



West Wimmera Shire Council

MINUTES

COUNCIL MEETING

Monday 16 September 2024
11:00 am

Microsoft Teams
You will be sent a meeting
invitation



Councillors and Shire Map



MAYOR
Cr. Tim Meyer



**DEPUTY
MAYOR**
**Cr. Tom
Houlihan**



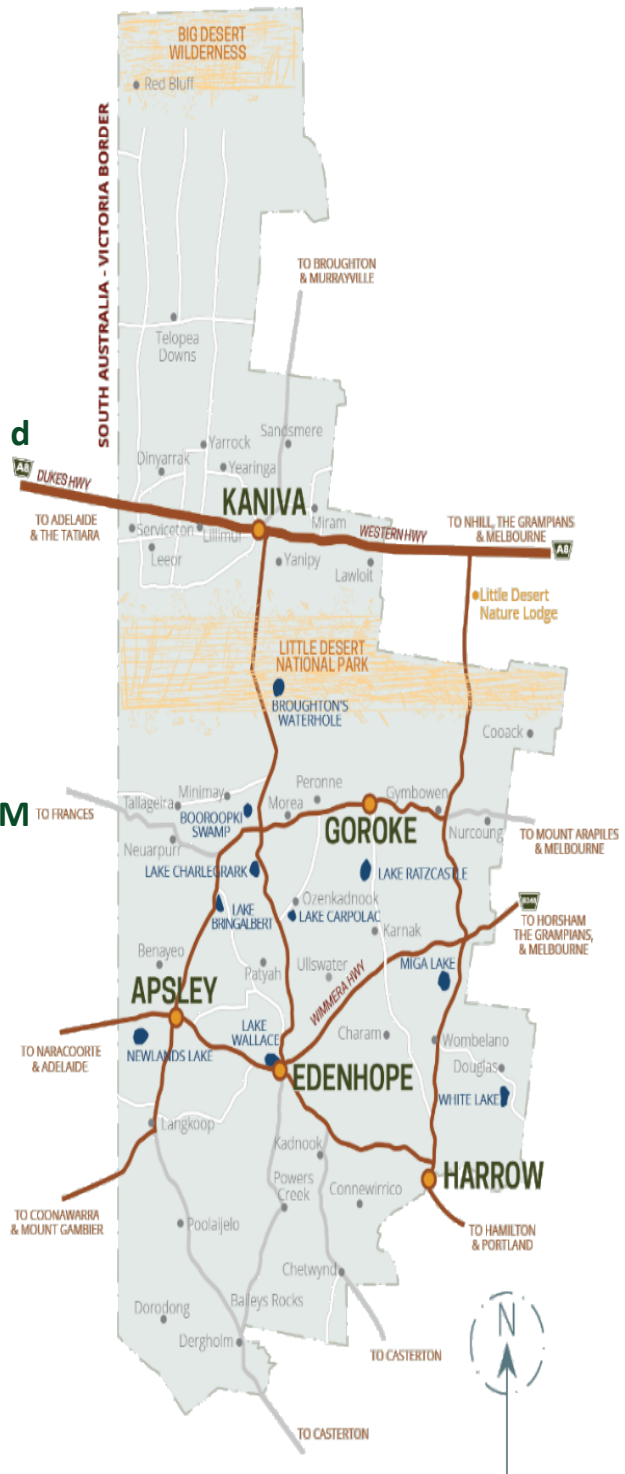
**Cr. Richard
Hicks**



**Cr. Bruce
Meyer OAM**



**Cr. Jodie
Pretlove**





COUNCIL VISION

Our West Wimmera community is healthy, thriving, diverse, harmonious, prosperous, and self-sustaining, with regional and global connectivity.

OUR VALUES

INNOVATIVE – We will proactively respond to change, are optimistic about our future and pursue continuous improvement in everything that we do.

ACCOUNTABLE – We will be responsible, take ownership of our actions and are committed to good governance, excellence, transparency, achievement of goals and advocating for our community

UNITED – We will do everything within our ability to encourage and form trusting relationships, to work together as one team to achieve our goals and advocate for ‘One West Wimmera’.

COLLABORATIVE – We will actively and openly consult with you and work constructively with community organisations, agencies, the business community and other levels of government to our community’s benefit.

OUR GOALS





Purpose of Council meetings

- (1) Council holds scheduled meetings and, when required, unscheduled meetings to conduct the business of Council.
- (2) Council is committed to transparency in decision making and, in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020, Council and Delegated Committee meetings are open to the public and the community are able to attend.
- (3) Meetings will only be closed to members of the public, in accordance with section 66 of the Act, if:
 - (a) there are clear reasons for particular matters to remain confidential; or
 - (b) a meeting is required to be closed for security reasons; or
 - (c) it is necessary to enable the meeting to proceed in an ordinary manner.
- (4) A meeting closed to the public for the reasons outlined in sub-rule 3(b) or 3(c) will continue to be livestreamed. In the event a livestream is not available:
 - (a) the meeting may be adjourned; or
 - (b) a recording of the proceedings may be available on the Council website

The West Wimmera Shire Council Governance Rules set out the meeting procedure rules for this Council Meeting.

