficiency initiatives.*
   d. *Improve water data access and capability for Local Governments to ensure evidence-based decision making.*
   e. *Provide effective leadership, guidance, education and enforcement to address the impacts of stormwater runoff.*

The Rural Water Council position and WALGA's Advocacy Position call for improved water security, climate resilience, emergency preparedness and recognition of Local Government as a key water infrastructure delivery partner.

WALGA's Advocacy Position provides the strategic framework, with the CWSP and APP Dams being one funding mechanism and on-ground delivery model to achieve those outcomes. Continued Australian and State Government investment in these types of programs would directly support advocacy priorities while delivering tangible benefits for regional communities, agriculture, emergency services and Local Government operations across Western Australia.

7.4 ADVOCACY FOR REFORMS TO ASPECTS OF THE STATE UNDERGROUND POWER PROJECTS CURRENTLY FACILITATED THROUGH THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT SECTOR

Town of Bassendean to move:

MOTION

That WALGA:

1. **Undertake a review of the State Government's Underground Power Programs to identify and advocate for the removal of inequities affecting Local Governments, with particular consideration of:**
   a. **Funding arrangements, including the requirement for Local Governments to make full project payments to Western Power during the construction phase while, in many cases, Local Governments provide extended repayment arrangements to affected property owners over a number of years;**
   b. **Legislative reform, including advocacy for amendments to the relevant legislation to enable Western Power to recover the costs of underground power projects directly from electricity consumers, rather than requiring Local Governments to act as the funding intermediary;**
   c. **Renewal liabilities, including the appropriateness or fairness of Western Power requiring Local Governments and their ratepayers to contribute financially to the renewal or replacement of Western Power owned underground electricity infrastructure that forms part of the broader electricity network and pre-exists throughout entire streets or localities.**
2. **Provide all Local Governments with a summary of the review findings and invite feedback on the issues identified and any proposed reforms.**
3. **Following consideration of that feedback, prepare a report for presentation to the WALGA Zones, including recommendations for advocacy to the State Government on any proposed legislative, policy or funding reforms arising from the review.**

IN BRIEF

- The current Targeted Underground Power Program (TUPP) Guidelines do not address the renewal of ageing underground power assets.
- The Town of Bassendean may be among the first Local Governments to face a requirement from Western Power to fund the renewal of state-owned, street-wide underground power infrastructure that is now approximately forty years old.
- This creates a complex landscape for Local Governments to navigate in respect to Western Power Underground Power Projects, and as such it is timely for a comprehensive review.

MEMBER COMMENT

<u>Reasons</u>
The Targeted Underground Power Program (TUPP) offers significant benefits, but the guidelines also create a number of challenges and risks for Councils arising from the responsibilities Councils must assume including the following key considerations:

Funding Model
Western Power requires councils to pay their full financial contribution for the project during construction phase. However, to make the cost more affordable for residents, Councils usually enable property owners to repay their share over a number of years.

This means Councils often borrow funds to meet Western Power's upfront payment schedule and then recover those costs from residents over time.

As an instrument of the State Government, this financial arrangement creates a funding gap for Councils where they must secure long-term borrowings to meet Western Power's upfront payment schedule while carrying the associated debt, interest costs and financial risk until all repayments are fully recovered from affected residents. This can impact Council borrowing capacity, cash flow, debt ratios and the ability to fund other capital projects, making participation in underground power programs a significant financial commitment.

Question: Should Western Power engage with residents to give effect to direct billing for underground power costs via electricity invoices?

The following issues pose significant strategic concerns for Councils that are not fully resolved in the current TUPP Guidelines.

Long-Term Asset Renewal
Underground cables have a long but finite life of around 40–60 years. Eventually they require replacement.

The current TUPP Guidelines do not address the renewal of ageing underground power assets. The Town of Bassendean may be among the first Local Governments to face a requirement from Western Power to fund the renewal of state-owned, street-wide underground power infrastructure that is now approximately forty years old.

Clarification is needed as to whether residents of housing estates developed with underground power are protected from future requirements to contribute to the renewal of ageing, state-owned underground infrastructure.

It should also be recognised that every Western Power underground project area has an interface, or "edge", where underground distribution infrastructure connects to the overhead network. This interface will continue to exist even if the entire metropolitan distribution network is eventually placed underground, as high-voltage transmission infrastructure will remain overhead.

The review proposed by this motion should therefore examine whether it is appropriate and equitable for Western Power to require Local Governments to contribute to the renewal of ageing street-wide or area-wide state-owned underground power assets that were originally installed as part of residential housing estate developments.

Full Electricity Network Costs are not Widely Understood
In general, there is limited public awareness that all aspects of the electricity network, including underground programs, are not funded through electricity charges.

As most large-scale underground power programs in Western Australia are only 20 to 30 years old, there is little local experience with the wholesale replacement of ageing residential underground power networks. Consequently, Councils and communities have limited understanding of the potential long-term financial liabilities associated with these assets.

<u>Regulatory Risk</u>
Western Power's maintenance and replacement expenditure is approved by the Economic Regulation Authority. However, there remains a disconnect between public expectations and current funding arrangements, with many assuming that the renewal of ageing underground power infrastructure would be fully funded by Western Power and the State. The TUPP Guidelines provide little clarity on this issue, creating a degree of uncertainty about future funding responsibilities.

Additional demands placed on Councils via Western Power Underground Power Programs:

- Councils become the public face of the project, particularly when residents object to paying contributions or experience construction disruption. Even though Councils are simply funding partners, residents may perceive the project as "the Council's project."
- Because projects are selected according to Western Power's network asset condition, some communities may receive underground power earlier than others. Councils may be put under pressure to explain why:
  - one suburb receives underground power whilst another nearby suburb does not; and
  - similar ratepayers contribute differently depending on project timing, for infrastructure that the Council does not own or manage.
- Councils are responsible for determining community support and undertaking engagement before projects proceed, requiring staff time and resources. The level of engagement with the community may actually increase during the Western Power Underground Project particularly if there are project disruptions or implementation issues.
- Western Power selects areas primarily based on network renewal needs rather than Council priorities. Western Power determines the project boundary, delivery timeline, costings, street lighting plans etc. Councils have little influence in determining TUPP programs and outcomes.
- Elected Members must formally approve participation, making Councils accountable for the decision regardless of later project issues.
- A significant implication is that if a Council rejects a TUPP offer:
  - Western Power generally replaces the old poles with new overhead poles and infrastructure; and
  - the area may therefore not receive another undergrounding opportunity for decades. This creates pressure on Councils because declining a Western Power TUPP project may effectively close the opportunity for a generation.

All of the above issues create a complex landscape for Local Governments to navigate in respect to Western Power Underground Power Projects, and as such it is timely for a comprehensive review.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

WALGA's Underground Power Advocacy Position 5.7 articulates that the Local Government sector supports the further continuation of cooperative arrangements to replace the overhead electricity distribution network by undergrounding power. Furthermore, the Position reiterates the Local Government sector's support for new approaches to identifying and prioritising areas for investment and for the establishment of a targeted funding mechanism to assist property owners that would suffer disadvantage as a result of needing to contribute to the cost of undergrounding the power distribution network.

Providing underground power has several benefits for Local Government:

- more reliable power supply;
- greater public safety (less opportunity for contact with liver power lines; optimised street lighting design);
- improved visual amenity of streetscapes;
- potential for greater tree canopy cover;
- reduced vegetation management costs; and
- elimination of pole-top fire risks, among others.

The Targeted Underground Power Program (TUPP) is the current cooperative arrangement between State Government, Local Governments, and Western Power and sets out the conditions under which projects to transition overhead electricity distribution infrastructure to underground can be initiated, agreed on, and progressed to completion. Maintenance projects related to underground power infrastructure are not included in the TUPP Program.

Western Power has an obligation to build and maintain its existing infrastructure, while homeowners are obligated to maintain private power infrastructure from the street connection to the home.

As TUPP projects are funded in part by the Local Government, Local Governments may wish to retain control of project funding recoup measures to reduce the transferral of administration costs to ratepayers and apply these measures in various ways to reduce the cost burden on ratepayers. Neither the template Co-Funding Agreement between Western Power and the Local Government nor the TUPP Guidelines prescribe how Local Government recovers the costs from property owners.

Additionally, Local Governments may wish to play a coordination role in the rollout of TUPP projects, particularly in relation to construction and excavation activities on Local Government infrastructure assets. Local Governments also retain the opportunity to negotiate around streetlighting, as funding partners in a TUPP project.

7.5 STATE ASSISTANCE GRANTS FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Shire of Chittering to move:

MOTION

That WALGA advocate to the State Government to establish an annual, untied State Assistance Grant for Western Australian Local Governments that:

1. **funds the annual unfunded gap between the Western Australian Local Government Grants Commission assessed equalisation need and the Commonwealth Financial Assistance Grants allocation;**
2. **is distributed using the existing Financial Assistance Grants equalisation methodology;**
3. **is indexed annually to reflect growth in costs, service pressures and asset renewal needs; and**
4. **supports Local Governments, particularly regional, rural and remote Local Governments, to maintain essential local services and place-based outcomes for their communities.**

IN BRIEF

- The Commonwealth Financial Assistance Grants (FA Grant) framework provides a recognised needs-based equalisation methodology for Local Government funding.
- In Western Australia, the Western Australian Local Government Grants Commission assesses Local Government expenditure need and revenue-raising capacity under that framework.
- The supporting paper identifies a total assessed need of $334,062,579.94 and Commonwealth FA Grant funding of $277,409,615, leaving an unfunded gap of $56,656,464.98.
- The proposed State Assistance Grant would not replace or duplicate FA Grants; it would complete the existing funding model by meeting the residual assessed gap.
- An untied, indexed State Assistance Grant distributed through the existing equalisation framework is a simple, transparent and fair way to strengthen Local Government financial sustainability.

MEMBER COMMENT

Background and purpose

Local Governments in rural and regional Western Australia are increasingly underpinning services and community supports beyond the historic Local Government remit. This occurs in the context of persistent cost shifting, thin local service markets, limited direct State presence in many communities, and increasing expectations that Local Governments will help keep communities functioning when other systems fall short.

The proposal is for WALGA to advocate for a State Assistance Grant that complements the existing Commonwealth Financial Assistance Grants (FA Grant) system. It does not create a competing formula, replace FA Grants, or seek to redesign the Commonwealth framework. Rather, it asks the State to fund the remaining assessed gap that is already identified through the existing equalisation architecture.

<u>Funding gap</u>
The attached State Assistance Grants Advocacy Paper identifies the following current funding position for Western Australian Local Governments:

Measure	Amount / Position
Total assessed need (WA Local Governments)	$334,062,579.94
Commonwealth FA Grant funding	$277,409,615.00
Commonwealth share of assessed need	79.26%
Unfunded gap	$56,656,464.98
Minimum grant Local Governments	34
Proposed State Assistance Grant pool	$56,656,464.98

Source: Local Government Grants Commission, as cited in the attached Advocacy Paper.

<u>Why this matters to the wider membership</u>
The issue is not confined to one Local Government. The gap in assessed funding need affects the financial capacity of Local Governments across Western Australia, and it falls most heavily on non-minimum grant Local Governments, including many Band 3 and Band 4 rural and remote Local Governments with small and dispersed populations, large service catchments, limited rate bases, weaker economies of scale and higher operating costs. Overall, 103 Local Governments in Western Australia are non-minimum grant Local Governments, meaning State Assistance Grants will apply to all 103 in filling the gap between the FA Grants and the assessed funding need.

<u>Service pressures</u>
Local Governments are increasingly expected to support or enable services that communities regard as essential, including health access support, environmental health and workforce facilitation, key worker housing support, emergency coordination and recovery, libraries and community learning, local freight and economic infrastructure, energy transition coordination, major land use pressures, regulatory compliance and exceptional utility-related support where continuity of service is critical.

These pressures do not generally remove formal responsibilities from other levels of government. However, they create practical and operational costs for Local Governments, particularly where communities expect a local response and where Government, market or service-provider presence is limited.

