



West Wimmera Shire Council

MINUTES

COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday 19 February 2025
2:00 pm

Council Chambers
Edenhope Council Offices
49 Elizabeth Street, Edenhope Vic
3318





Councillors and Shire Map



MAYOR
Cr. Tim Meyer



**DEPUTY
MAYOR**
Cr. Jodie Pretlove



**Cr. Richard
Hicks**



Cr. Helen Hobbs



Cr. Tom Houlihan





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, except during Section 5 Questions from the Gallery.

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
Jodie Pretlove, Deputy Mayor
Richard Hicks
Helen Hobbs
Tom Houlihan

Executive Leadership Team:

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

Officers:

Katie Frost - Governance Manager
Philippa Hicks - Executive Assistant to the CEO



Table of Contents

1	Welcome	9
2	Acknowledgement of Country	9
3	Opening Prayer.....	9
4	Apologies, Leave of Absences, Declaration of Conflict of Interest	9
4.1	Apologies	9
4.2	Leave of Absence	9
4.3	Declaration of Conflict of Interest	9
5	Questions from the Gallery	10
5.1	Written Questions on Notice	10
5.2	Verbal Questions without Notice	11
6	Delegates Reports	13
6.1	Councillor Tim Meyer (Mayor)	13
6.2	Councillor Jodie Pretlove (Deputy Mayor).....	13
6.3	Councillor Richard Hicks	13
6.4	Councillor Helen Hobbs	14
6.5	Councillor Tom Houlihan	14
7	Condolences	14
8	Confirmation of Previous Minutes	15
8.1	Unscheduled Council Meeting held on Friday, 6 December 2024.....	15
8.2	Unscheduled Confidential Council Meeting held on Thursday, 12 December 2024	16
8.3	Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 18 December 2024	16
8.4	Unscheduled Confidential Council Meeting held, 29 January 2025	17
9	Business Arising From Previous Minutes	18
10	Notices of Motion	18



11 Councillor Forum Record.....	18
11.1 Councillor Forum Record Wednesday, 4 December 2024.....	18
12 Deputations and Petitions.....	18
13 Chief Executive Officer	18
13.1 Financial Report for Q1 & Q2 including Annual Plan Update	18
14 Corporate and Community Services.....	45
14.1 Councillor Internal Resolution Procedure	45
14.2 Living Libraries Infrastructure Program: Open Access Fitout for Wimmera Libraries	60
14.3 Appointment of Audit and Risk Committee Chairperson	64
15 Infrastructure Development and Works	87
15.1 Tree Planting on Council Road Reserves Policy	87
16 Sealing Schedule.....	95
17 Late Items of Business.....	95
18 Confidential Reports	96
19 Close of Meeting	97



1 Welcome

The Mayor declared the meeting open at 2:04pm.

2 Acknowledgement of Country

The CEO read:

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

The CEO Read:

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

All Councilors 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 Questions from the Gallery

5.1 Written Questions on Notice

None Received



5.2 Verbal Questions without Notice

Moved: Cr Richard Hicks

Seconded: Cr Jodie Pretlove

That Council suspend Standing Orders for the purpose of receiving questions without notice from the members of the Gallery.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5 / 0)

Charles Ferrier – Kaniva

With the recent letter box drop in the Kaniva area, what documented process does Council have with consulting with rate payers and is it documented?

Cr Tim Meyer – Council do have a Community Engagement Policy and under the Local Government Act 2020 Council must enact this policy.

Director CCS – The Community Engagement Policy is coming up for review which will be a good time for Council to review and update this policy.

Do you think Council gave sufficient time for the rate payers to respond to the notice?

Cr Tim Meyer – The Community Engagement Policy stipulates when and how consultation should take place. The policy is up for review and if Council is failing in this process, it will be reviewed and fixed.

Cr Tom Houlihan – The letter was about applying for a Grant and Council had a limited timeframe to apply for this grant.

Moved: Cr Jodie Pretlove

Seconded: Cr Richard Hicks

That Council resume Standing Orders.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5 / 0)



6 Delegates Reports

Delegate Reports are for providing feedback on formal council business and are for information only

6.1 Councillor Tim Meyer (Mayor)

Date	Event
19/12/2025	Timber Towns Victoria Meeting
24/01/2025	Councillor information session – Key Worker Accommodation Funding Application
26/01/2025	Kaniva Australia Day celebration
26/01/2025	Dergholm Australia Day celebration
29/01/2025	Unscheduled Council Meeting - Key Worker Accommodation Funding Application
05/02/2025	Councillor Forum
14/02/2025	Wimmera Southern Mallee Development Meeting
19/02/2025	WWSC – Cemeteries Trust Meeting
19/02/2025	Pre-Council Meeting
19/02/2025	Council Meeting

6.2 Councillor Jodie Pretlove (Deputy Mayor)

Date	Event
24/01/2025	Councillor information session – Key Worker Accommodation Funding Application
26/01/2025	Unscheduled Council Meeting - Key Worker Accommodation Funding Application
05/02/2025	Councillor Forum
19/02/2025	WWSC – Cemeteries Trust Meeting
19/02/2025	Pre-Council Meeting
19/02/2025	Council Meeting



6.3 Councillor Richard Hicks

Date	Event
24/01/2025	Councillor information session – Key Worker Accommodation Funding Application
29/01/2025	Unscheduled Council Meeting - Key Worker Accommodation Funding Application
31/01/2025	Western Highway Action Committee Meeting
05/02/2025	Councillor Forum
19/02/2025	WWSC – Cemeteries Trust Meeting
19/02/2025	Pre-Council Meeting
19/02/2025	Council Meeting

6.4 Councillor Helen Hobbs

Date	Event
24/01/2025	Councillor information session – Key Worker Accommodation Funding Application
26/01/2025	Unscheduled Council Meeting - Key Worker Accommodation Funding Application
05/02/2025	Councillor Forum
19/02/2025	WWSC – Cemeteries Trust Meeting
19/02/2025	Pre-Council Meeting
19/02/2025	Council Meeting

6.5 Councillor Tom Houlihan

Date	Event
24/01/2025	Councillor information session – Key Worker Accommodation Funding Application
26/01/2025	Harrow Australia Day celebration
26/01/2025	Goroke Australia Day celebration
29/01/2025	Unscheduled Council Meeting - Key Worker Accommodation Funding Application
05/02/2025	Councillor Forum
19/02/2025	WWSC – Cemeteries Trust Meeting
19/02/2025	Pre-Council Meeting
19/02/2025	Council Meeting

7 Condolences

Nil



8 Confirmation of Previous Minutes

8.1 **Unscheduled Council Meeting held on Friday, 6 December 2024**

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Minutes of the Unscheduled Council Meeting held on Friday, 6 December 2024 be taken as an accurate record and confirmed.

Moved: Cr Richard Hicks

Seconded: Cr Helen Hobbs

That the Minutes of the Unscheduled Council Meeting held on Friday, 6 December 2024 be taken as an accurate record and confirmed.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5 / 0)

Attachments

Nil



8.2 Unscheduled Confidential Council Meeting held on Thursday, 12 December 2024

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Minutes of the Unscheduled Confidential Council Meeting held on Thursday, 12 December 2024 be taken as an accurate record and confirmed.

Moved: Cr Richard Hicks

Seconded: Cr Helen Hobbs

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Thursday, 12 December 2024 be taken as an accurate record and confirmed.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5 / 0)

Attachments

Nil

8.3 Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 18 December 2024

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 18 December 2024 be taken as an accurate record and confirmed.

Moved: Cr Richard Hicks

Seconded: Cr Helen Hobbs

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 18 December 2024 be taken as an accurate record and confirmed.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5 / 0)

Attachments

Nil



8.4 **Unscheduled Confidential Council Meeting held, 29 January 2025**

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Minutes of the Unscheduled Confidential Council Meeting held, 29 January 2025 be taken as an accurate record and confirmed.

Moved: Cr Richard Hicks

Seconded: Cr Helen Hobbs

That the Minutes of the Unscheduled Confidential Council Meeting held, 29 January 2025 be taken as an accurate record and confirmed.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5 / 0)

Attachments

Nil



9 Business Arising From Previous Minutes

Nil

10 Notices of Motion

There were no Notices of Motion submitted for the agenda.

Nil

11 Councillor Forum Record

11.1 Councillor Forum Record Wednesday, 4 December 2024

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Record for the Councillor Forum Record Wednesday, 4 December 2024 be received and noted.

Moved: Cr Richard Hicks

Seconded: Cr Jodie Pretlove

That the Record for the Councillor Forum Record Wednesday, 4 December 2024 be received and noted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5 / 0)

12 Deputations and Petitions

Nil



13 Chief Executive Officer

13.1 Financial Report for Q1 & Q2 including Annual Plan Update

Directorate: Corporate and Community Services

Report Author: Director Corporate and Community Services

Report Purpose: For Decision

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with the Financial Report for Q1 and Q2 2024/2025 including the Annual Plan update.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:

That Council receives and notes the Financial Report for Q1 and Q2 2024/2025 including the Annual Plan update.

Moved: Cr Jodie Pretlove

Seconded: Cr Helen Hobbs

That Council receives and notes the Financial Report for Q1 and Q2 2024/2025 including the Annual Plan update.

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

Council's financial performance for the period 1 July 2024 to 31 December 2024 has been impacted by a number of factors including an opening cash position lower than forecasted due to the timing of anticipated grant funding, and seasonal matters impacting the progress of capital works resulting in delays in the capitalisation of labour expenses.

Comprehensive financial data is attached to this report, namely:

- Profit and Loss Statement for the 6 months ended 31 December 2024
- Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2024
- Statement of Cash Flows for the 6 months ended 31 December 2024



- Capital Works report for the period to 31 December 2024

Observations are made below in relation to these statements:

Profit and Loss Statement for the 6 months ended 31 December 2024

Total Operating Income tracked within 3% of the amount budgeted for the period 1 July 2024 to 31 December 2024, however in relation to Non-Operating Income, Commonwealth capital grants were 61% less than the budgeted amount (approximately \$1.5M). Despite a net gain of 57% over the budgeted amount for asset disposal, Total Non-Operating Income has reduced by 28% (\$733,000) relative to the budgeted figure. This is primarily due to the timing of capital grant payments for RtR and LRCIP.

