

West Wimmera Shire Council

AGENDA

ANNUAL STATUTORY COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday 4 November 2026
9:00 am

Edenhope Council Offices
49 Elizabeth Street, Edenhope Vic 3318

PUBLIC ACCESS
Open to the public and Live streaming from Council's website:
www.westwimmera.vic.gov.au

Councillors and Shire Map



MAYOR
Cr. Tim Meyer



DEPUTY MAYOR
Cr. Helen Hobbs



Cr. Richard Hicks



Cr. Jodie Pretlove



Cr. Tom Houlihan



COUNCIL VISION

In 2041 West Wimmera is a great place to live, work, and play. We are growing and we are known for our natural environment, resilience and sense of community. We are proud of our heritage and are building new economic capacity based on agriculture, innovation and tourism, which is creating local employment. Our towns are vibrant and welcoming, offering the services and facilities that meet the needs of our community and visitors. We are a confident community and will empower everyone to be part of our future.

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.

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.

REQUIRED TO ATTEND:

Councillors:

Tim Meyer, Mayor
Helen Hobbs, Deputy Mayor
Richard Hicks
Tom Houlihan
Jodie Pretlove

Executive Leadership Team:

David Bezuidenhout - Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
Dalton Burns – Director Corporate and Community Services (DCCS)
Brendan Pearce - Director Infrastructure Development and Works (DIDW)

Table of Contents

1 Welcome 8
2 Acknowledgement of Country 8
3 Opening Prayer 8
4 Apologies, Leave of Absences, Declaration of Conflict of Interest 8
4.1 Apologies 8
4.2 Leave of Absence 8
4.3 Declaration of Conflict of Interest 8
5 Chief Executive Officer 9
5.2 Election of Mayor 10
5.3 Appointment and Election of Deputy Mayor 12
5.4 Date and Place of Council Meetings - Schedule for 2027 14
5.5 Appointments to Regional and State Bodies 18
5.6 Appointment to Advisory and Community Committees 20
5.7 Audit & Risk Committee (Advisory Committee) - Section 53 of the Local Government Act 2020 21
6 Close of Meeting 23

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

4.2 Leave of Absence

4.3 Declaration of Conflict of Interest

All Councillors and Council Staff have a personal responsibility to ensure they are aware of the provisions mandated in the Local Government Act 2020 with regard to Conflict of Interest disclosures.

5 Chief Executive Officer

5.1 Mayoral Term

Directorate: *Corporate and Community Services*
Report Author: *Governance Manager*
Report Purpose: *For Decision*

Purpose

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020 Section 26(3)*, before the election of the Mayor, a Council, other than the Greater Geelong City Council, must determine by resolution whether the Mayor is to be elected for a one year or a two year term.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:

That the Mayor of West Wimmera Shire Council be elected for a ____ term.

Attachments

Nil

5.2 Election of Mayor

Directorate: *Corporate and Community Services*
Report Author: *Governance Manager*
Report Purpose: *For Decision*

Governance Rules Part B

4. Election of the Mayor

The *CEO* must facilitate the election of the *Mayor* in accordance with the provisions of the *Act*.

5. Method of Voting

The election of the Mayor must be carried out by a show of hands or such other means as the CEO allows.

6. Determining the election of the Mayor

6.1 Unless Council resolves otherwise, the election of the Mayor will occur at a meeting held specifically to:

6.1.1 elect the Mayor and Deputy Mayor;

6.1.2 appoint Councillors to various committees;

6.1.3 determine the schedule of meetings (including locations and format) for the coming year.

6.2 This meeting will be held at a time and place determined by resolution of Council.

6.3 The CEO must open the meeting at which the Mayor is to be elected, and invite nominations for the office of Mayor.

6.4 Nominations for the office of Mayor are to be made by a verbal nomination at the meeting.

6.5 Once nominations for the office of Mayor have been received, the following provisions will govern the election of the Mayor.

6.6 Single nomination

6.6.1 If there is only one nomination, the CEO must declare the candidate nominated to be duly elected.

6.7 Multiple nominations and candidate elected on the first vote.

6.7.1 If there is more than one nomination, the Councillors in attendance may vote for one of the candidates.

6.7.2 In the event of a candidate receiving the votes of an absolute majority of Councillors, the CEO must declare that candidate to be elected.

NOMINATIONS:

The CEO declared Councillor _____ as Mayor of the West Wimmera Shire Council for the _____ term.

Attachments

Nil

5.3 Appointment and Election of Deputy Mayor

Directorate: *Corporate and Community Services*
Report Author: *Governance Manager*
Report Purpose: *For Decision*

Local Government Act 2020 20A

Office of Deputy Mayor

(1) A Council may establish an office of Deputy Mayor.

(2) If the Council has established an office of Deputy Mayor, the provisions of this Act relating to the office of Deputy Mayor apply.