<u>Consequences without reform</u>
Without reform, Local Governments will face increasing pressure to reduce or withdraw non-core but essential services, defer asset renewal, reduce flexibility within annual budgets and limit their ability to co-fund priorities. This creates financial risk for Local Governments and weakens the delivery of State and Commonwealth priorities in regional areas, where Local Governments are critical place-based delivery partners.

<u>Recommended model</u>
The State Assistance Grant should be established as an untied annual pool equal to the difference between the Western Australian Local Government Grants Commission (WALGGC) assessed equalisation need and the Commonwealth FA Grants allocation.

The pool should be distributed using the same general equalisation methodology that underpins FA Grants and indexed annually to reflect growth in costs and asset pressures. This approach uses the existing needs assessment architecture, avoids a new discretionary grants formula, and provides a transparent pathway to improve Local Government financial sustainability.

ATTACHMENT
- State Assistance Grants Advocacy Paper

SECRETARIAT COMMENT
By virtue of their small ratepayer base, many regional Local Governments rely on external funding to deliver core services. Over time, the sector has seen increased demands on resources coupled with a reduction in untied funding through the Federal Assistance Grants. These funding gaps negatively impact ability to carry out key functions and urgently need to be addressed.

ALGA has been advocating for the Financial Assistance Grants to be returned to 1% of Commonwealth taxation revenue, solving the funding shortfall in a more consistent way than developing a new State-based untied funding program. WALGA has also been advocating to the Australian Government for additional ongoing, formula-based, targeted funding to support Local Governments to deliver on community needs.

The State Budget represents an opportunity to supplement Australian Government funding for Local Government with program-based State funding. WALGA is currently preparing its 2027-28 State Budget Submission which will seek funding for a number of priority initiatives for the sector.

7.6 MANDATORY NABERS RATINGS FOR APARTMENT BUILDINGS

City of Perth to move:

MOTION

That WALGA calls on the Australian Government to:

1. **Extend the mandates under the Commercial Building Disclosure (CBD) program to residential apartment buildings, making NABERS ratings mandatory for apartment buildings in a manner similar to requirements for commercial properties.**
2. **To support widespread uptake and reduce barriers for building owners and managers, direct NABERS to waive all submission and assessment fees for apartment building ratings for the next five years.**
3. **Amend relevant legislation to require NABERS ratings to be disclosed in all rental and sale advertisements for apartments, ensuring prospective tenants and buyers have access to transparent energy efficiency information.**

IN BRIEF

- Mandatory NABERS ratings for apartment buildings would extend a proven energy performance framework to the residential sector.
- Disclosure requirements would provide transparency for apartment buyers and renters while incentivising building efficiency improvements.
- A five-year fee waiver would support broad uptake and reduce implementation barriers for building owners and strata managers.
- The proposal would contribute to emissions reduction, lower utility costs and support Australia's transition to a more sustainable built environment.

MEMBER COMMENT

Background

The Commercial Building Disclosure (CBD) program, administered under the *Building Energy Efficiency Disclosure Act 2010*, mandates NABERS Energy ratings for commercial office buildings over 1,000 square metres when sold or leased, promoting transparency and energy efficiency in the built environment. NABERS (National Australian Built Environment Rating System) provides a proven framework for assessing and improving the environmental performance of buildings. While NABERS ratings are currently available for apartment buildings[1] they remain voluntary for residential properties. Extending CBD-style mandates to residential apartments would drive sustainability, reduce energy costs for residents, and align with national climate goals by encouraging efficient building practices across sectors.

Purpose

Extending mandatory NABERS ratings to residential apartment buildings under a framework similar to the CBD program for commercial properties delivers multifaceted benefits across environmental, economic, and social dimensions. These ratings target

[1] https://www.nabers.gov.au/apartment-buildings

shared services and common areas (e.g., lifts, lobbies, pools, and lighting), which can constitute up to 60% of a building's total energy consumption. By mandating ratings and requiring their disclosure in all rental and sale advertisements, the policy enhances transparency, incentivises efficiency upgrades, and supports Australia's sustainability agenda, including the push toward net-zero emissions in the built environment.

Environmental Benefits

Mandatory NABERS ratings would measure and minimise energy and water usage in apartment buildings, directly contributing to reduced greenhouse gas emissions. The buildings sector accounts for approximately half of Australia's energy consumption and nearly a quarter of its emissions, making residential efficiency improvements essential for achieving national climate targets like net-zero by 2050. NABERS serves as a reliable benchmark for continuous performance monitoring, facilitating targeted reductions in resource use and fostering a healthier environment.

For example, it tackles high-impact elements such as gas-powered hot water systems via stakeholder engagement and feasible upgrades, aligning with broader efforts to decarbonise buildings. This initiative bolsters local climate action by enabling Councils to integrate NABERS data into community-level sustainability plans, such as retrofitting programs that address urban heat islands and promote renewable energy adoption at the grassroots level. Nationally, it accelerates the energy transition by scaling up proven tools like NABERS, which have already driven significant emissions reductions in commercial sectors and now extend to support embodied carbon assessments for cleaner, more sustainable construction.

Economic Benefits

Building owners and strata managers stand to cut energy and water expenses by up to 30-42%, as NABERS identifies inefficiencies in common areas where utilities often consume 25% of costs. Elevated NABERS scores enhance property appeal and value, providing a market advantage and fostering long-term asset appreciation in an eco-conscious real estate landscape. The proposed five-year fee waiver for submissions lowers entry barriers, yielding substantial net economic returns through simple upgrades like LED lighting and automated systems.

Moreover, this validated performance data streamlines sustainability reporting for investors, unlocking access to green financing and insurance incentives. Critically, these savings directly alleviate cost-of-living pressures for residents by reducing shared utility costs passed onto households, with potential annual bill reductions of hundreds of dollars per unit amid rising energy prices. On a national scale, NABERS has already generated nearly $2 billion in consumer savings through efficiency gains, positioning the program as a key driver in the energy transition toward affordable, low-carbon infrastructure.

Social and Community Benefits

With about 80% of prospective buyers and renters prioritising environmental performance data, mandatory disclosure in advertisements empowers informed choices, helping individuals select energy-efficient homes that lower personal energy bills and enhance living standards. This transparency raises resident awareness of building efficiency, encouraging behaviours like energy conservation and participation in strata-led initiatives, without intruding on individual unit assessments. Ratings elevate a building's reputation as a sustainability frontrunner, increasing resident satisfaction and community pride in eco-friendly living.

Overall, the program cultivates transparency, bolsters investor trust, and harmonises with growing green preferences, making apartments more desirable in a market that rewards sustainability. By heightening awareness, it empowers residents to advocate for local climate actions, such as Council-supported solar installations or waste reduction programs, fostering a grassroots culture of environmental stewardship.

<u>Local Government's Role</u>
Local Governments are ideally positioned to drive this program's success at the grassroots level, bridging federal mandates with community needs through their roles in planning, enforcement, and incentives. Local Governments may ensure equitable rollout of the proposed measures mandated by federal support and help addressing performance gaps.

Local Governments may also offer localised support, such as workshops for strata managers, coordinate subsidies during the fee-waiver period, and data-sharing platforms to track progress. This coordination amplifies national energy transition efforts by enabling place-based innovations, like net-zero precincts, while empowering residents through education campaigns that link building efficiency to everyday cost savings and climate resilience.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT
WALGA acknowledges the role that building performance disclosure programs can play in improving energy efficiency, reducing emissions and assisting consumers to make more informed purchasing and rental decisions. The NABERS framework is well established within the commercial property sector and has demonstrated value in providing a nationally consistent method for measuring and benchmarking building performance.

The intent of this motion aligns with broader Australian and State Government objectives to improve the energy performance of the built environment. Increased transparency regarding apartment building energy performance may encourage investment in building upgrades, support operating cost reductions and provide market-based incentives for improved sustainability outcomes.

WALGA notes that the Australian Government is already considering future expansion of building energy disclosure arrangements through the Commercial Building Disclosure (CBD) Expansion Roadmap and the Home Energy Ratings Disclosure Framework. These initiatives include investigation of energy performance disclosure mechanisms for residential buildings and consideration of the role of NABERS ratings for Class 2 apartment buildings. The Australian Government has also indicated that no immediate changes to the CBD program are proposed while further stakeholder consultation and policy development occurs.

The proposal raises a number of implementation considerations, including the regulatory and administrative burden on strata companies and apartment owners, the appropriateness of mandating disclosure for existing buildings, and the costs associated with undertaking and maintaining ratings. While the proposed five-year fee waiver would seek to address some of these barriers, any expansion of mandatory disclosure requirements would require detailed assessment of costs, benefits and potential impacts across different apartment building typologies and ownership structures.

7.7 FUNDING SUPPORT FOR NATIVE TITLE, ILUA AND TRADITIONAL OWNER ENGAGEMENT COSTS

Shire of Dundas to move:

MOTION

That WALGA:

1. **Advocate to the Western Australian and Australian Governments for the establishment of a dedicated funding program to support Local Governments with the costs associated with:**
    a. **Native Title negotiations;**
    b. **Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs);**
    c. **Aboriginal Cultural Heritage consultation;**
    d. **Traditional Owner engagement;**
    e. **Heritage, anthropological and cultural assessments; and**
    f. **Agreement implementation and monitoring.**
2. **Seek recognition that Native Title and Traditional Owner engagement requirements are increasingly necessary to deliver housing, infrastructure, emergency management, renewable energy, land tenure and economic development projects, and should not be funded solely from Local Government rate revenue.**
3. **Request that any future funding program prioritise regional, rural and remote Local Governments with:**
    b. **large geographic areas;**
    c. **significant Crown land holdings;**
    d. **extensive Native Title interests; and**
    e. **limited rate bases.**

IN BRIEF

- Remote Local Governments are increasingly required to undertake Native Title and Traditional Owner engagement to deliver essential projects.
- No dedicated State or Commonwealth funding exists to assist Local Governments with these costs.
- Current arrangements result in significant cost shifting from other levels of government to Local Government.
- Unfunded engagement requirements delay housing, infrastructure, emergency management and economic development projects.
- A dedicated funding program would improve outcomes for Traditional Owners, Local Governments and regional communities.

MEMBER COMMENT

Across Western Australia, Local Governments are increasingly wanting to engage with Native Title holders and Traditional Owners as part of delivering community infrastructure, housing, economic development, emergency management and land tenure projects.

While Local Governments support meaningful engagement and recognise the importance of Traditional Owner participation in decision-making processes, there is currently no dedicated State or Commonwealth funding mechanism available to assist Local Governments with the associated costs. These costs commonly include:

- legal advice and representation;
- Indigenous Land Use Agreement negotiations;
- anthropological and heritage assessments;
- cultural heritage investigations;
- authorisation meetings;
- Traditional Owner consultation and participation costs;
- travel and accommodation; and
- agreement implementation and monitoring.

For many remote Local Governments, a single project requiring Native Title resolution can incur costs of tens of thousands of dollars before any physical works commence.

The impact is particularly significant for remote and regional Local Governments that:
- manage large geographic areas;
- have small populations and limited rate bases;
- contain extensive Crown land holdings;
- are required to facilitate State and Commonwealth policy outcomes; and
- have significant Native Title and Traditional Owner engagement obligations.

The absence of dedicated funding creates a significant cost-shifting burden and can lead to:
- delays to housing projects;
- delays to airport, road and utility infrastructure;
- delays to emergency management initiatives;
- increased project costs;
- reduced investment certainty; and
- pressure on Local Government operating budgets.

This issue is becoming increasingly significant as governments seek to accelerate housing delivery, renewable energy projects, economic development initiatives and Closing the Gap commitments. Local Governments are expected to facilitate these outcomes but are not provided with funding to undertake the associated engagement processes.

A dedicated funding program would:
- reduce cost shifting to Local Government;
- support meaningful Traditional Owner participation;
- improve project certainty;
- accelerate housing and infrastructure delivery;
- support regional economic development;
- strengthen relationships between Local Governments and Traditional Owners; and
- assist in achieving broader State and Commonwealth policy objectives.