Total Operating Expenses tracked within 6% of the amount budgeted. Accordingly, the 14% variation between budgeted and actual Net Profit (including Non-Operating Income) was principally the result of delayed grant funding and higher employee costs, the latter being negatively impacted by seasonal capitalisation factors.

Work in Progress is not included in Property Plant and Equipment in the Balance Sheet because these items are capitalised at the end of the financial year.

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2024

Net Assets have increased by approximately \$3.45M to \$271,824,074 when compared to the close of FY2024. This increase was impacted by a 14% increase in Total Liabilities, comprised primarily of a 44% increase in Trade & Other Payables

Statement of Cash Flows for the 6 months ended 31 December 2024

The Opening Cash and cash equivalents amount of \$8,043,264 at 1 July 2024 was lower than the budgeted forecast due to non-receipt of Financial Assistance Grant funding before 1 July 2024. The budgeted cash forecast was based on the assumption that this funding would be received by Council in FY2024.

Capital works for the period to 31 December 2024

The Capital works program as at 31 December 2024 was 26% complete. Seasonal factors impacted upon the ability to significantly progress the majority of these projects before 31 December 2024, however, a substantial increase in work volume will occur in Q3 FY2025.



Risk Management Implications

The timing of grant funding payments to Council resulted in its cash position being less than originally forecasted. These timing considerations, the broader constriction in the general availability of grant funding, seasonal implications for capital works and the related capitalisation of operational expenses, and the severely depleted rates base, necessitate careful scrutiny and the conservative and prudent management of all current and future expenditure.

Legislative Implications

Not Applicable

Environmental Implications

Not applicable

Financial and Budgetary Implications

Council may develop a revised budget, but due to time constraints, should the revision of a particular line item in the current adopted budget be required, that particular item can be brought to Council for revision as required.

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 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.

Communication Implications

No Communication Implications

Equal Impact Assessment

No Equal Impact Assessment is required

Conclusion



Actuals for the period 1 July 2024 to 31 December 2024 tracked in line with budgeted expectations. Council's opening cash position was lower than originally forecasted due to the timing of grant funding payments. These timing considerations, coupled with the broader constriction in the general availability of grant funding, necessitate the conservative and prudent management of all future expenditure.

Attachments

1. Council reports 31 December 2024 with Capex [**13.1.1** - 4 pages]
2. Q 2 Update Annual Plan 20242025 [**13.1.2** - 18 pages]

Profit and Loss

West Wimmera Shire Council

For the 6 months ended 31 December 2024

Account	Actual YTD	Budget YTD	Budget Variance	% Var.	Annual Budget	Notes
Operating Income						
Rates and Charges	8,894,649	8,922,000	(27,351)	0%	8,922,000	
User Fees	407,061	294,498	112,563	38%	589,000	1
Statutory Fees and Fines	84,036	49,500	34,536	70%	99,000	
Contributions	1,232	208,002	(206,770)	-99%	416,000	2
Operating Grants	9,081,548	8,490,000	591,548	7%	9,829,000	
Interest Income	199,663	258,000	(58,337)	-23%	516,000	3
Other Income	979,440	840,504	138,936	17%	1,681,000	4
Total Operating Income	19,647,630	19,062,504	585,126	3%	22,052,000	
Gross Profit	19,647,630	19,062,504	585,126	3%	22,052,000	
Non Operating Income						
Net gain / (loss) on disposal of assets	298,711	190,002	108,709	57%	380,000	
Commonwealth Capital Grants	933,000	2,421,498	(1,488,498)	-61%	4,843,000	
State Capital Grants	646,545	0	646,545	0%	0	
Total Non Operating Income	1,878,256	2,611,500	(733,244)	-28%	5,223,000	5
Operating Expenses						
Employee Costs	5,888,849	5,137,003	751,846	15%	9,854,000	6
Materials & Services	5,262,882	5,116,504	146,378	3%	9,683,000	
Interest Expense	30	0	30	0%	0	
Depreciation	4,025,130	3,844,500	180,630	5%	7,689,000	
Other Expenses	143,925	373,002	(229,077)	-61%	746,000	7
Total Operating Expenses	15,320,817	14,471,009	849,808	6%	27,972,000	
Net Operating Profit	4,326,814	4,591,495	(264,681)	-6%	(5,920,000)	
Net Profit (including Non Operating Income)	6,205,070	7,202,995	(997,925)	-14%	(697,000)	
Work in Progress						
Work in Progress - Wages	151,622	0	151,622	0%	0	
Work in Progress - Wages Oncosts	72,779	0	72,779	0%	0	
Work in Progress - Contractors	1,535,857	0	1,535,857	0%	0	
Work in Progress - Materials	217,460	0	217,460	0%	0	
Work in Progress - Internal Plant	119,015	0	119,015	0%	0	
Work in Progress - External Plant	56,864	0	56,864	0%	0	
Work in Progress - Other	595,297	0	595,297	0%	0	
Total Work in Progress	2,748,893	0	2,748,893	0%	0	

Notes

- User fees are up \$113k (38%) on budget YTD.
- Contributions are down \$207k on budget YTD and are likely to be below budget forecasts at year end.
- Interest Income is down \$58k (23%) on budget YTD which is due to lower than forecast cash and investments and falling interest rates.
- Other income is up \$139k (17%) on budget YTD which primarily relates to insurance recoveries.
- Capital or non operating income is down \$733k (28%) on forecast YTD which is primarily due to the timing of capital grant payments for RTR and LRCL.
- Employee costs are up \$752k (15%) on budget YTD, which is primarily due to the currently low than forecast capitalisation of wages.
- Other expenses are currently down \$229k (61%) on budget YTD which primarily relates to the timing of external audit fees.

Balance Sheet

West Wimmera Shire Council
As at 31 December 2024

Account	31 Dec 2024	30 June 2024
Assets		
Current Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	4,240,231	6,537,112
Investments	2,540,794	1,507,462
Trade & Other Receivables	10,027,156	512,264
Inventory	118,120	135,280
Prepayments	0	21,175
Other Assets	0	18,014
Total Current Assets	16,926,301	8,731,306
Non-current Assets		
Property, Plant and Equipment	262,032,985	265,831,644
Investment in Associates	462,209	462,209
Trust Funds & Deposits	1,257	1,257
Total Non-current Assets	262,496,450	266,295,110
Total Assets	279,422,752	275,026,416
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Trade & Other Payables	4,440,000	3,066,352
Trust Funds & Deposits	543,675	408,831
Contract Liabilities	0	541,545
Provisions	2,365,973	2,302,055
Accrued Expenses	0	85,633
Total Current Liabilities	7,349,648	6,404,416
Non-current Liabilities		
Provisions	249,030	251,913
Total Non-current Liabilities	249,030	251,913
Total Liabilities	7,598,678	6,656,329
Net Assets	271,824,074	268,370,087
Equity		
Asset Revaluation Reserves	229,870,458	229,870,458
Restricted Reserves	2,361,360	2,363,550
Retained Earnings	39,592,256	36,136,079
Total Equity	271,824,074	268,370,087

Statement of Cash Flows

West Wimmera Shire Council

For the 6 months ended 31 December 2024

Account	Jul-Dec 2024	2024
Operating Activities		
Rates and Charges	(422,003)	8,517,132
Statutory fees and fines	90,053	137,032
User Fees	474,549	767,885
Grants - Operating	8,542,881	6,623,562
Grants - Capital	1,528,836	3,620,197
Contributions	1,232	26,050
Interest received	217,678	799,570
Receipts from other income	873,246	3,349,917
Employee costs	(5,120,492)	(11,183,090)
Payments for materials and services	(4,458,100)	(13,644,785)
Cash payments from other operating activities	(154,629)	(395,088)
Interest Expense	(30)	0
Net Cash Flows from Operating Activities	1,573,222	(1,381,619)
Investing Activities		
Payment for property, plant and equipment	(3,324,086)	(11,075,431)
Disposal of assets	309,667	309,897
Net Cash Flows from Investing Activities	(3,014,420)	(10,765,534)
Financing Activities		
Trust Funds & Other Deposits	177,650	188,589
Net Cash Flows from Financing Activities	177,650	188,589
Net Cash Flows	(1,263,548)	(11,958,565)
Cash and Cash Equivalents		
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of period	8,043,264	20,001,829
Net change in cash for period	(1,263,548)	(11,958,565)
Cash and cash equivalents at end of period	6,779,716	8,043,264

Capital Works Report
West Wimmera Shire Council
For the period to 31 December 2024

Description	Status	Annual Budget	Actual YTD	Budget Remaining	Grant Funded	Council Funding	Remaining Council Funding	Financial Progress
Committed Works - Final Seals		\$260,962	\$7,674	\$253,288	\$260,962	\$0	\$0	3%
Sealed Road Constructions		\$2,073,748	\$170,825	\$1,902,923	\$1,257,448	\$816,300	\$720,999	8%
Reseals		\$1,000,000	\$835,306	\$164,694	\$768,011	\$231,989	\$92,243	84%
Line Marking		\$20,000	\$0	\$20,000	\$0	\$20,000	\$20,000	0%
Shoulder Sheeting		\$651,590	\$117,998	\$533,592	\$51,590	\$600,000	\$533,545	18%
Resheeting		\$1,891,839	\$697,265	\$1,194,574	\$999,382	\$892,457	\$625,560	37%
Street Lighting		\$10,000	\$2,808	\$7,192	\$0	\$10,000	\$7,192	28%
Rural & Urban Drainage		\$60,000	\$11,992	\$48,008	\$0	\$60,000	\$48,008	20%
Bridges & Major Culverts		\$100,000	\$10,400	\$89,600	\$100,000	\$0	\$0	10%
Footpaths		\$157,000	\$18,671	\$138,329	\$0	\$157,000	\$138,329	12%
Kerb & Channel		\$55,000	\$3,811	\$51,189	\$0	\$55,000	\$51,189	7%
Buildings, Structures & Land		\$1,483,175	\$223,721	\$1,259,454	\$119,605	\$1,363,570	\$1,139,848	15%
Open Space		\$789,002	\$101,444	\$687,558	\$295,000	\$494,002	\$462,646	13%
Plant		\$1,498,500	\$256,414	\$1,242,086	\$0	\$1,498,500	\$1,242,086	17%
Fleet		\$500,000	\$290,565	\$209,435	\$0	\$500,000	\$209,435	58%
Total		\$10,550,816	\$2,748,893	\$7,801,923	\$3,851,998	\$6,698,818	\$5,291,080	26%