Governance Rules

Election of Deputy Mayor and Chairs of Delegated Committees

Any election for:

any office of Deputy Mayor; or

Chair of a Delegated Committee

will be regulated by Rule 6 of the Governance Rules, as if the reference to the:

CEO is a reference to the Mayor; and

Mayor is a reference to the Deputy Mayor or the Chair of the Delegated Committee (as the case may be).

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:

Option 1.

That Council resolves not to elect a Deputy Mayor.

Option 2.

That Council resolves to elect a Deputy Mayor and resolves that the Deputy Mayor to be elected for a one/two-year term.

NOMINATIONS

The CEO declared Councillor _____ as Deputy Mayor of West Wimmera Shire Council for the 2026-2027 year.

Background

The majority of Local Councils within Victoria elect a Deputy Mayor. West Wimmera Shire Council elected a Deputy Mayor for the first time in its history, for the 2019-2020 year and continued that practice in the years following.

Attachments

Nil

5.4 Date and Place of Council Meetings - Schedule for 2027

Directorate: *Corporate and Community Services*
Report Author: *Governance Manager*
Report Purpose: *For Decision*

Purpose

In an election year and pursuant to Council's Governance Rules, Division 1, Section 9, Council determines the schedule for its Council Meetings for the next calendar year at the meeting following the declaration of the Council.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

1. **Adopt the dates and venues for the formal Council Meetings in 2027 as per attached schedule A noting that all Council Meetings will commence at 2pm.**

2. **Note that the Councillor Forums will be held each month as per attached schedule to generally commence at 9am but the date, time and location may be varied as required.**

3. **Adopt the inclusion of three community forums at the following locations:**

    - **March: Minimay**
    - **June: Telopea Downs**
    - **October: Dergholm**

Declaration of Interest

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

Background

Council Meetings are held on a monthly basis, with the exception of January when there is no meeting. Council Meetings are generally held on the third Wednesday of the month commencing at 2.00pm.

Councillor forums are held on a monthly basis, with the exception of January when there is no meeting, and are generally held on the first Wednesday of the month. The venue alternates between Edenhope and Kaniva.

Rural Councils Victoria and Municipal Association Victoria (MAV) hold annual meeting events each year, which can on occasion clash with Council's scheduled Council meetings. These are the Rural Councils Victoria (RCV) Annual Forum and Annual General Meeting and the MAV Annual Conference and MAV's State Council in Melbourne which is typically held from Wednesday to Friday in the third week of October and attended by the CEO and Mayor.

At the time of Councils annual statutory meeting, the dates for the 2027 RCV and MAV events have not yet been confirmed. Should it become necessary to amend the Council meeting schedule to enable attendance at these events, Council will need to adopt a resolution accordingly to provide public notice in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

Scheduled A:

Month	Date	Meeting	Venue
February	Wed 3 Feb 2027	Councillor Forum	Kaniva
	Wed 17 Feb 2027	Council Meeting	Edenhope
March	Wed 3 Mar 2027	Councillor Forum	Edenhope
	Wed 17 Mar 2027	Council Meeting and Community Forum	Minimay
April	Wed 7 Apr 2027	Councillor Forum	Kaniva
	Wed 21 Apr 2027	Council Meeting	Edenhope
May	Wed 5 May 2027	Councillor Forum	Edenhope
	Wed 19 May 2027	Council Meeting	Kaniva
June	Wed 2 Jun 2027	Councillor Forum	Kaniva
	Wed 16 Jun 2027	Council Meeting and Community Forum	Telopea Downs
July	Wed 7 Jul 2027	Councillor Forum	Edenhope
	Wed 21 Jul 2027	Council Meeting	Kaniva
August	Wed 4 Aug 2027	Councillor Forum	Kaniva
	Wed 18 Aug 2027	Council Meeting	Edenhope
September	Wed 1 Sep 2027	Councillor Forum	Edenhope
	Wed 15 Sep 2027	Council Meeting	Kaniva
October	Wed 6 Oct 2027	Councillor Forum	Kaniva
	Wed 20 Oct 2027	Council Meeting and Community Forum	Dergholm
November	Wed 3 Nov 2027	Statutory Council Meeting to elect Mayor	Edenhope
	Wed 3 Nov 2027	Councillor Forum	Edenhope
	Wed 17 Nov 2027	Council Meeting	Kaniva
December	Wed 1 Dec 2027	Councillor Forum	Kaniva
	Wed 15 Dec 2027	Council Meeting	Edenhope

Community Forums

Community forums require at least six weeks of lead time, which includes liaising with the relevant community committee groups regarding their availability to host the meeting and forum, organise catering, generating publicity including the required Council Meeting advertisement, inviting the relevant communities, and receiving RSVPs. Community Forums are open to all residents of the area. The following table indicates locations in previous years.