Accordingly, WALGA is requested to advocate for a jointly funded State and Commonwealth program that recognises Native Title and Traditional Owner engagement as a shared public responsibility rather than an unfunded Local Government obligation.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

WA Local Governments may need to comply with requirements under the *Native Title Act 1993 (Cth)* and *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972 (WA)* where proposed activities may affect native title rights and interests or impact or harm Aboriginal cultural heritage. The applicable requirements vary depending on the activity, land tenure and context, and may include notification, consultation, opportunities to comment and/or approval processes and, in some native title future act matters, negotiation in good faith with a view to reaching agreement with native title parties. Positive relationships with Traditional Owners, cultural knowledge holders and native title parties can assist Local Governments to understand and meet their statutory obligations.

There is currently no dedicated Australian or State Government funding to support Local Governments' costs in relation to native title and Aboriginal heritage agreement-making. However, the State Government's Aboriginal Heritage Survey Program to fund Aboriginal heritage surveys on unsurveyed or high-priority areas of the State is open to a range of proponents, including Local Governments.

In 2025, the WA Government commissioned the National Native Title Tribunal (NNTT) to conduct a Review of Native Title and Aboriginal Heritage Processes (the Review). The Review report and Government response to recommendations were tabled in Parliament on 9 June 2026. While the scope and consultation for the Review focused on the mining industry, WALGA engaged with the Review lead and NNTT Member Mr Glen Kelly, to highlight key challenges for Local Governments. The Review recommendations and Government's response provide opportunities for greater policy clarity, practice guidance and administrative efficiencies for all parties. There is also a commitment to increase and better coordinate support for Prescribed Bodies Corporate across State agencies, to increase their capacity to deal with increasing volumes of heritage and native title matters.

WALGA's Advocacy Position 3.1.4 Aboriginal Heritage Protection calls for the State Government to provide adequate resourcing to ensure all parties have the capacity, capability and resources to discharge their statutory obligations relating to Aboriginal heritage protection.

WALGA continues to support Members to understand and comply with their obligations relating to native title and Aboriginal heritage approval processes and best practice in Aboriginal engagement. More information is available on the WALGA website and Kolbang Yanginy, the reconciliation resource for Local Governments that WALGA partnered to develop. WALGA advocacy on this issue includes ongoing discussions with State Government to share the experiences and insights of the Local Government sector and advocating for outcomes that address the need to balance delivering essential services and development, while protecting Aboriginal rights and interests.

The WALGA Local Government Convention 2026 Program includes a session on native title and agreement making, which is intended to provide practical insights and guidance on how Local Governments can leverage opportunities for partnership and agreement-making to enable land activation and infrastructure development.

The Shire of Dundas motion and WALGA's ongoing advocacy align on the need for greater support for WA Local Governments to comply with native title and Aboriginal heritage obligations, while meeting the needs of their community for essential infrastructure and services.

7.8 SUPPORT FOR ALGA MOTION #92 – NATIONAL CLIMATE ADAPTION FUNDING

Town of East Fremantle, City of Vincent, Shire of Augusta Margaret River to move:

MOTION

That WALGA:

1. **Endorse Motion 92 included within The Business Papers of the 2026 Australian Local Government Association National General Assembly as provided below:**
   a. ***Acknowledge that the increasing costs of climate change — including disaster recovery from storms, floods, and bushfires, and community resilience building for heatwaves and sea-level rise — place an unsustainable financial burden on Local Government.***
   b. ***Recognise the inequity where Local Governments and communities bear these costs despite not being responsible for the 75% of climate pollution generated by major coal, oil, and gas corporations.***
   c. ***Establish a Parliamentary Inquiry into the adequacy of the 2025 National Adaptation Plan, specifically addressing the lack of additional funding for Local Governments to deliver mandated adaptation responses.***
   d. ***Ensure this Inquiry identifies concrete revenue sources to meet investment needs, including the implementation of taxes or levies on the coal, oil, and gas industries aligned with the climate damage their products cause.***
   e. ***Establish a National Climate Compensation Fund with a dedicated funding stream for Local Governments, commensurate with the scale of the financial risks identified in the 2025 National Climate Risk Assessment***
2. **Adopt Motion 92 as part of WALGA's federal advocacy program; and**
3. **Actively advocate, in partnership with the Australian Local Government Association, for:**
   a. **the establishment of a National Climate Compensation Fund with a dedicated funding stream for Local Governments; and**
   b. **the introduction of a Climate Pollution Levy on coal, oil and gas corporations.**

IN BRIEF

- The costs of climate disaster response and readiness confronting Local Governments are fast outpacing the willingness or capacity of State and Federal governments to finance the shortfall. A sustainable, dedicated funding stream must be found.
- Across Australia, Local Governments collectively own and manage billions of dollars in infrastructure threatened by climate-impacted events, including storms, floods, water damage, and bushfires.
- The motion seeks WALGA support for and advocacy of ALGA Motion 92 regarding climate adaptation funding and calling for increased Commonwealth funding support for Local Governments responding to climate change impacts.
- Existing constraints on Local Government revenue-raising mean Councils cannot address these increasing costs without significantly compromising other essential services.
- Climate disruption costs and adaptation/resilience requirements are escalating beyond the capacity of Local Governments to pay for them.

- A dedicated fund for Local Governments extends point 2(b) of WALGA's existing Climate Change Advocacy Position 4.1: "*ensure that Local Government has the funding, guidance and practical support required to meet increasing risk and expanded legislative requirements to plan for, mitigate and adapt to climate impacts*".
- This motion seeks a federally administered funding solution that relieves the burden currently falling on ratepayers. The specific mechanism — whether through adjustment of existing policy settings or a new funding measure — is a matter for the Federal Government to determine.

TOWN OF EAST FREMANTLE COMMENT

Motion 92 included within The Business Papers of the 2026 Australian Local Government Association National General Assembly called on the Australian Government to:

1. *Acknowledge that the increasing costs of climate change — including disaster recovery from storms, floods, and bushfires, and community resilience building for heatwaves and sea-level rise—place an unsustainable financial burden on local government.*
2. *Recognise the inequity where local governments and communities bear these costs despite not being responsible for the 75% of climate pollution generated by major coal, oil, and gas corporations.*
3. *Establish a Parliamentary Inquiry into the adequacy of the 2025 National Adaptation Plan, specifically addressing the lack of additional funding for local governments to deliver mandated adaptation responses.*
4. *Ensure this Inquiry identifies concrete revenue sources to meet investment needs, including the implementation of taxes or levies on the coal, oil, and gas industries aligned with the climate damage their products cause.*
5. *Establish a National Climate Compensation Fund with a dedicated funding stream for local governments, commensurate with the scale of the financial risks identified in the 2025 National Climate Risk Assessment*

This motion extends beyond advocacy for funding (and other support), as it explicitly references how this funding might be delivered, via a polluter-pays mechanism, and dedicated compensation fund at least in part contributed to by the coal, oil and gas industries.

The motion calls on the Federal Government to establish a Parliamentary Inquiry into the adequacy of the 2025 National Adaptation Plan, create a dedicated funding stream for Local Governments that matches the scale of financial risks identified in the 2025 National Climate Risk Assessment, and identify taxes or levies on the coal, oil and gas industries aligned with the damage their products cause to finance the fund.

Research shows that roughly 76% of Australia's climate pollution comes from burning coal, oil and gas[2], a sector which has seen exceptional 'super profits' in recent years, and which pays well below its share of levies and taxes. Across the sector, income tax averages just 5% of its reported $436 billion income, compared with the 30% corporate tax rate[3]. To 2024, $111 billion worth of royalty-free liquefied natural gas (LNG) was exported from WA,

[2] Freeloaders, Oxfam Australia, April 2026
[3] Freeloaders: How gas corporates are paying little tax, Oxfam Australia, 30 April 2026

sacrificing at least $9.6 billion in revenue if royalties had been paid[4]. A polluter-pays mechanism is also supported by a majority of the Australian public - 70% of Australians support a mechanism to collect revenue from polluting industries[5].

Federal and State Governments are unwilling or unable to provide guaranteed long-term funding to meet the escalating climate change induced mitigation, adaption and resilience-building costs faced by Local Governments, or are even passing more costs of climate adaptation and mitigation onto other levels of government or residents[6][7]. The fossil fuel corporations, the major financial beneficiaries of climate disruption, contribute little to repairing the damage their products cause. A levy on fossil fuel products paid into a dedicated fund supporting Local Governments in climate adaptation and mitigation will bring costs and profits into better alignment.

CITY OF VINCENT COMMENT

Local Governments are legislatively obligated to address climate change through the *Local Government Act 1995*. Whilst there are sound policy reasons for all tiers of government to be a part of addressing this global challenge, for the Local Government sector the cost of both mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change is rapidly outpacing the capacity to do so.

The National Adaptation Plan outlines that natural disasters cost the Australian economy $38 billion per year. Costs will continue to escalate as global warming increases and current Federal funding is not sufficient, stable or long-term to support this.

Unlike other tiers of government with greater capacity to raise revenue, Local Governments have finite resourcing to adequately fund this without impacting on the delivery of essential services or significantly increasing rates. This is neither fair nor sustainable.

Motion 92 was unanimously passed at the ALGA National General Assembly, highlighting the importance of this issue across all Local Governments whether inner-city, urban, rural or remote.

Local Governments collectively own and manage billions of dollars in infrastructure currently threatened by climate-impacted events, including storms, floods, water damage, and bushfires.

For Vincent, key local challenges in responding to the impacts of climate change include:

- Reducing urban heat and increasing tree canopy while responding to the ongoing impacts of Polyphagous Shot-Hole Borer and reducing rainfall.
- Responding to extreme weather events and flooding impacts by upgrading the City's ageing and at-capacity drainage network whilst simultaneously being the highest density Council in WA.

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[4] Zero royalties charged on $111 billion in WA gas sales, The Australia Institute, 4 June 2024
[5] Pay up: Australians say it's time big polluters paid for the damage they do to the environment, The Australia Institute, 27 November 2024
[6] Queensland worse off under proposed disaster recovery funding changes, councils say, ABC News, 6 June 2026
[7] NSW proposes new property levy to support emergency services, Realtisan

A dedicated funding stream is essential for Local Governments to support climate change mitigation and adaptation responses without increasing the burden disproportionately to our communities.

The establishment of a Parliamentary Inquiry provides a way to identify opportunities for this to be delivered and is essential to shift the fiscal burden from ratepayers to the industries primarily responsible for inflicting climate-related damage.

Endorsement of this motion would give practical effect to WALGA's recently adopted Climate Change Advocacy Position. Specifically, to "*ensure that Local Government has the funding, guidance and practical support required to meet increasing risk and expanded legislative requirements to plan for, mitigate and adapt to climate impacts*".

The City values WALGA's continued leadership and looks forward to working collaboratively to secure the stable and long-term funding needed. This would enable Local Governments to respond to our legislative obligations and deliver local climate mitigation, resilience and adaptation measures for our communities.

SHIRE OF AUGUSTA MARGARET RIVER COMMENT

Right now, our communities are bearing the costs of dealing with the impacts of global warming. As a regional Local Government with an extensive coastline, the Shire is experiencing the effects of coastal impacts such as sea level rise, more severe storm events, and increased bushfire risk.

Local Governments, residents and local businesses are already bearing significant costs through rising insurance premiums, damage to community infrastructure, and disaster response and recovery efforts. While climate change has multiple causes, the extraction and use of coal, oil and gas remains a major contributor to global warming. Yet many of the costs of responding to these impacts continue to fall on local communities and future generations, rather than those who have profited most from fossil fuel production.

While climate change affects everyone, we are concerned that those experiencing the greatest impacts have often contributed the least to the problem. These costs are increasingly being borne by regional and local communities that have limited capacity to absorb them.

Communities across Australia are calling for coal, oil and gas corporations to contribute their fair share towards the costs of climate adaptation and recovery, helping ensure Local Governments have the resources needed to respond to climate impacts and build resilient, thriving communities.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

This motion was passed at the ALGA National General Assembly (NGA), however ALGA NGA motions are not binding and will be considered by the ALGA Board. WALGA is a member of ALGA and will have input into the determination of action relating to the motion.