ANNUAL PLAN

2024 / 2025

Q2 Update



DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN 2024/2025 (March 12th 2024)

GOAL	Initiative	Directorate	2024/2025 Action External	Status	Comments
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.1.1 Review and implement a revised Community Strengthening Program to ensure programs, clubs and infrastructure are supported equitably across the shire.	Corporate and Community Services	Continue to roll out Community Grants Program (Quick Response Grant, Sponsorships, Community Strengthening and Community Support Grant)	100%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.1.3 Implement municipal sport and recreation strategy	Corporate and Community Services	Fair Access policy implementation	90%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.1.3 Implement municipal sport and recreation strategy	Corporate and Community Services	Move 2 actions per precinct through Phase 1 from the municipal sport and recreation strategy	60%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.1.5 Work with other sporting, education and health service providers to promote and deliver accessible healthy and active lifestyles programs.	Corporate and Community Services	Working with WWHS & Yarriambiack to assess Assessible spaces across the shire	100%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.1.7 Work with State, Regional and Local Sporting Associations to offer socially modified forms of sport and recreation that cater to all ability levels.	Corporate and Community Services	Participation Plan roll outs in Apsley & Harrow for netball /tennis Court and Lighting Upgrades	60%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.1.8 Support and promote volunteering opportunities within the organisation with local community groups.	Corporate and Community Services	Supporting and recognising volunteers across the shire with Annual Volunteer Morning Teas	100%	

DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN 2024/2025 (March 12th 2024)

GOAL	Initiative	Directorate	2024/2025 Action External	Status	Comments
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.2.1 Maintain supported playgroups across the shire.	Corporate and Community Services	Delivery of Supported Playgroups Program	50%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.2.1 Maintain supported playgroups across the shire.	Corporate and Community Services	Support existing community playgroups with resources, advice and promotion. Increase facilitated playgroups with the aim of identifying potential leaders to set up community playgroup (transitioning with support). Encourage playgroups who want a facilitator to apply for community grants.	50%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.2.2 Provide a range of youth focused activities which provide a diverse range of safe and inclusive experiences across the shire.	Corporate and Community Services	Engagement of youth program with schools	40%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.2.2 Provide a range of youth focused activities which provide a diverse range of safe and inclusive experiences across the shire.	Corporate and Community Services	Apply for Freeza and Engage Youth Funding for programs across the shire	100%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.2.2 Provide a range of youth focused activities which provide a diverse range of safe and inclusive experiences across the shire.	Corporate and Community Services	Delivery Freeza and Engage Youth Funding inline with funding agreements	95%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.2.3 Partner with relevant local and regional organisations to promote and deliver domestic violence awareness campaigns.	Corporate and Community Services	16 days of activism campaign with local events in November	100%	

DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN 2024/2025 (March 12th 2024)

GOAL	Initiative	Directorate	2024/2025 Action External	Status	Comments
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.2.3 Partner with relevant local and regional organisations to promote and deliver domestic violence awareness campaigns.	Corporate and Community Services	white ribbon training for staff	100%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.2.3 Partner with relevant local and regional organisations to promote and deliver domestic violence awareness campaigns.	Corporate and Community Services	Supporting Pilot Program - Kaniva Community (Kaniva Katch Up) with Mental Health Awareness Group with consideration to expand to other towns	100%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.2.4 Support relevant regional and local agencies in promotion of mental health, drug, and alcohol awareness programs and also advocate for increased resources.	Corporate and Community Services	Staff Training for mental health (in the community) & Basic Emergency Management Training	100%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.2.4 Support relevant regional and local agencies in promotion of mental health, drug, and alcohol awareness programs and also advocate for increased resources.	Corporate and Community Services	Review and implement process for referral & Support services (MCH, Early Years, Kinders, Youth, Aged Care)	50%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.2.5 Ensure Communities of Respect and Equality (CoRE) action plan is maintained and being implemented.	Corporate and Community Services	Active Participation of CoRe alliance membership	100%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.2.6 Actively participate in road safety awareness programs.	Corporate and Community Services	Road Safety Awareness at Kindergartens for parents and children	50%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.2.7 Develop and promote intergeneration wellbeing activities in cooperation with other relevant agencies.	Corporate and Community Services	Intergenerational playgroup/gardening program in Edenhope	50%	

DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN 2024/2025 (March 12th 2024)

GOAL	Initiative	Directorate	2024/2025 Action External	Status	Comments
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.2.7 Develop and promote intergeneration wellbeing activities in cooperation with other relevant agencies.	Corporate and Community Services	Intergenerational pop up Playgroups	25%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.2.8 Prepare and implement an action plan to reflect and incorporate the new Child Safe Standards in Council governance and operations.	Corporate and Community Services	Annual Working with Childrens check audit	50%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.3.1 Actively support Committees of Management in management of community facilities.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Deliver West Wimmera Cabins Project	80%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.3.1 Actively support Committees of Management in management of community facilities.	Corporate and Community Services	Training for Committees of Management (DEECA) & Modern Rules for Committee Training	20%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.3.1 Actively support Committees of Management in management of community facilities.	Corporate and Community Services	Information Sessions for Community committees (Funding opportunities and general information)	20%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.3.1 Actively support Committees of Management in management of community facilities.	Corporate and Community Services	Support for community groups with cabin operations (Harrow, Lake Charlegrak & Goroke)	100%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.3.2 Ensure key infrastructure (Roads & Buildings) is maintained and renewed as required to support our economy, community use and involvement.	Infrastructure Development & Works	External Painting of Kaniva Shire Hall (seek funding if available) Windmill Cafe Goroke Mens Shed	30%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.3.2 Ensure key infrastructure (Roads & Buildings) is maintained and renewed as required to support our economy, community use and involvement.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Fire Fighting Facilities Upgrade at Edenhope Aerodrome(funded)	25%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.3.2 Ensure key infrastructure (Roads & Buildings) is maintained and renewed as required to support our economy, community use and involvement.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Complete Asset Inspections as per plan	40%	

DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN 2024/2025 (March 12th 2024)

GOAL	Initiative	Directorate	2024/2025 Action External	Status	Comments
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.3.2 Ensure key infrastructure (Roads & Buildings) is maintained and renewed as required to support our economy, community use and involvement.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Seek funding for Solar on government owned buildings funding (if available) - Potentially- Kaniva Hub, Pools	50%	No funding currently available
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.3.2 Ensure key infrastructure (Roads & Buildings) is maintained and renewed as required to support our economy, community use and involvement.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Delivery of Kaniva depot upgrade Wannon Avenue House Renovation Kaniva Pool All abilities water play splash park (subject to funding) Kaniva pool upgrades for accessibility(subject to funding)	20%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.3.3 Actively assist community groups in applying for funding to upgrade sport and recreation community infrastructure in line with the Municipal Sport and Recreation Strategy.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Deliver of Kaniva Rec Reserve - Lighting Harrow Rec reserve - Lighting (subject to funding) Kaniva Rec Reserve - facility design(subject to funding) Edenhope Recreation Reserve Changerooms(subject to funding)	30%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.3.4 Continue to extend Council's footpath network in towns and seek funding to develop and extend trails in accordance with Recreational Trails Strategy.	Infrastructure Development & Works	New Footpaths as per Capital Works Plan 1. Budjik street Farmer to webb Kaniva 2. Elizabeth Street Anne to Churchhill Street Edenhope 3. Compston Street - Barrack to Church Street Goroke	20%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.3.5 Advocate for improvements in public transport services for West Wimmera shire.	Corporate and Community Services	Continue to run/support and promote volunteer taxi service in Kaniva and centre for participation bus Kaniva - Horsham weekly	100%	

DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN 2024/2025 (March 12th 2024)

GOAL	Initiative	Directorate	2024/2025 Action External	Status	Comments
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.3.5 Advocate for improvements in public transport services for West Wimmera shire.	Corporate and Community Services	Continue to run/support and promote companion transport program Harrow, Kaniva and Edenhope	100%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.3.6 Review and improve Council's Asset Management System to manage Council buildings and facilities in accordance with legislative requirements.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Undertake condition assessment of all buildings	30%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.4.3 Support the implementation of childcare initiatives across shire.	Corporate and Community Services	Investigate service providers, funding and need for childcare in Goroke	25%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.4.5 Partner with other agencies in attracting additional training opportunities short courses.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Training Calendar on Councils website with business training opportunities	40%	

DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN 2024/2025 (March 12th 2024)

GOAL	Initiative	Directorate	2024/2025 Action External	Status	Comments
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.4.7 Secure ongoing, flexible, rural appropriate funding to support Maternal and Child Health and other Early Years initiatives.	Corporate and Community Services	Continue to provide Perinatal Mental Health Service (including infant loss support)	50%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.4.7 Secure ongoing, flexible, rural appropriate funding to support Maternal and Child Health and other Early Years initiatives.	Corporate and Community Services	Continue to roll out Mother and Baby information session and practical classes including Baby Massage	50%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.4.7 Secure ongoing, flexible, rural appropriate funding to support Maternal and Child Health and other Early Years initiatives.	Corporate and Community Services	Working with By5 project	40%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.4.10 In conjunction with Wimmera Primary Care Partnership and others, investigate options to deliver mental health services within the shire for young people.	Corporate and Community Services	Provide support and encourage headspace events & Mental Health Training to be run in West Wimmera	25%	

DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN 2024/2025 (March 12th 2024)

GOAL	Initiative	Directorate	2024/2025 Action External	Status	Comments
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.5.1 Through membership of the Wimmera Regional Library Corporation continue to provide Library services which are relevant and contemporary.	Corporate and Community Services	Active membership of Wimmera Library Service	50%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.5.3 Develop an Annual Events Program.	Corporate and Community Services	Develop an Annual Events program	50%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.6.1 Promote community participation in municipal emergency management planning.	Corporate and Community Services	Community Fire Awareness , through social media and Wimmera Emergency Management Team	90%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.6.2 Partner with communities, agencies and neighbouring municipalities to strengthen emergency and disaster planning, awareness and preparedness	Corporate and Community Services	Attend meetings and actively participate in the Wimmera Emergency Management Resources Sharing Partnership and work with the staff or the Wimmera Emergency Management Team	100%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.6.3 Plan for and deliver emergency response, relief and recovery as required in conjunction with Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee (REMP) Partners.	Corporate and Community Services	Attend and actively participate in the planning of the Grampians Regional Emergency Management team regional and local plans	100%	

DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN 2024/2025 (March 12th 2024)

GOAL	Initiative	Directorate	2024/2025 Action External	Status	Comments
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.6.4 Support local emergency services agencies. Plan for and deliver emergency services as required in conjunction with REMPC.	Corporate and Community Services	Plan for and deliver emergency services as required in conjunction with REMPC. as per the 3 tiers of emergency management planning in Victoria and the Emergency Management act 2013	100%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.7.1 Partner with State and Regional bodies to improve the availability of housing options in the shire.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Involvement in Wimmera Southern Mallee Development Housing Project and West Wimmera Housing Opportunity	40%	
GOAL 1: LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY	1.7.5 Partner with Wimmera Development Association (WDA) to implement a liveability framework to connect our community and to help develop a region that thrives in social, economic and environmental aspects.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Active membership with Wimmera Southern Mallee Development	40%	

DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN 2024/2025 (March 12th 2024)

GOAL	Initiative	Directorate	2024/2025 Action External	Status	Comments
GOAL 2: DIVERSE & PROSPEROUS ECONOMY	2.1.3 Implement the findings of the planning review through an amendment to the West Wimmera Planning Scheme.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Begin Implementation of Recommendations from planning scheme Review Policy neutral planning scheme amendments Update flood controls for Harrow and Chetwynd (add into planning scheme) Rezoning commercial area in Edenhope Rezoning commercial area in Kaniva Targeted settlement plans for larger towns (Edenhope, Kaniva, Goroke, Apsley & Harrow) Edenhope Flood Investigation Apsley Flood Investigation	35%	
GOAL 2: DIVERSE & PROSPEROUS ECONOMY	2.1.4 Deliver a Business Assistance Program that supports businesses to establish and grow.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Continue to delivery Business Assistance Grant Program	40%	
GOAL 2: DIVERSE & PROSPEROUS ECONOMY	2.1.4 Deliver a Business Assistance Program that supports businesses to establish and grow.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Supporting Industrial Development across the shire	40%	
GOAL 2: DIVERSE & PROSPEROUS ECONOMY	2.1.4 Deliver a Business Assistance Program that supports businesses to establish and grow.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Continue to deliver Streetscape Grant Program	40%	
GOAL 2: DIVERSE & PROSPEROUS ECONOMY	2.1.5 Work with the agricultural sector to support the continued development of cutting edge farming.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Support to Birchip Cropping Group Young Farmers Network (west Wimmera Group)	40%	
GOAL 2: DIVERSE & PROSPEROUS ECONOMY	2.2.2 Actively participate in regional tourism planning and promotional campaigns.	Corporate and Community Services	Active Membership to Wimmera Grampians Tourism (Visitor Economy Partnership)	100%	
GOAL 2: DIVERSE & PROSPEROUS ECONOMY	2.2.3 Implement Council's actions from Tourism Strategy.	Corporate and Community Services	Serviceton Railway Station - seek enabling tourism funding if available	50%	
GOAL 2: DIVERSE & PROSPEROUS ECONOMY	2.3.1 Review and update the Economic Development Strategy to maximise economic activity in the Shire.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Continue to work with WSMD on Housing in West Wimmera	40%	
GOAL 2: DIVERSE & PROSPEROUS ECONOMY	2.4.1 Seek funding and partnership opportunities to implement streetscape plans for Edenhope and Kaniva.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Seek external funding to implement Kaniva and Edenhope Streetscape Plans	40%	
GOAL 2: DIVERSE & PROSPEROUS ECONOMY	2.4.6 Actively work to improve the appearance of main streets and town entrances across the shire.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Lions Park Edenhope Project (pending funding outcome)	40%	

DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN 2024/2025 (March 12th 2024)

GOAL	Initiative	Directorate	2024/2025 Action External	Status	Comments
GOAL 2: DIVERSE & PROSPEROUS ECONOMY	2.5.1 Review the Road Management Plan (RMP) within 12 months of the Council election.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Review Road Management Plan (required within 12 months of new Council)	5%	
GOAL 2: DIVERSE & PROSPEROUS ECONOMY	2.5.2 Continue the programmed maintenance of the sealed and unsealed road network in accordance with the RMP and Moloney Report.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Complete Road Management Plan Inspections	40%	
GOAL 2: DIVERSE & PROSPEROUS ECONOMY	2.5.2 Continue the programmed maintenance of the sealed and unsealed road network in accordance with the RMP and Moloney Report.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Development of reaseal and resheet program	80%	
GOAL 2: DIVERSE & PROSPEROUS ECONOMY	2.5.2 Continue the programmed maintenance of the sealed and unsealed road network in accordance with the RMP and Moloney Report.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Delivery of 24/25 resheet program	5%	
GOAL 3: SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT	3.1.1 Prepare a Waste Management Plan to guide waste management activities and to maximise recycling and resource recovery.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Develop Draft Waste Management Plan	0%	
GOAL 3: SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT	3.2.1 Support activities to control pest animals in farming and township areas.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Roll out annual corella management plan	40%	
GOAL 3: SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT	3.2.1 Support activities to control pest animals in farming and township areas.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Delivery Council Roadside Weeds and Pest Program	70%	
GOAL 3: SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT	3.2.1 Support activities to control pest animals in farming and township areas.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Review Corella Management Plan	5%	
GOAL 3: SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT	3.2.2 Work with partner agencies on roadside vegetation management.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Landcare facilitator - Capacity building and support for local Landcare groups & roadside weed management across the shire	70%	
GOAL 3: SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT	3.2.2 Work with partner agencies on roadside vegetation management.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Work with partner agencies on roadside vegetation management on road construction projects	75%	
GOAL 3: SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT	3.3.4 Partner with key stakeholders to support the implementation of the Lake Wallace Strategy where funding permits.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Delivery - Boat Ramp Extension Seek funding for Hand Rail Project	0%	Waiting for water level to recede
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.1.1 Prepare and implement a 10 Year Financial Plan.	Corporate and Community Services	Long Term Financial Plan to be reviewed and updated	50%	

DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN 2024/2025 (March 12th 2024)

GOAL	Initiative	Directorate	2024/2025 Action External	Status	Comments
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.1.5 Maximise income from alternative sources.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Continue to seek suitable grant funding as it becomes available for community infrastructure projects Including Edenhope Recreation Reserve Oval Lighting Goroke Tennis/Netball Court Upgrade Goroke Rec Reserve Oval Lighting Kaniva Bowling Club - New Green Additional Projects to be added as they are approved through the PMO	40%	
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.1.5 Maximise income from alternative sources.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Maintain Grant Guru subscription to assist council staff and community members to source suitable grant funding	40%	
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.1.5 Maximise income from alternative sources.	Corporate and Community Services	Support community members to source suitable grant funding with Grant Guru	100%	
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.1.5 Maximise income from alternative sources.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Scoping and Planning for Kaniva, Edenhope and Goroke Pools	40%	Extensive scoping and planning for a range of options for Kaniva Pool.Goroke Pool Upgrade project to commence.
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.1.5 Maximise income from alternative sources.	Corporate and Community Services	Upgrade Grants Tracking Register	25%	
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.1.6 Implement the West Wimmera Shire Council Revenue and Rating Strategy.	Corporate and Community Services	Council Services Review	50%	
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.1.7 Undertake continuous improvement initiatives to look for cost efficiencies and savings.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Continue to deliver and support the innovation platform	40%	
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.2.1 Implement the Community Engagement Policy.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Review Community Engagement Policy	0%	Due for review March 2025
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.2.3 Regularly provide information to the community via the website and other channels to ensure Council's program and activities enjoy a high level of awareness. Implement an innovation platform.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Continue to deliver regular communication via council website and channels	50%	
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.4.1 Develop and implement the Workforce Plan.	Corporate and Community Services	Develop new 4 year Workforce Plan inline with Local Government Act Requirements	25%	

DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN 2024/2025 (March 12th 2024)

GOAL	Initiative	Directorate	2024/2025 Action External	Status	Comments
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.4.3 Review procurement policies and processes to maximise accountability, value for money and encourage local procurement.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Review Procurement Policy	50%	
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.4.6 Prepare Annual Business Plan to identify and track financial and operational performance.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Develop the 2025/26 Annual Plan	10%	
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.4.6 Prepare Annual Business Plan to identify and track financial and operational performance.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Develop the 2025-2029 Council Plan	5%	
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.4.6 Prepare Annual Business Plan to identify and track financial and operational performance.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Develop the 2025-2029 Health and Wellbeing Plan (included in Council Plan)	10%	
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.4.6 Prepare Annual Business Plan to identify and track financial and operational performance.	Corporate and Community Services	Complete 2023/2024 Annual Report	100%	
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.4.6 Prepare Annual Business Plan to identify and track financial and operational performance.	Corporate and Community Services	Complete 2023/2024 Annual Financial Statements	100%	
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.4.7 Implement a Project Management Framework.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Training and Implementation of the Project Management Framework across all departments	20%	
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.4.9 Develop a Framework and/or relevant Management Plans for key management areas in Council to ensure accountability and a clear understanding of responsibilities, processes, systems and procedures.	Corporate and Community Services	Compliance with new Aged Care Act (Pending outcome from Bill still to pass in parliament)	30%	
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.4.9 Develop a Framework and/or relevant Management Plans for key management areas in Council to ensure accountability and a clear understanding of responsibilities, processes, systems and procedures.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Policy Reviews Environmental Policy Street Tree Policy Tree Plantations on Unused Road Reserves Policy Tree Planting on WWSC Road Reserves Policy	25%	

DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN 2024/2025 (March 12th 2024)

GOAL	Initiative	Directorate	2024/2025 Action External	Status	Comments
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.4.9 Develop a Framework and/or relevant Management Plans for key management areas in Council to ensure accountability and a clear understanding of responsibilities, processes, systems and procedures.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Review Fleet Policy	40%	
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.4.9 Develop a Framework and/or relevant Management Plans for key management areas in Council to ensure accountability and a clear understanding of responsibilities, processes, systems and procedures.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Roll out quality management plan with each manager	80%	
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.4.9 Develop a Framework and/or relevant Management Plans for key management areas in Council to ensure accountability and a clear understanding of responsibilities, processes, systems and procedures.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Review and understand future involvement in Serviceton Railway Station.	50%	
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.4.9 Develop a Framework and/or relevant Management Plans for key management areas in Council to ensure accountability and a clear understanding of responsibilities, processes, systems and procedures.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Policy Reviews Social Media and Communications Policy Community Contributions Policy	50%	
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.4.9 Develop a Framework and/or relevant Management Plans for key management areas in Council to ensure accountability and a clear understanding of responsibilities, processes, systems and procedures.	Corporate and Community Services	Facilitation of the 2024 Local Government Election under the direction of the VEC	50%	
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.4.9 Develop a Framework and/or relevant Management Plans for key management areas in Council to ensure accountability and a clear understanding of responsibilities, processes, systems and procedures.	Corporate and Community Services	Annual Insurance Renewals	0%	Commences Feb 2025

DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN 2024/2025 (March 12th 2024)

GOAL	Initiative	Directorate	2024/2025 Action External	Status	Comments
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.4.9 Develop a Framework and/or relevant Management Plans for key management areas in Council to ensure accountability and a clear understanding of responsibilities, processes, systems and procedures.	Corporate and Community Services	Rollout annual Random Drug and Alcohol Testing	50%	
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.4.9 Develop a Framework and/or relevant Management Plans for key management areas in Council to ensure accountability and a clear understanding of responsibilities, processes, systems and procedures.	Corporate and Community Services	Conflict of Interest Training for new Councillors	100%	
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.4.9 Develop a Framework and/or relevant Management Plans for key management areas in Council to ensure accountability and a clear understanding of responsibilities, processes, systems and procedures.	Corporate and Community Services	Conflict of Interest Training for Staff	0%	Scheduled April 2025
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.4.9 Develop a Framework and/or relevant Management Plans for key management areas in Council to ensure accountability and a clear understanding of responsibilities, processes, systems and procedures.	Corporate and Community Services	Policy Review Asset Capitalisation Policy Investment Policy Rate Recovery Policy Financial Hardship Policy	75%	
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.4.9 Develop a Framework and/or relevant Management Plans for key management areas in Council to ensure accountability and a clear understanding of responsibilities, processes, systems and procedures.	Corporate and Community Services	Policy Review Councillor Code of Conduct Councillor and Staff Interaction Policy	50%	Model Code of Conduct implemented October 2024
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.4.9 Develop a Framework and/or relevant Management Plans for key management areas in Council to ensure accountability and a clear understanding of responsibilities, processes, systems and procedures.	Infrastructure Development & Works	Policy Review Asset Management Policy Development of an Asset Acquisition Policy	5%	


DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN 2024/2025 (March 12th 2024)

GOAL	Initiative	Directorate	2024/2025 Action External	Status	Comments
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.4.9 Develop a Framework and/or relevant Management Plans for key management areas in Council to ensure accountability and a clear understanding of responsibilities, processes, systems and procedures.	Corporate and Community Services	Policy Review Support for Public Art Policy	80%	
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.4.10 Investment in Council staff and Councillors to enable them to be the best leaders for their communities.	Corporate and Community Services	Roll out Organisation wide OHS & Risk Training (OHS & RISK budget includes - Snake , Manual Handling , First Aid , HSR Rep Training , White card)	50%	Ongoing
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.4.10 Investment in Council staff and Councillors to enable them to be the best leaders for their communities.	Corporate and Community Services	Skin Cancer Checks Flu Vaccines & other as required	100%	
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.4.10 Investment in Council staff and Councillors to enable them to be the best leaders for their communities.	Corporate and Community Services	OHS inductions & Reinductions	60%	
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.4.11 Review and implement a records management system, strategy and policy that ensures good organisational governance	Corporate and Community Services	Digitisation of old shire Rate Books 1957 onwards & Minute Books 29 books 1870-1990	0%	To commence second batch March 2025
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.4.11 Review and implement a records management system, strategy and policy that ensures good organisational governance	Corporate and Community Services	Development of Records Management Policy and Strategy	90%	Presented to Feb ELT
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.4.11 Review and implement a records management system, strategy and policy that ensures good organisational governance	Corporate and Community Services	Post Implementation of Cloud Records Management System Training	50%	Ongoing training provided to staff
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.5.1 Support the activities of the Audit and Risk Advisory Committee.	Corporate and Community Services	4 scheduled Meetings Audit and Risk Committee	50%	
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.5.2 Prepare and implement an annual internal audit program.	Corporate and Community Services	Internal Audits Planned for 2024-25 - Properties & Property owner database -Plant & Fleet Asset	10%	
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.5.4 Prepare and maintain a register of Council's statutory obligations including reporting and public registers.	Corporate and Community Services	Annual Review of Councils Statutory Obligations (Nov)	50%	
GOAL 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE	4.5.4 Prepare and maintain a register of Council's statutory obligations including reporting and public registers.	Corporate and Community Services	Caretaker Period Rollout Induction of new councillors	100%	



CONTACT US



-  council@westwimmera.vic.gov.au
-  www.westwimmera.vic.gov.au/
-  13 WWSC (13 99 72)

 **Postal**
PO Box 201 Edenhope, VIC 3318

 **Kaniva**
25 Baker Street, Kaniva VIC 3419

 **Edenhope**
49 Elizabeth Street, Edenhope, VIC 3318

CONNECT WITH US

-  facebook.com/westwimmerashire
-  www.instagram.com/westwimmera



14 Corporate and Community Services

14.1 Councillor Internal Resolution Procedure

Directorate: Corporate and Community Services

Report Author: Governance Manager

Report Purpose: For Decision

Purpose

The *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020* require Council to implement and adopt an internal resolution procedure that may be followed by Councillors to deal with alleged breaches of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

- 1. Adopt the attached Councillor Internal Resolution Procedure.**
- 2. Revoke the West Wimmera Shire Council Councillor Code of Conduct adopted 17 February 2021 which has now been replaced by the Model Councillor Code of Conduct in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*.**

Moved: Cr Richard Hicks

Seconded: Cr Jodie Pretlove

That Council:

- 1. Adopt the attached Councillor Internal Resolution Procedure.**
- 2. Revoke the West Wimmera Shire Council Councillor Code of Conduct adopted 17 February 2021 which has now been replaced by the Model Councillor Code of Conduct in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*.**

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

In accordance with amendments to the *Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020* and the *Local Government Act 2020* that came into effect in October 2024, Councillors must abide by the Model Councillor Code of Conduct and must adopt an internal resolution procedure for dealing with alleged breaches of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct by 1 July 2025 (Regulation 12A). The aim of the Internal Resolution Procedure is to address any alleged breaches of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct before they are escalated to formal processes like internal arbitration.

Council has based our proposed Councillor Internal Resolution Procedure on a template developed by Council's solicitors. Council officers have reviewed the Councillor Internal Resolution Procedure for Council's specific use.

The draft Internal Resolution Procedure is attached to this report, detailing:

- How a matter that is an alleged breach of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct is to be dealt with;
- The purpose of conciliation and how a Councillor can initiate a request to have a matter addressed through this process; and
- Who can perform the role of conciliator.

Disputes between Councillors may arise in a variety of circumstances. This Procedure is to apply to those disputes in which one Councillor (the Complainant) alleges that another Councillor (the Respondent) has breached the Model Councillor Code of Conduct. It provides both parties to a dispute with support and encouragement to resolve the dispute in a manner that enables the Councillors to move forward and maintain effective working relationships.

This Procedure is designed to minimise cost and disruption of disputes to Council and individual Councillors and, where possible, avoid disputes escalating and becoming the subject of an internal arbitration. It is acknowledged that this Procedure will not be suitable for resolution of all disputes between Councillors.

It is also recommended that the existing Councillor Code of Conduct adopted by Council 17 February 2021 be revoked, as it has legislatively been replaced by the Model Councillor Code of Conduct and this Internal Resolution Procedure.

Risk Management Implications

Risk identified:

Regulatory risk



Legislative Implications

The report complies with the requirements of the:

Local Government Act 2020

The *Local Government Act 2020* requires Council to implement prescribed procedures in relation to dealing with alleged breaches of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct, which are prescribed in the *Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020*.

Environmental Implications

Not applicable

Financial and Budgetary Implications

Not applicable

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 4 – Good Governance

4.4 Develop a high performing accountable organisation.

Communication Implications

No Communication Implications

Equal Impact Assessment

No Equal Impact Assessment is required

Conclusion

This report seeks Council adoption of the Internal Resolution Procedure in accordance with Section 140 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020* and to revoke the Councillor Code of Conduct policy which has now been replaced by the Model Councillor Code of Conduct.



Attachments

1. Draft Councillor Internal Resolution Procedure January 2025 [**14.1.1** - 6 pages]
2. Model- Councillor- Code-of- Conduct (1) [**14.1.2** - 5 pages]

INTERNAL RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

1. Purpose

This Internal Resolution Procedure (**Procedure**) is adopted under and in accordance with section 140 of the *Local Government Act 2020 (Act)* and regulation 12A of the *Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020*.

This Procedure will be observed when dealing with alleged breaches of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct.

2. Internal Resolution Procedure

Disputes between Councillors may arise in a variety of circumstances. This Procedure is to apply to those disputes in which one Councillor (**the Complainant**) alleges that another Councillor (**the Respondent**) has breached the Model Councillor Code of Conduct.

This Procedure provides both parties to a dispute with support and encouragement to resolve the dispute in a manner that enables the Councillors to move forward and maintain effective working relationships.

This Procedure is designed to minimise cost and disruption of disputes to Council and individual Councillors and, where possible, avoid disputes escalating and becoming the subject of an internal arbitration.

It is acknowledged that this Procedure will not be suitable for resolution of all disputes between Councillors.

An overview of the Procedure is annexed, in the form of a flowchart.

3. First Stage of Internal Resolution Procedure – Discussion

A Complainant is encouraged to raise their issue directly with the Respondent in a respectful and courteous manner, either in person or in writing, where they feel comfortable to do so.

Councillors are encouraged to recognise that:

- (a) certain behaviours and communications may be perceived by others to be causing issues or offence that may not have been intended;
- (b) it can provide useful insight to reflect on their own behaviour or motivation and possible contribution to the dispute, whether intended or not; and
- (c) dealing with the dispute early is more likely to avoid the issue escalating and resolve it before it threatens the effective operation of Council.

It is useful to frame any issue from the Councillor's perspective (eg "I felt disrespected when you said / did ..."), rather than accusing another person of holding a particular position or taking a negative action deliberately. A Councillor should let the other Councillor know how they feel and ask for an explanation, rather than making accusations or assumptions.