Members of the public are reminded that they are required to remain silent during this meeting.

This Council meeting will be recorded for live streaming.

Recording of Meeting and Disclaimer

Please note every Council Meeting (other than items deemed confidential under section 3 (1) of the Local Government Act 2020) is being recorded and streamed live on West Wimmera Shire Council's website in accordance with Council's Governance Rules. Live streaming allows everyone to watch and listen to the meeting in real time, giving you greater access to Council debate and decision making and encouraging openness and transparency. All care is taken to maintain your privacy; however, as a visitor in the public gallery, your presence may be recorded. By remaining in the public gallery, it is understood your consent is given if your image is inadvertently broadcast. Opinions expressed or statements made by individual persons during a meeting are not the opinions or statements of West Wimmera Shire Council. Council therefore accepts no liability for any defamatory remarks that are made during a meeting.



Councillors pledge

As Councillors of West Wimmera Shire Council, we solemnly and sincerely declare and affirm that we will consider each item on this agenda in the best interests of the whole municipal community.



In Attendance:

Councillors:

Tim Meyer, Mayor
Tom Houlihan, Deputy Mayor
Richard Hicks
Bruce Meyer OAM
Jodie Pretlove

Executive Leadership Team:

David Bezuidenhout - Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
James Bentley - Director Corporate & Community Services (DCCS)
Brendan Pearce - Director Infrastructure Development & Works (DIDW)

Officers:

Kaddie Cother - Governance Coordinator
Philippa Hicks - Executive Assistant to the CEO
Abbas Mehr - Chief Financial Officer



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1 Welcome

2 Acknowledgement of Country

The West Wimmera Shire Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet, and pays respect to their elders, past, present and emerging.

3 Opening Prayer

Almighty God, we humbly ask your blessing upon this Council. Guide and prosper our decisions to the advancement of Your Glory and the true welfare of the people of West Wimmera Shire. Amen.

4 Apologies, Leave of Absences, Declaration of Conflict of Interest

4.1 Apologies

Nil

4.2 Leave of Absence

Nil

4.3 Declaration of Conflict of Interest

None Declared



5 Chief Executive Officer

No Reports



6 Corporate and Community Services

6.1 Audit of Financial Statements and Performance Statement 2022/23

Directorate: Corporate and Community Services

Report Author: Chief Financial Officer

Report Purpose: For Decision

Purpose

The Annual Report comprising the Financial Statements and Performance Statement 2022/23 was adopted by Council on 31 October 2023 pending final approval from the Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO). Council has received final approval from VAGO and is now required to adopt the Annual Report including the Financial Statements and Performance Statement 2022/23 in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:

That Council adopt the Annual Report for the 2022-23 financial year that contains the following sections as detailed in section 98 of the *Local Government Act 2020*:

- a) A report of Operations of Council**
- b) An audited Performance Statement**
- c) Audited Financial Statements**
- d) A copy of the Auditors Report on the Performance Statement**
- e) A copy of the Auditors Report of the Financial Statements under Part 3 of the Audit Act 1994, and**
- f) Any other matters prescribed in the regulations**



Moved: Cr Bruce Meyer

Seconded: Cr Jodie Pretlove

That Council adopt the Annual Report for the 2022-23 financial year that contains the following sections as detailed in section 98 of the *Local Government Act 2020*:

- a) A report of Operations of Council**
- b) An audited Performance Statement**
- c) Audited Financial Statements**
- d) A copy of the Auditors Report on the Performance Statement**
- e) A copy of the Auditors Report of the Financial Statements under Part 3 of the Audit Act 1994, and**
- f) Any other matters prescribed in the regulations**

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5 / 0)

Declaration of Interest

No officer declared an interest under the Local Government Act 2020 (LGA 2020) in the preparation of this report.

Background

The Annual Report which includes the Financial Statements and Performance Statement 2022/23 were presented to Council on the 31 October 2023 where Council resolved the following:

- 1. That Council adopt the 2022/23 Annual Report including the audited Financial Statements and Performance Statement in accordance with s100 of the Local Government Act 2020 pending any recommendations by VAGO.*
- 2. That the CEO be authorised to include any recommendations from VAGO into the Annual Report.*

Due to internal administrative issues, the progress of the audit was significantly delayed. On 9 August 2024 Council approved in principle the 2022/23 Financial Statements and Performance Statement. In order to comply with the Local Government Act 2020, this documentation was submitted to Crowe Australasia in their capacity as audit service provider for VAGO. Following receipt of VAGO's final approval, Council is now required to adopt the Annual Report 2022/23 including the 2022/23 Financial Statements and Performance Statement.