WALGA has undertaken extensive consultation on the Climate Change Advocacy Position which was adopted by State Council in July 2026. As noted in the commentary from Local Governments, the motion aligns with WALGA's Advocacy Position on Climate Change however goes into greater detail regarding the issue and resolution. WALGA is currently developing an advocacy plan to progress the outcomes in the recently adopted Advocacy Position and will work with ALGA and other Local Government Associations on these matters.

7.9 DELIVERING EQUITABLE NBN FIBRE UPGRADE PATHWAY FOR MULTI-DWELLING UNITS

City of Perth to move:

MOTION

That WALGA calls on the Australian Government to work with NBN Co to:

1. **Establish and publish a funded national upgrade pathway to Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) for all Multi-Dwelling Units (MDUs), including apartments, townhouses and older unit developments currently served by Fibre to the Building (FTTB).**
2. **Close the existing policy gap for MDUs by prioritising high-density urban housing within future FTTP rollout planning, recognising the significant proportion of capital-city residents who live in apartments and townhouses.**
3. **Provide dedicated funding and delivery mechanisms - including grants, co-investment and streamlined approvals - to address the additional cost and complexity of retrofitting fibre in older strata-titled buildings, ensuring residents are not disadvantaged by dwelling type.**
4. **Support Local Governments to work with strata bodies and NBN Co to streamline MDU upgrade delivery, including standardised strata engagement materials and access/approval processes for common property.**

IN BRIEF

- Residents of many apartment buildings, townhouses and other multi-dwelling developments remain excluded from NBN Co's funded Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) upgrade program and continue to rely on legacy Fibre to the Building (FTTB) infrastructure.
- Establishing a funded national FTTP upgrade pathway for multi-dwelling units would address a growing digital inequity affecting residents of high-density housing, particularly within capital cities.
- Dedicated funding, co-investment opportunities and streamlined delivery arrangements would help overcome the additional cost and complexity of upgrading older strata-titled buildings to full-fibre connections.
- Supporting Local Governments to work with strata bodies and NBN Co would facilitate more efficient upgrade delivery through streamlined approvals, access arrangements and standardised engagement processes.

MEMBER COMMENT

Background

People are increasingly concerned about a growing digital infrastructure inequity affecting residents of apartments, townhouses and older unit developments. Reliable high-speed broadband is now essential infrastructure, underpinning economic participation, remote work, education, telehealth and access to government services.

While the National Broadband Network (NBN) is transitioning toward a predominantly fibre-based network, a significant cohort of households – those living in Multi-Dwelling Units (MDUs) – remain reliant on legacy copper-based technologies due to historical infrastructure decisions.

The Australian Government and NBN Co have already set a clear direction of travel for the fixed-line network: move legacy copper areas to full fibre. NBN's "full fibre" upgrade program explicitly enables eligible premises on Fibre to the Node (FTTN) and Fibre to the Curb (FTTC) to upgrade to Fibre to the Premises (FTTP), and in January 2025 NBN Co announced a Government-backed investment package to upgrade the remaining FTTN footprint, enabling higher-speed services delivered mostly via FTTP.

However, this transition leaves out a major cohort: the Fibre to the Building/Basement (FTTB) footprint, which is dominated by apartment buildings and older unit developments. NBN's FY26 Annual Service Improvement Plan confirms that a full-fibre upgrade for the FTTB footprint is not currently planned, with only limited trials underway.

This exclusion disproportionately affects city residents. Apartments are a significant and growing share of Australia's housing stock, with more than 2.6 million people living in apartments nationally, including over 550,000 people in high-rise buildings. In capital cities, older apartments are disproportionately served by FTTB, FTTN or FTTC, and in many cases are either ineligible for existing FTTP upgrade programs or face unclear, complex and costly upgrade pathways.

Within the City of Perth, hundreds of inner-city apartments in precincts such as the CBD, East Perth, West Perth and Northbridge were connected via FTTB during earlier phases of the NBN rollout as recently as 2016 and now face capped speeds and reduced reliability compared with neighbouring dwellings that have access to full-fibre connections.

While NBN expects around 90% of the fixed-line network (approximately 10.3 million premises) to have access to near-gigabit wholesale speeds by December 2025, residents of many MDUs remain stuck on FTTB with no defined or funded pathway to FTTP.

Local Governments also have a practical role in removing on-the-ground barriers to fibre upgrades in strata buildings. Even where upgrades are available, MDUs can be delayed by complex owner-corporation decision-making and access arrangements across common property and multiple tenancies. Councils are well placed to support and convene strata communities so upgrades can proceed efficiently.

Accordingly, Local Governments should be supported to work with strata bodies, NBN Co and industry to streamline access and approvals, including standard engagement materials, model strata resolutions, clear access/works guidance for common property, and streamlined local approvals for low-impact telecommunications works.

Without a clear upgrade strategy, a growing number of urban households risk being left behind as the rest of the country transitions to world-class fibre connectivity, entrenching a digital divide based not on demand or location, but on dwelling type.

<u>Supporting Evidence</u>

1. NBN Co has stated that approximately 90% of the fixed-line footprint is targeted to be capable of gigabit speeds by 2025; however, the majority of Fibre to the Building (FTTB) connections are not currently included in this upgrade pathway.
2. Industry estimates indicate that more than 2 million apartments and townhouses are connected to the NBN nationally.
3. Australian Bureau of Statistics Census data indicates that over 500,000 Australians reside in high-rise apartment buildings (nine storeys or more), predominantly located in capital cities.

4. NBN FTTB services are typically limited to maximum download speeds of around 100 Mbps, compared with FTTP services capable of supporting download speeds up to 2,000 Mbps.
5. ACCC and industry reporting has identified a widening performance and reliability gap between fibre-based and copper-based NBN technologies, particularly during peak demand periods.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

Current WALGA advocacy regarding the provision of high-speed internet is restricted to the Local Government sector's support for consistent and appropriate internet solutions including suitable pricing for rural, regional, and remote Western Australia (Advocacy Position 2.4.3).

The role of Local Government in relation to the National Broadband Network (NBN) is typically to support the planning and design of the network prior to the rollout of fibreoptic cable, and to work with NBN Co on community engagement. Much of the work to connect properties outside of the public realm is undertaken by NBN Co and the property owner, including strata properties. In particular, retrofitting existing buildings with new fibreoptic cable that does not require changes to infrastructure in the public realm may not involve Local Governments at all.

Whilst Local Governments may acknowledge the role of high-speed internet as beneficial to residents, the interface of the change from FTTB to FTTP with Local Government business may be limited.

8 CLOSURE

Upon the completion of business, the Chair will close the meeting.

Attachment 1: AGM Standing Orders

Return to Agenda item 4

WALGA

Western Australian Local Government Association
Annual and Special General Meeting Standing Orders

1. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of these Standing Orders, if not inconsistent with the context, the following words shall have the following meanings:

1.1 *"Absolute Majority"* means: a majority of Delegates whether present and voting or not.

1.2 *"Association"* means: the Western Australian Local Government Association.

1.3 *"Chief Executive Officer"* means: the Chief Executive Officer for the time being of the Association.

1.4 *"Constitution"* means: the Constitution of the Association.

1.5 *"Delegate or Deputy Delegate"* means: those persons duly nominated to represent a Member Local Government at a Meeting of the Association. In the construction of these Standing Orders unless the context requires otherwise, the word "Delegate" shall in the absence of the Delegate include a Deputy Delegate. A Deputy Delegate acting in the capacity of a Delegate unable to attend a meeting of the Association shall exercise all rights of that Delegate.

1.6 *"Deputy President"* means: the Deputy President for the time being of the Association.

1.7 *"Meeting"* means: an Annual or Special General Meeting of the Association.

1.8 *"Member Local Government"* means: a Local Government admitted to ordinary membership of the Association in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution.

1.9 *"President"* means: the President for the time being of the Association. In the construction of these Standing Orders unless the context requires otherwise, the word "President" shall in the absence of the President include the Deputy President or the Delegate chosen by resolution to preside at any Meeting of the Association.

1.10 *"Simple Majority"* means: a majority of Delegates that are present and voting.

2. CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

The proceedings and business of Meetings of the Association shall be conducted according to these Standing Orders.

3. NOTICE OF MEETING

3.1 Annual General Meeting
The Chief Executive Officer shall give at least ninety (90) days notice of an Annual General Meeting to all Member Local Governments, advising of the closing date for submission of motions for inclusion on the agenda.

3.2 Special General Meeting
A Special General Meeting of the Association is to be held if a request is received by the President, in accordance with the requirements of the Constitution. No business shall be transacted at a Special General Meeting other than that for which the Special General Meeting was called.

3.3 Notice of a Special General Meeting shall be given by the Chief Executive Officer to all Member Local Governments.

4. QUORUM

4.1 The Association shall not conduct business at a Meeting unless a quorum is present.

4.2 At any Meeting, greater than one half of the Delegates who are eligible to vote must be present to form a quorum.

4.3 The Association is not to transact business at a Meeting unless a quorum is present.

4.4 If a quorum has not been established within 30 minutes after a Meeting is due to begin then the Meeting can be adjourned –

(a) by the President or if the President is not present at the meeting, by the Deputy President;

(b) if neither the President nor Deputy President is present at the meeting, by a majority of Delegates present;

(c) if only one Delegate is present, by that Delegate; or

(d) if no Delegate is present, by the Chief Executive Officer or a person authorised by the Chief Executive Officer.

4.5 If at any time during a Meeting a quorum is not present, the President shall thereupon suspend the proceedings of the Meeting for a period of five (5) minutes and if a quorum is not present at the expiration of that period, the Meeting shall be deemed to have been adjourned and the person presiding is to reschedule it for some future time.

4.6 Notice of a Meeting adjourned because of absence of a quorum is to be given to all Member Local Governments.

5. MEETINGS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

The business of the Association conducted at a Meeting shall be open to the public except upon such occasions as the Association may by resolution otherwise decide.

6. ORDER OF BUSINESS

Unless the Association should decide otherwise, the order of business at Meetings shall be as follows:

(a) Record of attendance and apologies;
(b) Announcements;
(c) Confirmation of minutes of previous Meetings;
(d) President's report;
(e) Financial report for the financial year; and
(f) Consideration of Executive and Member Motions.

7. VOTING ENTITLEMENTS

7.1 Each Member Local Government shall be entitled to be represented at any Meeting by two (2) Delegates.

7.2 Only eligible and registered Delegates may vote.

7.3 A Delegate shall be entitled to exercise one vote on each matter to be decided. Votes are to be exercised in person.

7.4 If a Delegate is unable to attend any Meeting a duly eligible and registered Deputy Delegate may attend and exercise a vote.

7.5 A Deputy Delegate shall be nominated in writing and delivered to the Chief Executive Officer before the commencement of the Meeting. The nomination shall be signed by the Chief Executive Officer of the Member Local Government that nominated the Delegate.

8. SPECIAL URGENT BUSINESS

At any time during a Meeting a Delegate may, with the approval of an Absolute Majority, introduce a motion relating to special urgent business that calls for an expression of opinion from Delegates.

In presenting an item of special urgent business, a Delegate shall have sufficient copies of the motion in writing for distribution to all Delegates present at the Meeting and, where practicable, give prior notice to the President of such intention.

9. PRESIDENT TO PRESIDE

9.1 The President shall preside at all Meetings, but in the absence of the President, the Deputy President shall preside.

9.2 In the absence of the President and the Deputy President, the Delegates shall choose by resolution, a Delegate present to preside at the Meeting.

10. SPEAKING PROTOCOL

10.1 Only registered Delegates and members of the Association's State Council shall be entitled to speak at Meetings.

10.2 The first person who attracts the attention of the President shall have precedence in speaking.

10.3 If two or more Delegates wish to speak at the same time, the President shall decide who is entitled to priority.

10.4 Speakers are to use the microphones supplied.

10.5 When addressing a meeting, speakers are to:

(a) rise and remain standing unless unable to do so by reason of sickness or disability;

(b) address the meeting through the President;
(c) state their name and Local Government before otherwise speaking;
(d) refrain from reading comment printed in the agenda paper in support of a motion, but may identify key points or make additional comment; and
(e) refrain from using provoking or discourteous expressions that are calculated to disturb the peaceful current of debate.