[9739994:46021662_1]



Maddocks

4. Second Stage of Internal Resolution Procedure – Conciliation

Where a direct conversation between Councillors has not been successful in resolving the dispute, or a Councillor does not feel comfortable communicating directly with another Councillor, the second stage of this Procedure is conciliation.

4.1 Initiating conciliation

A Complainant initiating conciliation must notify the Mayor and the Respondent of the dispute by completing a **Conciliation Application Form**. That form (see Attachment 1 to this Procedure) must:

- (a) specify the names of the Complainant and Respondent;
- (b) specify the provision (or provisions) of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct alleged to have been breached;
- (c) detail what was said or done by the Respondent to constitute a breach of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct;
- (d) attach any supporting information to provide examples of the behaviour complained of (eg screenshots or emails); and
- (e) be dated and signed by the Complainant.

4.2 Participating in conciliation

Councillors are not obliged to engage in conciliation but should only decline to participate if they honestly and reasonably believe that their participation would adversely affect their health or wellbeing or would otherwise be unsafe.

A Respondent declining to participate in the conciliation must advise the Complainant and the Mayor of their unwillingness to participate, and the reasons for it. That advice must be provided no more than one week after receiving the Conciliation Application Form.

4.3 Conduct of conciliation

Conciliation is to be conducted by the Mayor except when the Mayor is a party to the dispute or otherwise unavailable to conduct conciliation. In that case the Deputy Mayor will assume the role of the Mayor in the conciliation process. If both the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor are parties to the dispute or otherwise unavailable to conduct the conciliation, the role of the Mayor must be performed by a Councillor jointly chosen for the purpose by the parties.

When, in this Procedure, reference is made to the Mayor it includes:

- (a) the Deputy Mayor; and
- (b) a Councillor jointly chosen for the purpose by the parties,

when the Mayor and/or the Deputy Mayor are parties to the dispute or otherwise unavailable to conduct a conciliation.

4.4 Roles and responsibilities

The role of the Mayor is to provide guidance to the parties to the dispute about the Standards of Conduct in the Model Councillor Code of Conduct, and actively explore whether the dispute can be resolved by agreement between them.



Maddocks

The role of the Complainant and Respondent is to explain their respective positions and, in a show of goodwill, actively explore the possibility of resolving the dispute by agreement.

All Councillors are responsible for conducting themselves in a courteous and respectful manner at all times during the conciliation.

The role of the Councillor Conduct Officer is to provide the Mayor with the administrative support necessary to arrange and conduct the conciliation.

4.5 Support from Council

Council, through the Councillor Conduct Officer, will provide administrative assistance to the Mayor when arranging a time and place for conciliation, including any technical assistance that may be required. Council will make a venue available to the Councillors within Council's offices that is private and suited to the conciliation process.

Council will not provide any substantive guidance or advice about the subject matter of the dispute, or pay the costs of legal advice or representation for any Councillor in connection with this Procedure. Parties to a dispute may seek their own legal or other advice at their own cost, if they choose to do so.

4.6 End or termination of conciliation

Conciliation will end or be terminated if any of the following occurs:

- (a) the parties cannot jointly choose a Councillor to conduct the conciliation within one week of being asked to do so;
- (b) the Respondent notifies the Mayor that they do not wish to participate in conciliation, and the reasons for it, within one week of receiving the Conciliation Application Form;
- (c) the Respondent does not respond to the Conciliation Application Form at all within two weeks of receiving it;
- (d) conciliation has not occurred within four weeks of the Complainant submitting the Conciliation Application Form;
- (e) conciliation has occurred and the parties have been unable to resolve the dispute;
or
- (f) the dispute has been resolved.

The time for conciliation may be extended by agreement between the parties to the dispute, whether or not the matter has been escalated to one of the formal dispute resolution procedures outlined in the Act.

4.7 Confidentiality

Parties and other participants are expected to maintain confidentiality concerning the dispute and the operation of this Procedure.

4.8 Record of outcome

The Mayor must document any agreement that is reached between the Complainant and Respondent. The agreement must be signed by the Complainant, Respondent and Mayor. Copies must be provided to the Complainant and Respondent, and the original must be



Maddocks

retained by the Mayor. Again, parties and the Mayor are expected to maintain the confidentiality of the agreement reached.

5. Internal Resolution Procedure does not Apply in these Circumstances

The following disputes are not covered by this Procedure:

- (a) differences between Councillors in relation to policy or decision making, which are appropriately resolved through discussion and voting in Council meetings;
- (b) complaints made against a Councillor or Councillors by a member or members of Council staff, or by any other external person;
- (c) allegations of sexual harassment;
- (d) disclosures made about a Councillor under the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012*, which can only be made to the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission; and
- (e) allegations of criminal misconduct, which should be immediately referred to Victoria Police or the relevant integrity authority.

6. Formal Dispute Resolution Procedure

This Procedure operates alongside, and does not replace, the formal dispute resolution procedures outlined in the Act.

The formal dispute resolution procedure applies to misconduct, serious misconduct and gross misconduct.

Section 141 of the Act provides for an internal arbitration process concerning a breach of the Standards of Conduct set out in the Model Councillor Code of Conduct.



Maddocks

Attachment 1 Conciliation Application Form

Complainant:
Respondent:
Provisions of Model Councillor Code of Conduct breached:
Action constituting breach: (Include dates, times and detailed descriptions of the action complained of. Attach further documents as necessary.)

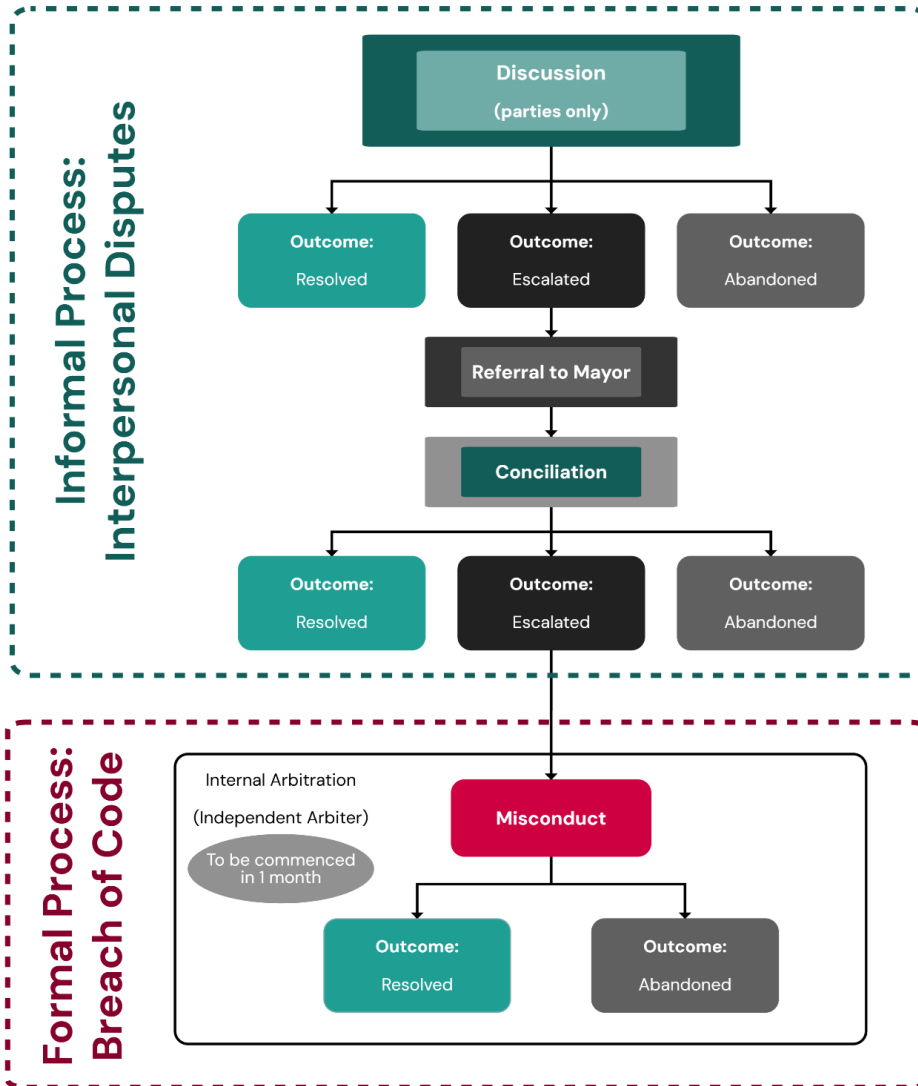
Signed by)
)
)
 on)



Maddocks

Annexure

INTERNAL RESOLUTION PROCEDURE FLOWCHART





Government
Services

Model Councillor Code of Conduct

Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Amendment
Regulations 2024

Model Councillor Code of Conduct

Schedule 1 of the Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Amendment Regulations 2024

Definitions

In this Schedule—

discrimination means unfair or unfavourable treatment of a person on the grounds of an attribute specified in section 6 of the **Equal Opportunity Act 2010**.

Standards of Conduct

1. Performing the role of a Councillor

A Councillor must do everything reasonably necessary to ensure that they perform the role of a Councillor effectively and responsibly, including by—

- (a) representing the interests of the municipal community by considering and being responsive to the diversity of interests and needs of the municipal community; and
- (b) being fit to perform the role of a Councillor when acting in that capacity or purporting to act in that capacity; and
- (c) diligently using Council processes to become informed about matters which are subject to Council decisions; and
- (d) not performing or purporting to perform any responsibilities or functions of the Chief Executive Officer; and
- (e) acknowledging and supporting the Mayor in the performance of the role of the Mayor, including by—
 - (i) respecting and complying with a ruling of the Mayor as the chair of Council meetings (unless dissenting from the ruling in accordance with the Council's Governance Rules); and
 - (ii) refraining from making public comment, including to the media, that could reasonably be perceived to be an official comment on behalf of the Council where the Councillor has not been authorised by the Mayor to make such a comment.