Community Forum Town	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**
Apsley									**CM**	
Benayeo										
Connewirrecoo										
Dergholm										**X**
Douglas										
Goroke										
Harrow									**CM**	
Minimay										**X**
Serviceton										
Telopea Downs										**X**

Attachments

Nil

5.5 Appointments to Regional and State Bodies

Directorate: *Corporate and Community Services*
Report Author: *Governance Manager*
Report Purpose: *For Decision*

Purpose

Council makes a series of appointments to regional and State bodies as detailed below. Councillors also sit on other State bodies as individuals, but usually receive Council endorsement.

It is appropriate that Council representatives and alternate representatives to these bodies be appointed, as well as the CEO or a Director of Council, in certain cases.

The term of the appointment is twelve months commencing from today's meeting.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:

That the appointments of Council representatives to regional and State bodies, as detailed in the table below, be accepted and the relevant bodies be advised.

REGIONAL / STATE BODY	CURRENT REPRESENTATIVE/S 2025-26	PROPOSED REPRESENTATIVE/S 2026-27
Local Government State Wide Forum – Recycling & Waste Matters	Cr Houlihan Alt: -	Cr Houlihan
Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)	Mayor Dept. Mayor (if any)	Mayor Dept. Mayor (if any)
Rail Freight Alliance (RFA)	Cr. Hicks Alt: Cr Meyer	Cr. Hicks Alt: Cr Meyer
Rural Councils Victoria (RCV)	Mayor CEO Alt: Dept. Mayor (if any)	Mayor CEO Alt: Dept. Mayor (if any)
Timber Towns Victoria	Cr Meyer Alt: Cr Hicks	Cr Meyer Alt: Cr Hicks

West Grampians Pipeline Community Consultative Committee	Cr Houlihan Alt: Cr Pretlove	Cr Houlihan Alt: Cr Pretlove
West Wimmera Shire Cemeteries Trust	All Councillors Sec: Director CCS	All Councillors Sec: Director CCS
Western Highway Action Committee (WHAC)	Cr Hicks Director IDW Alt: Cr Hobbs	Cr Hicks Director IDW Alt: Cr Hobbs
Wimmera Southern Mallee Council Alliance	Mayor Alt: -	Mayor
Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Transport Group (WSMRTG)	Cr Pretlove Director IDW Alt: Cr Hobbs	Cr Pretlove Director IDW Alt: Cr Hobbs

Attachments

Nil

5.6 Appointment to Advisory and Community Committees

Directorate: *Corporate and Community Services*
Report Author: *Governance Manager*
Report Purpose: *For Decision*

Purpose

Council has established several Advisory Committees, which are a non-legislated type of committee, and have been set up to provide advice to Council.

Any recommendations from these committees for action or expenditure must be taken by Council in a Council Meeting, by formal resolution of Council.

Council's current and proposed Community and Advisory Committees are stated in the table below.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:

That Council elect the representatives to the Community & Advisory Committees as detailed in the table below:

COMMITTEE	CURRENT REPRESENTATIVES 2025/2026	PROPOSED REPRESENTATIVES 2026/2027
CEO Employment Matters Advisory Committee (CEMAC)	All Councillors Bill Millard– Independent Chair	All Councillors Bill Millard – Independent Chair

5.7 Audit & Risk Committee (Advisory Committee) - Section 53 of the Local Government Act 2020

Directorate: *Corporate and Community Services*
Report Author: *Governance Manager*
Report Purpose: *For Decision*

Purpose

Under Section 53 of the Local Government Act 2020, Council must establish an Audit and Risk Committee:

(1) A Council must establish an Audit and Risk Committee.

(2) An Audit and Risk Committee is not a delegated committee.

(3) An Audit and Risk Committee must—

(a) include members who are Councillors of the Council; and

(b) consist of a majority of members who are not Councillors of the Council and who collectively have—

(i) expertise in financial management and risk; and

(ii) experience in public sector management; and

(c) not include any person who is a member of Council staff of the Council.

(4) The chairperson of an Audit and Risk Committee must not be a Councillor of the Council.

(5) Sections 123 and 125 and Division 2 of Part 6 apply to a member of the Audit and Risk Committee who is not a Councillor as if the member were a member of a delegated committee.

(6) A Council may pay a fee to a member of an Audit and Risk Committee who is not a Councillor of the Council.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:

That Council elect the representatives to Council's Audit & Risk Committee as detailed in the table below for 2026/2027.

AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE	CURRENT REPRESENTATIVES 2025-2026	PROPOSED 2026-2027 REPRESENTATIVES
Councillors	Cr T Meyer Cr Pretlove	Cr Meyer Cr Hobbs
Independent members	Mr Richard Ainio (Chair) Mr Andrew Johnson Ms Celeste Gregory	Mr Richard Ainio (Chair) Mr Andrew Johnson (until March 2027) Ms Celeste Gregory (until March 2027)
Council Officer Contact	Director Corporate & Community Services (DCCS) Chief Financial Officer	Director Corporate & Community Services (DCCS) Chief Financial Officer

Attachments

Nil

6 Close of Meeting

Next Meeting:

19 November 2025

Kaniva