11. DEBATE PROCEDURES

11.1 A Delegate moving a substantive motion may speak for –
(a) 5 minutes in their opening address; and
(b) 3 minutes in exercising the right of reply.

11.2 Other speeches for or against motions are to be limited to 3 minutes unless consent of the meeting is obtained which shall be signified without debate.

11.3 No Delegate, except the mover of a motion in reply, is to speak more than once on the same motion except by way of personal explanation.

11.4 As soon as the right of reply has been exercised, the motion is to be forthwith put to the vote without further comment.

11.5 No discussion shall take place on any motion unless it is moved and seconded.

11.6 Only one amendment on any one motion shall be received at a time, and such amendment shall be disposed of before any further amendment can be received. Any number of amendments may be proposed.

11.7 The provisions of these Standing Orders applicable to motions apply mutatis mutandis to amendments, except that the mover of an amendment shall have no right of reply.

11.8 When a motion has been moved and seconded, the person presiding shall at once proceed to take a vote thereon unless a Delegate opposes it or an amendment is proposed.

11.9 No more than two Delegates shall speak in succession on one side, either for or against the question before the meeting, and if at the conclusion of the second speaker's remarks, no Delegate speaks on the other side, the motion or amendment may be put to the vote.

11.10 Notwithstanding clause 11.8, where a composite motion is moved which embodies the core aspects of subsequent motions listed on the agenda, a Delegate whose motion has been superseded shall have the opportunity to speak on the question of the composite motion before it is put. Once a composite motion has been carried, no further debate shall be permitted in respect of the superseded motions.

11.11 At any time during a debate, but after the conclusion of a Delegate's comments, a Delegate who has not spoken during the debate may move, without discussion, "that the question be now put". If that motion is seconded and carried by a majority, the question shall be submitted at once to the meeting, after the mover has replied.

12. QUESTIONS

Any Delegate seeking to ask a question at a Meeting shall direct the question to the President.

13. POINT OF ORDER

A Delegate who is addressing the President shall not be interrupted except on a point of order, in which event the Delegate shall wait until the Delegate raising the point of order has been heard and the question of order has been disposed of, whereupon the Delegate so interrupted may, if permitted, continue.

14. MOTION - SUBSTANCE TO BE STATED

A Delegate seeking to propose an original motion or amendment shall state its substance before addressing the meeting thereon and, if so required by the President, shall put the motion or amendment in writing.

15. PRESIDENT TO BE HEARD

Whenever the President signifies a desire to speak during a debate, any Delegate speaking or offering to speak is to be silent, so that the President may be heard without interruption.

16. WITHDRAWAL OF MOTION

A motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the mover with the consent of the meeting, which shall be signified without debate, and it shall not be competent for any Delegate to speak upon it after the mover has asked permission for its withdrawal, unless such permission has been refused.

17. PRESIDENT MAY CALL TO ORDER

The President shall preserve order and may call any Delegate to order when holding an opinion that there shall be cause for so doing.

18. RULING BY PRESIDENT

The President shall decide all questions of order or practice. The decision shall be final and be accepted by the meeting without argument or comment unless the meeting resolves that a different ruling shall be substituted for the ruling given by the President. Discussions shall be permitted on any such motion.

19. RESOLUTIONS

19.1 Except as otherwise provided in the Constitution and these Standing Orders, all motions concerning the affairs of the Association shall be passed by a Simple Majority.

19.2 Any matter considered at a Special Meeting shall not be passed unless having received an Absolute Majority.

20. NO DISCUSSION

Where there is no discussion on a motion, the President may deem the motion to be passed unless the meeting resolves otherwise.

21. PERMISSIBLE MOTIONS DURING DEBATE

21.1 When a motion is under debate, no further motion shall be moved except the following:

(a) that the motion be amended;
(b) that the meeting be adjourned;
(c) that the debate be adjourned;
(d) that the question be now put;
(e) that the meeting proceed with the next item of business; or
(f) that the meeting sits behind closed doors.

21.2 Any Delegate who has not already spoken on the subject of a motion at the close of the speech of any other Delegate, may move without notice any one of the motions listed in clause 21.1 (b)-(f) and, if the motion is seconded, it shall be put forthwith.

21.3 When a debate is adjourned, the Delegate who moves the adjournment shall be the first to speak on the motion when the debate is resumed unless the Delegate advises of no desire to speak on the motion. Where this occurs, the President shall then call for further speakers, with the exception of those Delegates who have previously spoken (unless the meeting otherwise agrees).

22. RESCISSION OF RESOLUTION

22.1 At the same Meeting
Unless a greater majority is required for a particular kind of decision under the Standing Orders or the Constitution (in which event that shall be the majority required), the meeting may, by Simple Majority at the same Meeting at which it is passed, rescind or alter a resolution if all Delegates who were present at the time when the original resolution was passed are present.

22.2 At a future Meeting
Unless a greater majority is required for a particular kind of decision under the Standing Orders or the Constitution (in which event that shall be the majority required), the meeting may rescind or alter a resolution made at an earlier meeting:

(a) by Simple Majority, where the Delegate intending to move the motion has, through the Chief Executive Officer, given written notice of the intended motion to each Delegate at least seven (7) days prior to the Meeting; or
(b) by Absolute Majority, in any other case.

23. METHOD OF TAKING VOTES

The President shall, in taking a vote on any motion or amendment, put the question first in the affirmative, and then in the negative and may do so as often as is necessary to enable formation and declaration of an opinion as to whether the affirmative or the negative has the majority on the voices or by a show of hands or by an electronic voting system.

24. DIVISION

Immediately upon a vote being taken and a declaration of the final result by the President, a Delegate may call for a division.

25. ALL DELEGATES TO VOTE

25.1 A Delegate present at the Meeting when a question is put shall vote on the question.

25.2 Each Delegate shall be entitled to exercise one deliberative vote on any matter considered.

26. PRESIDENT'S RIGHT TO VOTE

The President shall have a casting vote only.

27. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

27.1 In cases of urgent necessity or whilst the meeting is sitting behind closed doors, any of these Standing Orders may be suspended on a motion duly made and seconded, but that motion shall not be declared carried unless a Simple Majority of Delegates have voted in favour of the motion.

27.2 Any Delegates moving the suspension of a Standing Order shall state the object of the motion, but discussion shall not otherwise take place.

28. NO ADVERSE REFLECTION ON ASSOCIATION

A Delegate shall not reflect adversely upon a resolution of the Association, except on a motion that the resolution be rescinded.

29. NO ADVERSE REFLECTION ON DELEGATE

A Delegate shall not reflect adversely upon the character or actions of another Delegate nor impute any motive to a Delegate unless the Association resolves, without debate, that the question then before the Association cannot otherwise be adequately considered.

30. MINUTES

30.1 The Chief Executive Officer is to cause minutes of the Meeting to be kept and preserved.

30.2 The minutes of a Meeting are to be submitted to the next Meeting for confirmation.

30.3 Copies of the previous Meeting minutes will be supplied to all Delegates prior to the Meeting.

WALGA

Attachment 2: Minutes of the 2025 Annual General Meeting
Return to Agenda item 5

WALGA
Annual General Meeting
Minutes

Tuesday, 23 September 2025

Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre
21 Mounts Bay Road, Perth WA

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 OPENING

The Chair declared the meeting open at 3:01pm.

2 RECORD OF APOLOGIES

- Shire of Denmark
- Shire of Kojonup
- Shire of Ngaanyatjarraku
- Shire of Peppermint Grove
- Shire of Pingelly
- Shire of Sandstone
- Shire of Trayning
- Shire of Westonia

3 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Nil.

4 ADOPTION OF AGM STANDING ORDERS

The Annual General Meeting Standing Orders were contained within the Agenda.

RESOLUTION

Moved: **Cr Paul Kelly, Town of Claremont**
Seconded: **President Paige McNeil, Shire of Mundaring**

That the WALGA Annual General Meeting Standing Orders be adopted with the exception of section 12.5 to allow for the use of mobile phones during the meeting.

CARRIED

5 CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

The Minutes of the 2024 WALGA Annual General Meeting were contained within the Agenda, along with a report on the action taken on the 2024 AGM resolutions.

RESOLUTION

Moved: **Cr Paul Kelly, Town of Claremont**
Seconded: **President Chris Antonio, Shire of Northam**

That the Minutes of the 2024 WALGA Annual General Meeting be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.

CARRIED

6 ADOPTION OF ANNUAL REPORT

The 2024-2025 Annual Report, including the 2024-2025 Audited Financial Statements, was distributed to Members separately.

RESOLUTION

Moved: **Cr Karen Wheatland, City of Melville**
Seconded: **President Chris Antonio, Shire of Northam**

That the 2024-2025 Annual Report, including the 2024-2025 Audited Financial Statements, be received.

CARRIED

7 CONSIDERATION OF EXECUTIVE AND MEMBER MOTIONS

7.1 PROVISION OF MEDICAL SERVICES IN REMOTE AND VERY REMOTE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Shire of Lake Grace

MOTION

Moved: President Cr Len Armstrong, Shire of Lake Grace
Seconded: Cr Peter Callaghan, Shire of Gnowangerup

That WALGA calls on the Western Australian Government and WA Grants Commission to:

1. **increase the Medical Facilities Cost Adjuster component of the Financial Assistance Grants to Local Governments; and**
2. **recalculate distributions to those Local Governments in remote and very remote locations that are providing block cash payments to attract and retain general practitioners to allow affected Councils to redirect ratepayer funds to Local Government responsibilities.**

AMENDMENT

Moved: Cr Darren King, Shire of Boyup Brook
Seconded: President Cr Les Price, Shire of Cue

To amend point 2 as follows:

2. **recalculate distributions to those Local Governments ~~in remote and very remote locations~~ that are providing block cash payments to attract and retain general practitioners to allow affected Council to redirect ratepayer funds to Local Government responsibilities.**

THE AMENDMENT WAS PUT AND CARRIED

AMENDMENT

Moved: President Cr Kristy D'Aprile, Shire of Katanning
Seconded: Cr Scott Crosby, Shire of Kent

To amend point 1 as follow:

1. **increase <u>the total funding and then</u> the Medical Facilities Cost Adjuster component of the Financial Assistance Grants to Local Governments; and**
2. **recalculate distributions to those Local Governments that are providing block cash payments to attract and retain general practitioners to allow affected Council to redirect ratepayer funds to Local Government responsibilities.**

THE AMENDMENT WAS PUT AND CARRIED

THE SUBSTANTIVE MOTION AS AMENDED WAS PUT

That WALGA calls on the Western Australian Government and WA Grants Commission to:

1. **increase the total funding and then the Medical Facilities Cost Adjuster component of the Financial Assistance Grants to Local Governments; and**
2. **recalculate distributions to those Local Governments that are providing block cash payments to attract and retain general practitioners to allow affected Council to redirect ratepayer funds to Local Government responsibilities.**

CARRIED

MEMBER COMMENT
The Shire of Lake Grace is the lead Shire in the "Local Government Rural Health Funding Alliance" which also consists of the Shires of Gnowangerup, Jerramungup, Ravensthorpe, Narembeen, Jerramungup and Kojonup.

The Shire of Lake Grace, on behalf of the Alliance successfully presented a motion at the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) National General Assembly, calling on the Australian Government to increase Financial Assistance Grants and recalibrate their distribution to better support rural councils funding general practitioner (GP) services. The motion was carried unanimously.

Remote and very remote Local Governments are filling a critical gap in primary healthcare. Local Governments are the third sphere of government yet are delivering on behalf of the State and Commonwealth. These Local Governments are stepping into primary healthcare provision due to insufficient Commonwealth and State financial support to GPs and specific incentives for remote and very remote communities. This is not their legislated responsibility, yet these six Local Governments are contributing over $1.475 million annually in cash, plus housing, vehicles, and surgeries to attract and retain GPs where there is geographical isolation, small populations and diverse health needs.