2. Behaviours

- (1) A Councillor must treat others, including other Councillors, members of Council staff and members of the public, with dignity, fairness, objectivity, *courtesy and respect*, including by—

OFFICIAL

- (a) not engaging in demeaning, abusive, obscene or threatening behaviour, including where the behaviour is of a sexual nature; and
 - (b) not engaging in behaviour that intentionally causes or perpetuates stigma, stereotyping, prejudice or aggression against a person or class of persons; and
 - (c) not engaging in discrimination or vilification; and
 - (d) supporting the Council, when applying the Council's community engagement policy, to develop respectful relationships and partnerships with Traditional Owners, Aboriginal community controlled organisations and the Aboriginal community; and
 - (e) supporting the Council in fulfilling its obligation under the Act or any other Act (including the **Gender Equality Act 2020**) to achieve and promote gender equality; and
 - (f) ensuring their behaviours and interactions with children are in line with the Council's policies and procedures as a child safe organisation and obligations under the **Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005** to the extent that they apply to Councillors.
- (2) A Councillor, as an individual at the workplace, must take reasonable care for their own health and safety and take reasonable care that their acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons by—
- (a) adhering to applicable systems and policies put in place by the Chief Executive Officer to manage risks to health and safety in the workplace; and
 - (b) complying, so far as the Councillor is reasonably able, with any reasonable instruction that is given by the Chief Executive Officer to manage risks to health and safety.
- (3) A Councillor must act in accordance with any policies, practices and protocols developed and implemented under section 46 of the Act that support arrangements for interactions between members of Council staff and Councillors.

3. Good governance

A Councillor must comply with the following Council policies and procedures required for delivering good governance for the benefit and wellbeing of the municipal community—

- (a) the Council's expenses policy adopted and maintained under section 41 of the Act;

OFFICIAL

- (b) the Council's Governance Rules developed, adopted and kept in force by the Council under section 60 of the Act, including in relation to—
 - (i) conduct in Council meetings or meetings of delegated committees; and
 - (ii) requesting and approval of attendance at Council meetings and meetings of delegated committees by electronic means of communication; and
 - (iii) the Council's election period policy included in the Council's Governance Rules under section 69 of the Act, including in ensuring that Council resources are not used in a way that is intended to influence, or is likely to influence, voting at a general election or by-election;
- (c) the Council's Councillor gift policy adopted under section 138 of the Act;
- (d) any direction of the Minister given under section 175 of the Act.

4. Integrity

- (1) A Councillor must act with integrity, exercise reasonable care and diligence and take reasonable steps to avoid any action which may diminish the public's trust and confidence in the integrity of local government, including by—
 - (a) ensuring that their behaviour does not bring discredit upon the Council; and
 - (b) not deliberately misleading the Council or the public about any matter related to the performance of their public duties; and
 - (c) not making Council information publicly available where public availability of the information would be contrary to the public interest.

Note

See the public transparency principles set out in section 58 of the Act.

- (2) A Councillor must not, in their personal dealings with the Council (for example as a ratepayer, recipient of a Council service or planning applicant), expressly or impliedly request preferential treatment for themselves or a related person or entity.

5. The Model Councillor Code of Conduct does not limit robust public debate

Nothing in the Model Councillor Code of Conduct is intended to limit, restrict or detract from robust public debate of issues in a democracy.





14.2 Living Libraries Infrastructure Program: Open Access Fitout for Wimmera Libraries

Directorate: Corporate and Community Services

Report Author: Director Corporate and Community Services

Report Purpose: For Decision

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's support for the submission of a grant funding application supporting Horsham Rural City Council's prospective grant funding application to implement an Open Access service model for Wimmera Libraries. This would enable after-hours access to up to the five Wimmera Libraries branches across Horsham and West Wimmera, facilitating increased community engagement.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:

That Council authorises a funding application be made under the Living Libraries Infrastructure Program for the Open Access fit-out for Wimmera Libraries branches project.

Moved: Cr Richard Hicks

Seconded: Cr Helen Hobbs

That Council authorises a funding application be made under the Living Libraries Infrastructure Program for the Open Access fit-out for Wimmera Libraries branches project.

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

West Wimmera Shire Council (WWSC) has a partnership agreement with Horsham Rural City Council (HRCC) to provide library services to the community under the Wimmera Libraries



banner. HRCC intends to apply for a grant to introduce Open Access library services to up to five Wimmera Libraries branches, allowing registered members after-hours access. The total project cost is \$189,200, with a HRCC contribution of \$19,667. No contribution is required from WWSC, however HRCC has requested that WWSC complete a grant application mirroring its own to ensure that the funding body is aware that both library partners comprising Wimmera Libraries consent to the grant application. In addition, since the project has the potential to affect certain WWSC-owned property, and since it relates to after-hours building access, the proposal is being presented to Council for consideration.

The Proposal

Wimmera Libraries seeks to implement an Open Access model, allowing after-hours access to up to five branches via special membership and induction. The initiative aims to address accessibility challenges in rural and regional communities, ensuring equitable access to library services. Similar models are successfully operating in other Victorian public libraries, providing a tested and refined approach.

The proposed fitout includes security and access control installations, including CCTV, keypad entry, and automated announcements. The project is eligible for funding through the Living Libraries Infrastructure Program, requiring a co-contribution from HRCC. No co-contribution is required from WWSC.

The Open Access model would:

- Enable broader community access beyond standard staffed hours.
- Improve library utilisation without significant operational cost increases.
- Address existing barriers for full-time workers, older persons, and individuals with sensory needs.
- Increase book borrowing by breaking down barriers to library access.
- Leverage grant funding to implement a cost-effective solution for modernising library services.

Grant applications close on 14 March 2025, with funding announcements in May 2025 and funding agreements executed in June 2025. Construction timeframes will be determined post-approval, with an outcomes report required 12 months after completion.

WWSC-owned properties which could potentially benefit from this funding are:

- Edenhope library
- Kaniva library



- Goroke library

Following discussion with Sarah Wiesner, Coordinator Wimmera Libraries HRCC, and Louise Gabbe, Facilities and Quality Manager WWSC, it has been identified that facilitation of open access may be problematic at the Edenhope library due to its location within the Edenhope and District Community Centre and the absence of an external door in the premises. These facts alone would not prevent the grant application from being lodged, because the project does not require open access arrangements at all library sites.

The Kaniva and Goroke sites have external doors, so there is no structural impediment to open access being facilitated. However, it is for Council to consider whether it is prudent to allow open access with respect to matters such as:

- Operational Risks: Unauthorised access or misuse of library facilities is a potential risk. This will be mitigated through security measures, controlled access policies, and CCTV monitoring.
- Reputational Risks: Community concerns about the future of library jobs could arise. This can be mitigated by a robust communication strategy to address public concerns and champion this librarian-driven project, which has a great many benefits for both staff and the community.

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

Not applicable

Financial and Budgetary Implications

Not applicable

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

- 1.1 Create a healthy, active, and vibrant community.
- 1.4 Deliver quality services that support community life.
- 1.7 Improve the liveability of the shire to assist in growing our population into the future.

Communication Implications

No Communication Implications

Equal Impact Assessment

No Equal Impact Assessment is required

Conclusion

The Open Access fitout presents a cost-effective opportunity to enhance library access for the community. However, it is for Council to determine whether the risks accompanying open access arrangements can be acceptably mitigated.

Attachments

Nil



14.3 Appointment of Audit and Risk Committee Chairperson

Directorate: Corporate and Community Services

Report Author: Director Corporate and Community Services

Report Purpose: For Decision

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend the appointment of Mr Richard Ainio as Chairperson of the West Wimmera Shire Council Audit and Risk Committee for a three-year term in accordance with the West Wimmera Shire Council Audit and Risk Committee Charter and to authorise remuneration for the ARC independent members (including the Chairperson).

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

- 1. Appoints Mr Richard Ainio as Chairperson of the West Wimmera Shire Council Audit and Risk Committee for a three-year term in accordance with the West Wimmera Shire Council Audit and Risk Committee Charter.**
- 2. Remunerates the Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Committee the amount of \$800 (excluding GST) per meeting.**
- 3. Remunerates the Independent Members of the Audit and Risk Committee the amount of \$727.27 (excluding GST) per meeting.**

Moved: Cr Jodie Pretlove

Seconded: Cr Richard Hicks

That Council:

- 1. Appoints Mr Richard Ainio as Chairperson of the West Wimmera Shire Council Audit and Risk Committee for a three-year term in accordance with the West Wimmera Shire Council Audit and Risk Committee Charter.**
- 2. Remunerates the Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Committee the amount of \$800 (excluding GST) per meeting.**
- 3. Remunerates the Independent Members of the Audit and Risk Committee the amount of \$727.27 (excluding GST) per meeting.**

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

West Wimmera Shire Council's Audit and Risk Committee (the Committee) is constituted pursuant to section 53 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, which requires that the Committee consist of a majority of members who are not Councillors. The operation of the Committee is governed by the West Wimmera Shire Council Audit and Risk Committee Charter (the Charter). (refer attachment)

The Committee is a five-person committee comprised of two Councillor members and three independent members. Council appoints one of the independent members as the Chairperson of the Committee.

On 18 November 2024, the Committee's Chairperson Mr Mick Jaensch notified Council of his resignation from the Committee effective at the conclusion of the Committee meeting scheduled for 10 December 2024. Mr Jaensch had previously foreshadowed his intention to resign from the Committee to pursue other professional interests. At the Committee's 10 December 2024 meeting, Committee members and Council management wished Mr Jaensch well in his future endeavours and expressed deep gratitude for his contribution to the stewardship of the Committee as Chairperson, as well as recognising the significant contribution he has made to the improvement of Council's financial, risk management and governance frameworks.

Following extensive advertising of the role, Council received four applications, three of which proceeded to interview. The interview panel consisted of the Chief Executive Officer, the Director Corporate and Community Services and the Human Resource Manager.

The interview panel agreed unanimously that the preferred applicant is Mr Richard Ainio. A reference check has been conducted, and it is now recommended that Mr Ainio be appointed as the Committee's Chairperson for a three-year term. The proposed Committee meeting schedule for 2025 is as follows:

1. Tuesday 11 March at 2pm
2. Tuesday 10 May at 2pm
3. Tuesday 9 September at 2pm
4. Tuesday 9 December at 2pm

Mr Ainio is a Chartered Accountant and company auditor with broad professional experience spanning 25 years. He currently serves on the audit committees for Hobsons Bay City Council, Moonee Valley City Council, Central Goldfields Shire Council, Warrnambool City Council, Glenelg Hopkins CMA and Ballarat General Cemeteries Trust. In addition, he has experience



as an audit partner servicing a number of VAGO clients including six councils (one of which was West Wimmera Shire Council), two hospitals and the Victorian State Library.

Mr Ainio's curriculum vitae is attached to this report for Councillors' information.