Financial Statements for FY 2022-23

This report outlines the Financial Statements 2022/23 which were presented to the Audit & Risk Committee at its Special Meeting held 8 August 2024 and the following summary of financial results is accordingly presented to Council.

Income / Revenue

Council's total income for the year aggregated to \$33.196 million against the budgeted \$31.257 for this period reflecting 6.20% positive earnings. The following table provides an insight into budgeted and actual results against various reportable components.

	Budget	Actual	Variance
	<i>\$ '000</i>	<i>\$ '000</i>	<i>\$ '000</i>
Rates & Charges	8,241	8,242	-
Statutory Fees & Fines	137	156	13.87%
User Fees	977	696	-40.37%
Grants - Operating	12,945	14,624	12.97%
Grants - Capital	6,965	6,360	-8.68%
Contributions - Monetary	264	126	-52.27%
Contributions – non-monetary	-	0	0
Gain / (Loss) on Disposal of Assets	100	174	74.00%
Other Income	1,628	2,951	81.26%
Share of net profits / (loss) - Associates and Joint Ventures	-	(133)	-100.00%
	31,257	33,196	6.20%

Council received some operating grants to fund its infrastructure renewals which resulted in higher than budgeted income for the year. The allocation of capital grants was more than double the previous year's total of \$2.903 million but remained slightly lower than the budgeted amount. However, Council was able to deliver a higher proportion of its budgeted capital works (Budget: \$11.273 million) due to improved results in operational grants.

The road maintenance contracts and other reimbursable works for VicRoads provided improved earnings as reported in other income. Council has invested in capacity-building of the Infrastructure Development & Works directorate, as well as plant and equipment to mitigate the impact the reduced availability of contractors servicing rural areas.

Expenses



The expenses tracked within operating levels achieved during the year. The higher cost of delivering essential services throughout the Shire presents resourcing challenges.

	Budget	Actual	Variance
	<i>\$ '000</i>	<i>\$ '000</i>	<i>\$ '000</i>
Employee Costs	9,776	9,919	1.46%
Materials and Services	13,269	9,277	30.08%
Depreciation	7,864	10,661	35.57%
Other Expenses	348	453	30.17%
	31,257	30,310	3.03%

The most significant variance resulted from additional depreciation included in the financial statements for the year, following the desktop revaluation which was based on indicative current unit rates, as recommended by the auditors. The actual revaluation has now been completed and these revaluations have had a minimal impact in the financial year 2023-24. However, in accordance with best practice and the Australian Accounting Standards, this revaluation has provided a more accurate reflection of Council's critical asset values in the financial statements.

Operating Surplus / (Deficit) for the Year

Council's operational results for this financial year present a \$2.886 million surplus as opposed to the originally forecast balanced budget indicative of a break-even position at the end of this financial year.

Asset Revaluation

Council has applied an internally assessed desktop valuation based on current average unit rates for different classes and components of our critical infrastructure assets in accordance with best practice and Australian Accounting Standards. The application of revised unit rates was thoroughly examined by the auditors and an agreed revaluation has been included in the financial statements. A formal revaluation by a licensed valuation consultant was completed



in September 2023 for incorporation in FY 2023/24, resulting in a minor impact on asset valuation in FY 2023-24.

As a result of this revaluation, there was an additional impact on depreciation posted to the financials for financial year 2022/23. The net result of this revaluation is a \$36.329 million surplus which has been incorporated into the Asset Revaluation Reserve.

Comprehensive Result

Council's 2022-23 budget projected a balanced budgetary position. However, the surplus arising out of operations amounting to \$2.886 million, coupled with the additional revaluation surplus of \$36.329 million, has resulted in total comprehensive income of \$39.215 million.

Prior Year Adjustments

During the finalisation of the 2022/23 financial statements, there were some variations in actual values identified compared to the previous year's audited financial statements. These variations were investigated and included as part of the audit process. The auditors conducted an audit into these items and in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and guidance received from the Victorian Auditor General's Office (VAGO), there are items in the previous year's financial statements which have been restated to accurately reflect the financial position.

A disclosure of these restatements and their impact has been provided and relates to restatement of cash and cash equivalents and adjustments made to materials and services to accurately reflect the value of accrued liabilities for FY 2021-22. The auditors are satisfied that this restatement has accurately clarified all prior year discrepancies.