The Medical Facilities Cost Adjustor under the Financial Assistance Grants in WA is calculated and distributed by the WA Grants Commission. It recognizes only 82% of a 3-year rolling average, capped at $85,000–$100,000. It does not reflect actual costs, which often exceed $200,000–$300,000 per GP per community. It then leaves a significant funding gap (e.g. Shire of Kojonup received $0 despite spending $250,000 as it was provided to a third party local not-for-profit to engage the GP and Practice).

The Shire of Lake Grace is requesting block funding and a recalculation criterion to remote and very remote local governments, distributed via the Financial Assistance Grants (Medical Facilities Cost Adjustor). This would reduce the unsustainable burden on ratepayer funds, ensure continuity of care and return ratepayer funds to core local government services.

These Local Governments are not creating the problem — rather they are solving it. They are collaborating regionally, implementing multi-site rural generalist models that requires economies of scale as a group, and ensuring reasonable travel distances for locals to GPs. Without their intervention, communities would face worsening health outcomes and risks to their economic viability.

This motion aligns with the top four priorities identified by band 4 WALGA member Local Governments as requiring solutions in 2025.

The comparative Government health spend between major city residents and rural and remote Australia is $848 per person less in the regions (NRHA). People in the bush are 2.9 times more likely to be hospitalized; 2.8 times more likely to be hospitalized for reasons that are potentially preventable and 2.7 times more likely to die from potentially avoidable causes.[8]

Life expectancy in remote areas, compared with major cities is 13 years less for males and 7 years for females.[9] Telehealth is not a viable substitute for resident GPs — it risks deskilling local clinicians and eroding continuity of care.

The Alliance of Councils has prepared a position paper to raise awareness and suggest a solution to attract and retain GPs in their rural and remote communities, where current Commonwealth and State government policy settings are inadequate.

Reference Document

- January 2025 Position Paper – Provision of Remote GP Services

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

Access to primary healthcare is the responsibility of the Australian and State Governments. In some rural and remote areas, the current health system does not provide equitable service. Access to primary health is a critical issue for a large proportion of WALGA members. Local Government support of primary healthcare services creates a financial impost and diverts funding from other Local Government services and functions.

In 2023, WALGA commissioned Rural Health West (RHW) to survey WA Local Governments to ascertain the extent to which Local Governments were providing financial or in-kind support to secure primary healthcare services. The Survey Report provides a comprehensive dataset on the cost, nature, and geographical location of Local Government support, as well as evidence that Local Government support was predominantly focused on General Practice services.

This issue has also been identified as a priority for the sector at a number of forums, including the October 2024 Band 4 Local Governments meeting and the May 2025 Zone meetings. WALGA has also been working with the Local Government Rural Health Alliance in the development of their advocacy.

WALGA has begun a renewed advocacy campaign, with targeted asks of the Australian and State Governments to improve access to primary health services in rural and remote areas, to remove the need for Local Government intervention.

A revised Rural and Remote Health Advocacy Position aligned to the finding and recommendations of the Survey Report is tabled for the September 2025 State Council. The proposed revisions provide a stronger position on the responsibility of the Australian and

[8] Royal Flying Doctors Service, 2023
[9] Royal Flying Doctors Service, 2023

State Governments for primary healthcare provision and addressing the cost impost on Local Government, compelled to intervene where the current health system is failing.

The revised position aligns with the wider healthcare reform platform to enable advocacy partnerships and to provide a level of flexibility for the advocacy campaign in response to Government announcements.

The Lake Grace motion and WALGAs ongoing advocacy align on the need for financial reimbursement for Local Government support for essential primary health care services. WALGA's approach, does not specifying how reimbursement to Local Governments should be undertaken, or which Local Governments should be eligible. This approach aims to provide flexibility to achieve the same outcome, such as utilising the upcoming renewal of the National Health Reform Agreement.

7.2 HOMELESSNESS – SHORT-TERM ACCOMMODATION SOLUTIONS

City of Kalgoorlie Boulder

MOTION

Moved: **Mayor Glenn Wilson, City of Kalgoorlie Boulder**
Seconded: **President Ron Chambers, Shire of Esperance**

That WALGA advocate to the State Government to provide culturally appropriate short-term accommodation options and wrap-around support services that provide sustainable homelessness solutions in regional centres across Western Australia.

AMENDMENT

Moved: **Cr Barry Winmar, City of Kwinana**
Seconded: **Cr Chontelle Stone, City of Cockburn**

That WALGA advocate to the State Government to provide culturally appropriate short-term accommodation options and wrap-around support services that provide sustainable homelessness solutions in <u>all Local Governments</u> across Western Australia.

THE AMENDMENT WAS PUT AND CARRIED

THE SUBSTANTIVE MOTION AS AMENDED WAS PUT

That WALGA advocate to the State Government to provide culturally appropriate short-term accommodation options and wrap-around support services that provide sustainable homelessness solutions in all Local Governments across Western Australia.

CARRIED

MEMBER COMMENT

Shelter WA's Policy Position on Ending Homelessness in WA highlights the overrepresentation of Aboriginal people in homelessness services and calls for short-stay options and self-determination in service delivery. The motion reinforces the importance of Housing First principles and the need for coordinated responses; specifically, that all governments ensure people with lived experience of homelessness are central to the design and delivery of homelessness services.

The motion highlights a growing disconnect between the practical realities faced by Local Government in the requirement for short-term accommodation for First Nations people in their communities. WALGA's advocacy position on homelessness acknowledges that Local Governments can support responses to homelessness through planning, health, and community development functions, it does not consider them as lead agencies. Local Governments are increasingly forced to lead this space due to the lack of a coordinated state-wide response and support.

Historically, many regional centres and cities have been meeting places for different Aboriginal communities with these areas offering a place where individuals can meet to conduct cultural business, socialise with family and friends, shop, and attend medical and other appointments. While some stay with family and friends, in many cases in overcrowded conditions, others are street present. Additional risks are posed for those with a limited experience of living in larger regional cities.

Homelessness data is typically captured through the Australian Census which does not accurately capture short-term or seasonal homelessness. Discussions with other WA regional Local Governments has identified that significant numbers of remote Aboriginal community members travel to regional centres and cities especially during the summer period. These Local Governments and their stakeholders are ill-equipped to support their needs ranging from temporary culturally appropriate and safe accommodation to food provision.

Typically, when Local Governments step up in this area, state-funded systems often pull back, particularly in regional cities. This is an understandable consequence of under-resourced and failing systems but does not advance efforts to solve street presence or seasonal homelessness.

While Local Governments interact closely with people experiencing homelessness and have valuable local knowledge, they do not have the resources, funding, or specialist workforce to lead homelessness responses especially in regional areas when street present people increase during particular times of the year. In the All Paths Leads to Home, State Government acknowledges this and views Local Governments as key partners in coordinating local, place-based efforts and facilitating referrals to appropriate services.

The State Government, primarily through the Department of Communities, is responsible for leading and funding homelessness responses, including the provision of social and affordable housing and specialist services. It coordinates with other State agencies across justice, health, mental health, and education to address the systemic causes of homelessness — functions that are beyond the capacity and remit of local governments. However, homelessness is not included in this remit as, by definition, the Department provides homes in remote communities.

The State Government recognises that effective responses require partnerships. It seeks to leverage the local knowledge, planning tools, and community connections of Local Governments, while retaining responsibility for funding, policy, and service coordination which does not include short-term accommodation for visiting Aboriginal community members across regional WA.

In 2021, the Australian Local Government Association co-signed a landmark national agreement to close the gap, setting targets in education, employment, health, justice, safety, housing, land and waters, and Indigenous language preservation. The agreement includes a target to increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in appropriately sized (not overcrowded) housing to 88%.

The 2021 Census showed there were 122,000 people in Australia experiencing homelessness on Census night – 48 people per 10,000. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were disproportionately homeless – 307 out of 10,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were experiencing homelessness.

However, neither the Closing the Gap agreement, the Closing the Gap 2024 Annual Report and Commonwealth 2025 Implementation Plan, nor the 2024 National Housing and Homeless Plan Summary Report include any consideration for addressing transitional homelessness – only overcrowding issues.

The City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder recently completed a collaborative, landmark national study on Anti-social Behaviour and Transitional Aboriginal Homelessness. The research project included engagement with local and state government agencies and key providers in over eight locations in Western Australia, the Northern Territory, and South Australia, to assess existing strategies, pinpoint gaps, and explore potential solutions that enhance local government efforts in this regard.

A Housing and Homelessness motion was raised by the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder at the 2025 Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) National General Assembly in Canberra in July and was approved for submission to the Federal Government for consideration.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

Aboriginal Short Stay Accommodation (Short Stays) are designed to provide safe, culturally appropriate and affordable short-term accommodation for Aboriginal people who travel to regional centres to access services, or for business, cultural or family reasons.

There are three existing Aboriginal Short Stays operating in regional Western Australia: Broome, Derby and Kalgoorlie. The State Government acknowledges that these Short Stays are in high demand. Planning is underway by the Department of Housing and Works to develop an additional three new Short Stays in Geraldton, Kununurra and Perth.

Short Stays are a response to homelessness. WALGA does not currently have an advocacy position on short-stay accommodation, but does have a Homelessness Advocacy Position. WALGA is currently reviewing the Homelessness Advocacy Position as part of a regular advocacy position review process. To inform the review, WALGA is currently surveying all Local Governments to gather information on the extent of Local Government engagement with homelessness and the extent of services, including accommodation options, available within their Local Government areas.

7.3 REVISION OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ADMINISTRATION) REGULATIONS 1996 IN RELATION TO THE HOLDING OF AND ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS BY ELECTRONIC MEANS

Shire of Dardanup

MOTION

Moved: President Cr Tyrrell Gardiner, Shire of Dardanup
Seconded: Cr Ellen Lilly, Shire of Dardanup

That WALGA advocates for a change to the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996 in relation to the holding of and attendance at meetings by electronic means to allow elected members to attend more than 50% of meetings remotely, only if each instance more than 50% in the rolling year is justified and approved by the Mayor/President or Deputy Mayor/Deputy President.

AMENDMENT

Moved: Cr Lewis Hutton, City of Joondalup
Seconded: President Cr Rossco Foulkes-Taylor, Shire of Murchison

That WALGA advocates for a change to the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996 in relation to the holding of and attendance at meetings by electronic means to allow <u>the Local Government to determine the number of meetings that can be attended electronically.</u>

LOST

PROCEDURAL MOTION

Moved: Cr Karen Wheatland, City of Kwinana
Seconded: President Ron Chambers, Shire of Esperance

That the question be now put.

CARRIED

THE SUBSTANTIVE MOTION WAS PUT

That WALGA advocates for a change to the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996 in relation to the holding of and attendance at meetings by electronic means to allow elected members to attend more than 50% of meetings remotely, only if each instance more than 50% in the rolling year is justified and approved by the Mayor/President or Deputy Mayor/Deputy President.

LOST

MEMBER COMMENT

The Local Government Administration Regulations 1996 provides as follows:

14C. Attendance at meetings by electronic means may be authorised (Act s. 5.25(1)(ba))

(3) The mayor, president or council cannot authorise a member to attend a meeting (the proposed meeting) under subregulation (2)(b) <u>if the member's attendance at the proposed meeting under that authorisation would result in the member attending more than half of the meetings</u> (including the proposed meeting) of the council or committee, in the relevant period, under an authorisation under subregulation (2)(b)

Additionally, the regulations also set out:

14D. Meetings held by electronic means (Act s. 5.25(1)(ba))

(2A) The council cannot authorise a meeting (the proposed meeting) to be held under subregulation (2)(c) <u>if holding the proposed meeting under that authorization would result in more than half of the meetings</u> (including the proposed meeting) of the council or committee, in the relevant period, being held under an authorization under subregulation (2)(c).