Risk Management Implications

Risk identified: Financial risk

Regulatory risk

Reputation risk

Strategic risk

Legislative Implications

The report complies with the requirements of the:



Local Government Act 2020

Environmental Implications

Nil

Financial and Budgetary Implications

The financial risk rating has been assessed as: Low

Policy Implications

This report is supported by the following West Wimmera Shire Council Policy/s:

Asset Capitalisation Policy
Asset Management Policy
Asset Management Strategy
Borrowings Policy
Council Grants Policy
Investment Policy

Council Plan Implications

This report supports the following sections of the West Wimmera Shire Council Plan 2021 – 2025:

Goal 4 – Good Governance

- 4.1 Ensure long term financial sustainability.
- 4.4 Develop a high performing accountable organisation.
- 4.5 Maintain a rigorous risk management framework.

Goal 5 – Our Commitment Values

Accountability - We will be responsible, take ownership of our actions and are committed to good governance, excellence, transparency and advocating for our community.

Communication Implications

No Communication Implications

Equal Impact Assessment

No Equal Impact Assessment is required

Conclusion



Following final approval from VAGO, Council is now required to adopt the Annual Report 2022/23 including the Financial Statements and Performance Statement.

Attachments

1. WWSC Annual Report 2022-23 1 (Final Draft) [6.1.1 - 169 pages]
2. WWSC Financial Statements 2022-23 25072024 [6.1.2 - 54 pages]
3. WWSC Performance Statement 2022-23 24072024 [6.1.3 - 10 pages]



6.2 Sponsorship and Contributions Grant Application

Directorate: Corporate and Community Services
Report Author: Community Development and Tourism Manager
Report Purpose: For Decision

Purpose

An application from the Apsley Action Group has been received under Council's Community Sponsorship and Contributions Grant Guideline. The application has been assessed by officers as eligible for determination by Council.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:

That Council determine the following application which has been received under Council's Community Sponsorship and Contributions Grant Guideline:

- **Apsley Action Group – Application amount \$1,200**

Moved: Cr Jodie Pretlove

Seconded: Cr Richard Hicks

Having considered the application from the Apsley Action Group under Council's Community Sponsorship and Contributions Grant Guideline, Council approves a grant in the amount \$800.

CARRIED (4 / 0)

1 Abstention

Declaration of Interest

No officer declared an interest under the Local Government Act 2020 (LGA 2020) in preparing this report.

Background

The Apsley Action Group has submitted an application under Council's Sponsorship and Contributions Grant Guideline for the amount of \$1,200 plus \$80 in-kind support.

The application has been lodged electronically through the Smarty Grants platform.

The application relates to the performance of a comedy double feature written and performed by Damian Callinan. The application expresses this to be a rare local opportunity to host an outstanding artist who appeals to a broad audience. The application describes



this proposed event as a significant opportunity to contribute to community wellbeing. To quote from the application this event is described as “an affordable spring fling with a quality entertainer is welcome as we experience a very challenging year in our rural communities”.

The West Wimmera Shire Council Sponsorship and Contributions Grant Guideline provides individuals and organisations with the opportunity to seek Council support for worthy initiatives which benefit the West Wimmera Shire community. Under the Guideline, applicants may apply for financial and/or in-kind support from Council.

Council's Sponsorship and Contributions Grants may be awarded to organisations or individuals to support:

- Enhanced community wellbeing
- Increased community participation
- Recovery efforts following catastrophic emergencies
- Activities demonstrating a benefit to the West Wimmera community

Sponsorship and Contributions Grant budget

Council's 2024/2025 budget has made provision for a total annual financial expenditure of \$6,000 for the Community Sponsorship and Contributions Grant. \$3,200.00 has been expended in the current financial year leaving a YTD budget of \$2,800.00.

The total quantum of financial grant funding sought within the attached grant application is \$1,200.00.

Should Council determine to grant the applicant the full amount requested in the application, an amount of \$1,600.00 will be available in the budget for distribution in the Community Sponsorship and Contributions Grant stream for the remainder of the 2024/2025 financial year.

Risk Management Implications

Risk identified:

There are no obvious risks for Council to mitigate or eliminate in regard to the proposal considered for funding support in this report.

Legislative Implications

Not Applicable



Environmental Implications

Nil

Financial and Budgetary Implications

The financial risk rating has been assessed as: Low

Policy Implications

This report is supported by the following West Wimmera Shire Council Policy/s:

Not applicable

Council Plan Implications

This report supports the following sections of the West Wimmera Shire Council Plan 2021 – 2025:

Goal 1 – Liveable & Healthy Community

1.5 Support and encourage our events, cultural and arts communities.

Communication Implications

No Communication Implications

Equal Impact Assessment

No Equal Impact Assessment is required

Conclusion

This application for Council's Sponsorship and Contributions Grant has been assessed by officers as eligible for determination by Council.

Attachments

Nil



7 Infrastructure Development and Works

No Reports



8 Close of Meeting

Meeting closed:

The Unscheduled Council Meeting - 16 September 2024 was declared closed at 11:27 am

Meeting Closed 11:27 am

Mayor's Signature