<u>(Emphasis added)</u>

Therefore, under the current regulations neither a Council nor a Councillor can hold or attend more than 50% of the meetings electronically.

This motion is proposed in response to the unique circumstances within the Shire of Dardanup, and potentially other local governments, who due to their professional commitments, such as FIFO (Fly In Fly Out), or other circumstances, may be required to work away from the local area for extended period - sometimes up to 50% of their time.

The motion seeks to address the challenges faced by Councillors when taking leave or managing personal, family or work commitments. It aims to ensure that these circumstances do not hinder their ability to effectively represent and serve the community. By supporting this motion, the Council can implement measures that provide flexibility in these situations, ultimately allowing Councillors to fulfil their duties without unnecessary disruption.

The intent of the motion it to ensure that the work of the Council continues to operate effectively and efficiently during periods when individual Councillors may be temporarily unavailable (in person) i.e. having a Councillor/s who works away from time to time or even 50% of the time. This motion will also assist with when Councillors who already work away go on leave or have other family commitments.

By implementing greater flexibility, such as expanding access to remote and electronic Council and Committee meeting participation, the Council can support ongoing engagement, reduce disruption to Council operations, and ensure inclusive representation from a broader demographic of elected members.

The demographic of elected and potential elected members to Shire Councils has changed and is evolving. If we want to encourage participation, we need to adapt to the way we engage and allow engagement.

Financial, physical, employment and locational restrictions need to be taken into account for the engagement ability of elected members to advocate for their rate payer base.

The current percentage provision of remote / electronic meeting ability available, while acceptable for the majority of elected members, is insufficient for the minority of elected members who are engaged, though restriction to contribute through logistical or bureaucratic barriers.

Key considerations should be given to workforce realities i.e. FIFO or workers with demanding employment schedules; diverse demographics, equity in participation and encouraging engagement.

This demographic change includes new mothers and parents of young children, FIFO workers, Shift workers & Disabled or Mobility impaired. All of these groups can and do provide diverse opinions and experience to the overall group of elected members.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

Regulations 14C and 14D of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996* were introduced in 2022 to provide flexibility for the sector but reflect an expectation that Local Governments should prioritise in person meetings and in person Council Member attendance. Under regulation 14C a Council or Committee Member may attend a meeting by electronic means only if authorised by the Mayor / President or Council. Electronic attendance cannot be authorised if it would exceed the 50% cap.

It is important that Council Meetings remain accessible for members of the community to attend and participate. In many cases, in person meetings may best achieve this outcome. However, the introduction of livestreaming requirements for Class 1 and 2 Local Governments, and widespread adoption by many smaller Local Governments, has changed the way the community accesses and engages with Council Meetings. In addition, Local Government experience to date indicates that Council Members are able to effectively participate in meetings when attending electronically.

Removing the 50% cap on electronic attendance could enable Councils to make a policy decision regarding the balance of electronic and in person attendance that best meets the expectations of their community and the needs of Council Members. This could support greater diversity in candidates and Council Members and may also assist Local Governments seeking independent persons as members of their Audit Risk and Improvement Committees. Council, and the Mayor or President as the decision maker, would be accountable to the community for the decision to authorise additional electronic attendance.

7.4 RATING EXEMPTION ADVOCACY MOTION

City of Bunbury

RESOLUTION

Moved: **Cr Karen Steele, City of Bunbury**
Seconded: **President Cr Tony Dean, Shire of Nannup**

That WALGA, in addition to its current advocacy positions 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 relating to rating exemptions, advocate to the WA Government for the introduction of a reimbursement model, whereby the WA Government repays Local Government the greater of:

1. 75% of the value of rates lost in applying the charitable purposes exemption; or
2. 1% of the total rate revenue of the Local Government.

CARRIED

MEMBER COMMENT

The City of Bunbury faces significant financial impacts from rate exemptions granted under Section 6.26(2) of the *Local Government Act*, with 443 properties currently exempt due to charitable or religious purposes. This represents a substantial annual revenue loss of $1.67 million (3.4% of total rates), affecting the City's capacity to deliver community services and facilities.

WALGA has established advocacy positions calling for reform, particularly focusing on the need to review rating exemption categories and address the expanding scope of charitable purpose definitions. Of particular concern is that exemptions have extended beyond their original intention, now encompassing non-charitable commercial activities of charitable organizations.

This matter requires urgent attention as the current system creates an inequitable burden on other ratepayers and impacts the financial sustainability of Local Governments in delivering essential community services.

The City of Bunbury currently has 443 properties with 85 organisations that have a rate exemption under Section 6.26(2) of the *Local Government Act* due to properties being used for charitable or religious purposes. This equates to a loss of rate revenue of $1,667,522 in 2024/25, or 3.4% of rates which has a significant impact on the City to fund services and facilities for the Bunbury community. Of these properties, 407 ($1,227,021) are used for charitable purposes.

The following is a comparison with other known Local Governments (as at October 2024).

Council	Number of Rate Exempt Properties	Total Number of Properties	Percentage of Rate Exempt Properties	Loss of Revenue from Rate Exemptions	Total Rate Revenue	Percentage of Loss Revenue
City of Bunbury	443	17,194	2.6%	$1,667,522	$49,690,996	3.4%
City of Busselton	171	25,327	0.7%	$1,296,212	$64,960,318	2.0%
City of Geraldton	158	19,487	0.8%	$1,700,000	$54,080,426	3.1%
Shire of Harvey	44	13,245	0.3%	$99,000	$29,482,269	0.3%
City of Wanneroo	374	88,589	0.4%	Not Provided		

WALGA already has four documented Advocacy Positions relating to this matter, the two most applicable being:

2.1.1 Rating Exemptions Review
A broad review be conducted into the justification and fairness of all rating exemption categories currently prescribed under Section 6.26 of the Local Government Act 1995; and

2.1.2 Rating Exemptions Charitable Purposes
1. *Amend the Local Government Act 1995 to clarify that Independent Living Units should only be exempt from rates where they qualify under the Commonwealth Aged Care Act 1997;*
2. *Either:*
    a. *amend the charitable organisations section of the Local Government Act 1995 to eliminate exemptions for commercial (non-charitable) business activities of charitable organisations; or*
    b. *establish a compensatory fund for Local Governments, similar to the pensioner discount provisions, if the State Government believes charitable organisations remain exempt from payment of Local Government rates.*
3. *Request that a broad review be conducted into the justification and fairness of all rating exemption categories currently prescribed under Section 6.26 of the Local Government Act 1995.*

Exemptions under this section of the Act have extended beyond the original intention and now provide rating exemptions for non-charitable purposes, which increase the rate burden to other ratepayers. It is considered that in the absence of amendments to better define 'charitable purposes', that the WA Government considers reimbursement to local governments once exemptions exceed a defined threshold, which could be set based on Local Government band levels.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

In addition to the WALGA Advocacy Positions 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 as mentioned in the Member comment for this item, WALGA also has the following relevant positions on rating exemptions:

2.1.3 Rating Exemptions – Department of Housing: Leasing to Charitable Organisations

Position Statement	That WALGA advocate to the Minister for Housing to include in the lease agreements with charitable institutions that they must pay Local Government rates on behalf of the Department of Housing recognising the services Local Government provides to its tenants.

2.1.4 Rating Exemptions – Rate Equivalency Payments

Position Statement	Legislation should be amended so rate equivalency payments made by LandCorp and other Government Trading Entities are made to the relevant Local Governments instead of the State Government.

2.1.5 Rating Restrictions – State Agreement Acts

Position Statement	Resource projects covered by State Agreement Acts should be liable for Local Government rates.

7.5 RATEABILITY OF MISCELLANEOUS LICENSES

Shire of Mount Magnet

RESOLUTION

Moved: **President Cr James McGorman, Shire of Mount Magnet**
Seconded: **President Cr Rossco Foulkes-Taylor, Shire of Murchison**

That WALGA:

1. **Formally oppose any move by the Local Government Minister to introduce amendments to the *Local Government Act* to restrict the application of rates on Miscellaneous Licenses.**
2. **Develop an advocacy position on sector consultation prior to any amendment to the *Local Government Act*.**
3. **Undertake a financial analysis of the cost to the Mining Industry of the rating of Miscellaneous Licenses compared to the benefit to the Local Government sector.**

CARRIED

MEMBER COMMENT

The *Local Government Act 1995* s 6.26 (1) sets out the intent that all occupied land utilized for purposes other than charitable, benevolent, or other purposes of the Crown is rateable.

Subsequent to the enactment of the *Local Government Act 1995*, significant amendments were made to the terms of a Miscellaneous License in the *Mining Act 1978* through the *Mining Amendment Act 1998*.

Miscellaneous Licenses are one of a number of tenement types granted in respect to mineral resource recovery by the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety (LGIRS). The defined purposes for the grant of a Miscellaneous License is set out in the Mining Regulations 1981 r 42B, of which constitute significant infrastructure and construction necessary for the operations necessary to a mining enterprise.

The *Mining Amendment Act 1998* amended the term of the Miscellaneous license from a 5-year term with further two 5-year possible extensions; to a 21-year term with two possible further 21-year term extensions.

This amendment was made to explicitly facilitate the construction of permanent infrastructure – an evolution that clearly signals a shift in their functional and economic significance.

The introduction of the Fringe Benefits Tax in 1986 had a devastating impact on regional communities across Australia as Fly in Fly out work took hold, and unrated remote work camps replaced local workers, while often increasing traffic on Local Government owned assets such as airports and short stay accommodation intended for tourists, but used to house overflow crews.

Justice Solomon stated in his deliberations that:

> *"It is also noteworthy that the local government has a substantive role to play in the grant of a miscellaneous licence over any land (including Crown land). Given that a miscellaneous licence is often used for the development of significant infrastructure, the need for the involvement of local government is self-evident. Even a cursory perusal of the items listed in reg 42B indicates that it refers to facilities and infrastructure that would ordinarily be of direct concern to a local government.*
>
> *It is noteworthy that the role of local government in the granting of other mining tenements is more limited. That feature of the Mining Act 1978 suggests that local government is likely to be more concerned or directly engaged with the activity on a miscellaneous licence than on other mining tenements."*

<u>Road Agreements</u>
The Local Government in which a Miscellaneous License is held for the purpose of road construction, will often enter an agreement for maintenance of that road. The agreement is voluntary in basis, however, the cost of drafting and regulating compliance with the agreement is reported by many Local Governments to be both financially and resource hungry.

There have been reports made by Local Governments of agreements taking years to be completed, of costs to take legal action to enforce compliance, and the regular inspections to ensure undertaking are met.

These costs are outside the scope of road agreements and borne by the Local Government.

Much of the resource fields of Western Australia are located in Band 4 Local Governments, in very remote areas. While the Mining Company has access to legal and corporate resources, Local Governments are under-resourced and inequal in the negotiations.

<u>Mining Camps</u>
Significant environmental health services are provided to remote Mining Camps by Local Government, including commercial kitchen licensing, inspection and regulation; sewerage/wastewater treatment systems and monitoring, inspection and compliance; swimming pool inspections including water monitoring; all other services offered to a town-based business, with the cost of distance to travel and the complication of many more residents.

During an epidemic or outbreak of communicable disease, the Local Government in remote areas holds the statutory responsibility for incident control.

This service is increasingly difficult to resource with qualified officers choosing not to live and work remotely.

Mining Camps situated on a Miscellaneous License or Mining Lease have on occasion been approved by the Minister as rateable under the GRV methodology, upon application by the Local Government. This area of land is excised from the tenement for the purpose of the valuation.

The process for this to occur is protracted, requires the Mining Camp to have been operational for 12 months already and is at the discretion of the Minister. The Mining Company is required to provide input to the decision in the interest of fairness.

These already GRV-rated camps would be exempt from any rating of miscellaneous licenses as they have already been excised from the tenement.

<u>Pipelines, powerlines, conveyor systems, tunnel, bridge, aerodrome, communications facilities, power generation and transmission facilities, storage or transportation facility for minerals or mineral concentrates, and pump stations</u>
Each of the above purposes conveys a restricted access to the land on which they are constructed by tourists, small prospectors and local Traditional Owners. In many cases they are constructed on an underlying pastoral property which also pays rates on the same parcel.

<u>Borefield, bore</u>
These purposes require less restriction of access, but are also valued at a lower rate under the *Valuation of Land Act* than other purposes.

On this one piece of land, for each of the purposes above, the pastoral activity is curtailed despite the cost of the pastoral lease remitted to the State Treasury, and the rates to the Local Government.

The rateable value of a Miscellaneous License under the *Valuation of Land Act* is five times the rent on the tenement which is set out in the Mining Regulations 1981. Currently the rent on a Miscellaneous License is $27 per ha, with the exception of a license granted for the search of ground water which is valued at $1.12 per ha.

Rent payable on an underlying exploration license is $1.55 per ha.

<u>Tenement holder</u> remits to -

- **Treasury** – rent on the exploration license, for the Miscellaneous License, (in addition to royalty applicable on the principle Mining Tenement activity).
- **Local Government** – rates on the exploration license only.

<u>The Pastoralist</u> remits to –

- **Treasury** – rent on the pastoral lease
- **Local Government** – rates on the pastoral lease.

On occasion the Mining Company will provide extra funds through a Community Benefit scheme to a community through philanthropic gifting which is spent in accordance with the ideological values of the board, land access purposes, and often to charities or causes that are outside of the regions in which the minerals are extracted through ESG programs. These donations do not correlate to rigorous statutory Integrated Planning and Reporting process undertaken by the Local Government.

The Local Government is increasingly constrained financially and further burdened by compliance with regulations – particularly in the regions where the minerals are extracted. Service provision that falls within the statutory scope of the State Government is being devolved to Local Government, including housing for State employees, medical services, security to community, provision of agency services such as Transport, Health, Human Services. These are by and large unfunded and under resourced by the State Government.

Planning options are significantly constrained through land banking of Mining Companies with tenements in townsites and on town commons.

Conversely, the GDP provided by the Mining Industry in Australia for quarter 1 of 2025 alone reached $84.1B.

This inequity of wealth distribution has been evidenced through recent actions taken by Councils to increase rates to adequately fund the deficiency in their budget in accordance with the *Local Government Act* requirements. At that time, the Minister for Local Government publicly stated that the proposal "did not meet the values of consistency, equity and fairness".

In handing down his decision, Justice Solomon concluded with

> *"It is plain from the terms of the provisions referred to above [s6.26] that the object of imposing rates is to raise revenue for local government to undertake its activities. Specifically, the imposition of rates allows a local government to make up any budget deficiency. The Act thus reflects a direct link between the imposition of rates and the local government's ability to undertake its activities. As noted above, the local government plays a direct role and function in the grant of a miscellaneous licence. Plainly, the more significant the infrastructure proposed to occupy the miscellaneous licence, the greater will be the role played and the activity undertaken by the local government. In my view, a construction that exempts land from rates which is the subject of a miscellaneous licence and is occupied by significant infrastructure, sits most uncomfortably with the plain object of the statutory provisions concerning the local government's power to impose rates.*
>
> *The second factor stems from the wording of s 6.26(2) itself. The exemptions in s 6.26(2)(a) - (k) relate overwhelmingly to charitable, benevolent, religious and public or civic purposes. That sits harmoniously with the theme of s 6.26(2)(a)(i). A construction that would exempt from rating, land that may be occupied by critical infrastructure facilitating the creation of profits for private interests, runs counter to the charitable and civic theme of s 6.26(2).*
>
> *In my view, the Shire's construction provides greater harmony with the relevant object of the rating provisions of the LGA. "*

The judiciary—our independent and impartial arbiter of legislative intent—has clearly affirmed the rateability of Miscellaneous Licenses, not only through statutory interpretation but also through a reasoned understanding of their practical implications.

To disregard this position through swift legislative action, without sector wide consultation is to undermine the very principles of legal clarity and administrative fairness upon which our governance is built.

The AGM is requested to support the actions taken by the Shire of Mount Magnet to rate Miscellaneous Licenses in accordance with the judgement recently handed down by the Supreme Court, and further request WALGA to undertake a full financial analysis of the cost to the mining industry of this action, and the financial benefit to Local Government in Western Australia.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

At the time of the distribution of this Agenda, State Council has not considered an item relating to Miscellaneous Licences.

However, item 8.2 in the September 2025 State Council Agenda relates to rating of Miscellaneous Licences. The recommendation in that report is that WALGA:

1. Advocate for Local Governments to continue to have the ability to rate miscellaneous licences under the *Mining Act 1978*; and
2. Oppose legislative amendments that seek to exempt occupied miscellaneous licence land from rating.
3. Continue to advocate for a broad review to be conducted into the justification and fairness of all rating exemption categories currently prescribed under section 6.26 of the *Local Government Act 1995*.

This item will be considered by State Council at the meeting on 5 September.

In relation to point 2 of the motion –
As a matter of course WALGA always advocates for consultation on legislative and regulatory amendments, however formalising this position has merit.

In relation to point 3 of the motion –
WALGA would need to determine the scope and cost of this analysis before considering in the context of WALGA's existing budget.

8 CLOSURE

Upon the completion of business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 4:11pm.

Attachment 3: Action Taken on Resolutions of the 2025 Annual General Meeting
Return to Agenda item 5

2025 AGM Resolution	Comment/Update
7.1 Provision of Medical Services in Remote and Very Remote Local Government That WALGA calls on the Western Australian Government and WA Grants Commission to: 1. increase the total funding and then the Medical Facilities Cost Adjuster component of the Financial Assistance Grants to Local Governments; and 2. recalculate distributions to those Local Governments that are providing block cash payments to attract and retain general practitioners to allow affected Council to redirect ratepayer funds to Local Government responsibilities.	This item was referred by State Council to the People and Place Advisory Group for further work in December 2025. Improving access to primary healthcare services in rural and remote areas remains an advocacy priority for WALGA, supported by the WALGA 2025 General Practice Support Survey Report published in January 2026. This advocacy priority is also reflected in the current Federal and State Budget Submissions and aligned to the revised Advocacy Position 3.2.2 Rural and Remote Healthcare Services endorsed by State Council in September 2025. WALGA is exploring opportunities for partnership advocacy on this matter with health sector stakeholders. This work includes developing solution options. Progress will be shared with State Council in due course. WALGA has raised the sector's concerns directly with the Minister for Health and has engaged with the Office's advisors, who have expressed interest in developing solutions and the opportunity to work collaboratively to raise these with the Australian Government. The provision of medical services in remote and very remote Local Governments is an issue across jurisdictions and WALGA is concurrently advocating to the Australian Government and keen to explore opportunities for co-commissioning of place-based models.

7.2 Homelessness – Short-Term Accommodation Solutions That WALGA advocate to the State Government to provide culturally appropriate short-term accommodation options and wrap-around support services that provide sustainable homelessness solutions in all Local Governments across Western Australia.	This item was referred by State Council to the People and Place Advisory Group for further work in December 2025. Following consultation with the sector, to address the range of issues being experienced, a new Advocacy Position was developed. State Council endorsed the new Homelessness Advocacy Position 3.11 in May 2026: *WALGA calls on the Western Australian and Australian Governments to provide leadership, support and sustainable, long-term funding to prevent and respond to homelessness, in particular by:* *1. Ensuring specialist homelessness services are responsive to local need, place-based and people-centred.* *2. Investing in crisis accommodation, social and affordable housing and wraparound services.* *3. Strengthening homelessness data collection and sharing arrangements to provide current, granular and locally relevant information to inform funding and improve service provision.*
7.4 Rating Exemption Advocacy Position That WALGA, in addition to its current advocacy positions 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 relating to rating exemptions, advocate to the WA Government for the introduction of a reimbursement model, whereby the WA Government repays Local Government the greater of: 1. 75% of the value of rates lost in applying the charitable purposes exemption; or 2. 1% of the total rate revenue of the Local Government.	This item was referred by State Council to the Governance Advisory Group for further work in December 2025. WALGA's current Rating Exemption Advocacy Positions 2.1.1 to 2.1.4 call for a broad review into the justification and fairness of all rating exemption categories, with a particular focus on the charitable purpose's exemption. WALGA included funding for a review of rates in its most recent State Budget submission. Additional concerns regarding rating and rating exemptions have arisen since the 2025 AGM. WALGA will undertake a RFQ process for an external consultant to undertake a review of rating exemptions to

	assist with WALGA's advocacy to the State Government. WALGA has directly raised concerns about rating exemptions with key political stakeholders including directly with the Minister for Local Government, and through submissions including the State Budget Submission and Submission to the Inquiry into Local Government Financial Sustainability.
7.5 Rateability of Miscellaneous Licenses That WALGA: 1. Formally oppose any move by the Local Government Minister to introduce amendments to the *Local Government Act* to restrict the application of rates on Miscellaneous Licenses. 2. Develop an advocacy position on sector consultation prior to any amendment to the *Local Government Act*. 3. Undertake a financial analysis of the cost to the Mining Industry of the rating of Miscellaneous Licenses compared to the benefit to the Local Government sector.	State Council endorsed this resolution in December 2025. Advocacy Position 2.1.18 Rating of Miscellaneous Licences was adopted by State Council in September 2025: *That WALGA:* *1. Advocate for Local Governments to continue to have the ability to rate miscellaneous licences under the Mining Act 1978; and* *2. Oppose legislative amendments that seek to exempt occupied miscellaneous licence land from rating.* *3. Continue to advocate for a broad review to be conducted into the justification and fairness of all rating exemption categories currently prescribed under section 6.26 of the Local Government Act 1995.* WALGA undertook extensive engagement with the State Government and opposition parties including the Liberals, Nationals and the Greens to strongly oppose the legislative amendments, however the Bill was passed in June 2026. WALGA previously advocated for a Regulatory Impact Assessment to be undertaken by the State Government to determine the potential impact on Local Governments affected by this amendment. The financial implications of this amendment are yet to be determined, however, impacted Local Governments and their communities will need to work

	through this process, as a result of the State Government's legislative changes. Notwithstanding this, WALGA continues to advocate for a broad review to be conducted into the justification and fairness of all rating categories currently prescribed in the Act. Rating exemptions have a significant impact on the revenue of Local Government and their ability to provide essential community services.

RISK ASSESSMENT TOOL

OVERALL RISK EVENT: *West Australian Local Government Association Annual General Meeting*

RISK THEME PROFILE:

6 - Community Engagement

RISK ASSESSMENT CONTEXT: Strategic

CONSEQUENCE CATEGORY	RISK EVENT	PRIOR TO TREATMENT OR CONTROL			RISK ACTION PLAN (Treatment or controls proposed)	AFTER TREATEMENT OR CONTROL		
		CONSEQUENCE	LIKELIHOOD	INHERENT RISK RATING		CONSEQUENCE	LIKELIHOOD	RESIDUAL RISK RATING
HEALTH	No risk event identified for this category.	Not Required - No Risk Identified	N/A	N/A	Not required.	Not required.	Not required.	Not required.
FINANCIAL IMPACT	No risk event identified for this category.	Not Required - No Risk Identified	N/A	N/A	Not required.	Not required.	Not required.	Not required.
SERVICE INTERRUPTION	No risk event identified for this category.	Not Required - No Risk Identified	N/A	N/A	Not required.	Not required.	Not required.	Not required.
LEGAL AND COMPLIANCE	No risk event identified for this category.	Not Required - No Risk Identified	N/A	N/A	Not required.	Not required.	Not required.	Not required.
REPUTATIONAL	Participation and support of member Councils at the WALGA AGM is of importance to the industry as a whole.	Minor (2)	Unlikely (2)	Low (1 - 4)	Not required.	Not required.	Not required.	Not required.
ENVIRONMENT	No risk event identified for this category.	Not Required - No Risk Identified	N/A	N/A	Not required.	Not required.	Not required.	Not required.
PROPERTY	No risk event identified for this category.	Not Required - No Risk Identified	N/A	N/A	Not required.	Not required.	Not required.	Not required.