It is submitted that the depth of Mr Ainio's professional experience, his intricate knowledge of finance and auditing, and his ability to communicate technical accounting and compliance issues with a broad audience, make him an eminently eligible candidate to be appointed as the next Chairperson of the West Wimmera Shire Council Audit and Risk Committee.

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

The report complies with the requirements of the:
Local Government Act 2020

Environmental Implications

Not applicable

Financial and Budgetary Implications

Not applicable

Policy Implications

Not applicable

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.

Communication Implications



No Communication Implications

Equal Impact Assessment

No Equal Impact Assessment is required

Conclusion

Due to the resignation of the West Wimmera Shire Audit and Risk Committee Chairperson in December 2024, and following a subsequent formal selection process, it is recommended that Council appointment Mr Richard Ainio as the new Chairperson of the West Wimmera Shire Council Audit and Risk Committee.

Attachments

1. WWSC Audt__ Risk Committee Charter 2024 [14.3.1 - 19 pages]



Audit & Risk Committee Charter

(Pursuant to Section 53(2) of the Local Government Act 2020)



Table of Contents

1. Purpose	2
2. Authority	3
3. Membership and Tenure	4
4. Meetings	6
5. Responsibilities	7
6. Reporting to Council	11
7. Performance Evaluation	12
8. Committee Member Regulatory Obligations	13
9. ARC Members Remuneration	14
10. Review of Charter	15
Appendix A	16



1 Purpose

West Wimmera Shire Council has established an Audit & Risk Committee (the Committee) pursuant to Section 53 of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act) to support Council in discharging its oversight responsibilities related to financial and performance reporting, risk management, fraud prevention systems and control, maintenance of a sound internal control environment, Council's performance with regard to compliance with its policies and legislative and regulatory requirements, and assurance activities including internal and external audit. It acts in this capacity by monitoring, reviewing, endorsing and advising on the above matters as set out in this Charter. This Charter has been developed in accordance with Section 54 of the Act.

The appointment of independent members to the Committee as outlined in this Charter enables the Committee to provide advice to Council on matters related to its responsibilities based on broader skills and experience than might otherwise be the case and in so doing bring additional benefits to Council.

The Committee has no executive authority and no delegated financial responsibilities and is therefore independent of management.



2 Authority

The Committee is directly responsible to Council for discharging its responsibilities as set out in this Charter. The Committee has no delegated authority from Council unless specifically provided by Council from time to time and any such authority shall be temporary and may only relate to specific matters as directed by Council.

The Committee has the authority to:

- 2.1** Provide advice and make recommendations to Council on matters within its areas of responsibility;
- 2.2** Retain counsel of relevant independent experts where it considers that is necessary in order to execute its responsibilities, subject to prior agreement with the Chief Executive Officer;
- 2.3** Seek any relevant information it requires from Council, Council Officers (who are expected to co-operate with the Committee's requests) and external parties;
- 2.4** Meet with Council Officers, internal and external auditors and other parties as required to discharge its responsibilities; and
- 2.5** Through the Chief Executive Officer, have access to appropriate management support to enable it to discharge its responsibilities effectively.



3 Membership and Tenure

The Committee will consist of at least five members appointed by Council, three of whom must be independent members. Council employees cannot be members of the Committee. Details of membership and tenure are set out below:

Independent Members

3.1 Independent members will be appointed for three-year terms.

3.2 Independent members may be reappointed for one additional three-year term subject to satisfactory performance, unless otherwise resolved by Council.

3.3 Independent members must collectively have expertise in financial management and reporting and risk management and also experience in public sector management.

3.4 Independent members terms of appointment will be set so that as far as possible only one member retires at a time in order to minimize the loss of knowledge of Council's business that may occur on change of membership.

3.5 Remuneration will be paid to independent members as approved by Council from time to time.

Councillor Members

3.6 Councillor members will be appointed to the Committee by Council.

3.7 Councillor members shall be appointed for a two-year term and may be appointed by Council for a further two-year term.

3.8 Should an appointed Councillor member not be able to attend a committee meeting, Council can appoint an alternate member to act in such circumstances, either on a meeting-by-meeting basis or for the entire year.



Chairperson

3.9 The Chairperson of the Committee must be an independent member.

3.10 Council will appoint the Chairperson of the Committee.

3.11 If the Chairperson is unable to attend a meeting, the members in attendance at the meeting will appoint a Chairperson for that meeting from among the attending independent members.

Quorum for Meetings

3.12 A quorum shall comprise at least one Councillor member and two independent members.

AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

5 Members Committee



3 Independent Members

2 Councillors

Tenure 3 Years

Tenure 2 Years

Extension allowed for an additional term of 3 Years

Appointed by the Council Annually

Extension allowed for an additional term of 2 Years

Chairperson

Chairperson **MUST** be appointed from the Independent Members

Council will appoint the Chairperson

Quorum



At least 2 Independent Members **and** 1 Councillor



4 Meetings

4.1 The Committee will meet at least four times a year, and authority to convene additional meetings, as circumstances require.

4.2 A schedule of meetings and work plan aligned to this Charter will be developed annually and agreed by members with the work plan tabled at every meeting of the Committee.

4.3 All Committee members are expected to attend each meeting in person preferably, although attending the meeting through electronic means will be considered equally effective to facilitate the Committee members amid remoteness of the Council offices.

4.4 The Committee will invite members of Council's management team, the internal and external auditors and other personnel as appropriate to attend meetings. The Chief Executive Officer and the Director Corporate Services and Manager Finance (or equivalents) will attend all meetings, except for confidential matters as determined by the Chairperson.

4.5 Committee members and the internal and external auditors can request the Chairperson to convene additional meetings if they feel that is justified to address unexpected matters that may have arisen.

4.6 Meeting agendas and appropriate briefing materials will be provided to members at least three business days before each meeting.

4.7 Minutes will be prepared for all meetings.



5 Responsibilities

The Committee will carry out the following responsibilities.

Financial and Performance Reporting

5.1 Monitor significant accounting and external reporting issues, including complex or unusual transactions, transactions and balances in areas where judgement is required, changes to accounting policies, recent accounting, professional and regulatory pronouncements and legislative changes, and understand their effect on the annual financial report and the audit thereof;

5.2 Monitor changes to the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework and understand the impact of those changes on Council's performance indicators;

5.3 Review the annual financial report and annual performance statement and consider whether they are complete, consistent with information known to Committee members, reflect appropriate accounting treatments and adequately disclose Council's financial performance and position;

5.4 Review with management and the external auditors the results of the audit, including any difficulties encountered by the auditors and how they were resolved;

5.5 Recommend the adoption of the annual financial report and annual performance statement to Council; and

5.6 Review the appropriateness of the format and content of periodic management financial reports and performance statements to Council as required.



Risk Management

- 5.7** Monitor annually the effectiveness of Council's risk management framework;
- 5.8** Monitor Council's risk appetite statement and the degree of alignment with Council's risk profile;
- 5.9** Monitor Council's risk profile and the changes occurring in the profile;
- 5.10** Monitor Council's treatment plans for significant risks, including the timeliness of mitigating actions and progress against those plans;
- 5.11** Monitor the insurance programme annually prior to renewal; and
- 5.12** Monitor the approach to business continuity planning arrangements, including whether business continuity and disaster recovery plans have been regularly updated and tested.

Fraud Prevention Systems and Controls

- 5.13** Monitor Council's Fraud Prevention policies and controls, including the Fraud Control Plan and fraud awareness programme;
- 5.14** Receive reports from management about actual or suspected instances of fraud or corruption including analysis of the underlying control failures and action taken to address each event; and
- 5.15** Review reports by management about the actions taken by Council to report such matters to the appropriate integrity bodies.

Internal Control Environment

- 5.16** Monitor the adequacy and effectiveness of key policies, systems and controls for providing a sound internal control environment and for complying with the overarching Governance Principles;
- 5.17** Monitor that key policies, systems and controls are reviewed regularly and updated where required;
- 5.18** Monitor significant changes to systems and controls including whether those changes significantly impact Council's risk profile; and
- 5.19** Ensure that a programme is in place to test compliance with systems and controls;



Compliance Management

5.20 Monitor the systems and processes implemented by Council for managing compliance with relevant legislation and regulations and the results of management's follow up of any instances of non-compliance;

5.21 Review the processes for communicating Council's Employee Code of Conduct to employees and contractors and for monitoring compliance with the Code;

5.22 Obtain briefings on significant changes in relevant legislation and regulations, and on any significant compliance matters; and

5.23 Receive reports from management on the findings of any examinations by regulatory or integrity agencies (whether related to investigations at Council or other agencies), such as the Ombudsman, IBAC, Victoria Government Inspectorate, etc. and monitor Council's responses.

Internal Audit

5.24 Review and recommend to Council for approval the three year strategic internal audit plan, the annual internal audit plan;

5.25 Monitor progress on delivery of annual internal audit plan;

5.26 Review and approve proposed scopes for each review in the annual internal audit plan;

5.27 Review reports on internal audit reviews, including recommendations for improvement arising from those reviews;

5.28 Meet with the leader of the internal audit function at least annually in the absence of management;

5.29 Monitor action by management on internal audit findings and recommendations;

5.30 Monitor the effectiveness of the internal audit function and ensure that it has appropriate authority within Council and has no unjustified limitations on its work;



5.31 Ensure that the Committee is aware of and appropriately represented with regard to any proposed changes to the appointment of the internal audit service provider, including being appropriately briefed on the need for any proposed change; and

5.32 Recommend to Council, if necessary, the termination of the internal audit contractor.

External Audit

5.33 Receive and note the external audit scope and plan proposed by the external auditor;

5.34 Discuss with the external auditor any audit issues encountered in the normal course of audit work, including any restriction on scope of work or access to information;

5.35 Monitor the significant findings and recommendations made by the external auditor, and management's responses to them, are appropriate and are acted upon in a timely manner;

5.36 Monitor the effectiveness of the external audit process and ensure that the Victorian Auditor General's Office (VAGO) is aware of the Committee's views;

5.37 Monitor the findings and recommendations of any relevant performance audits undertaken by VAGO and Council's responses to them; and

5.38 Meet with the external auditor at least annually in the absence of management.



6 Reporting to Council

6.1 Minutes of Committee meetings will be provided to Council at the first available opportunity after clearance by the Committee Chairperson following each Committee meeting; and

6.2 The Chairperson will prepare a report to Council through the Chief Executive Officer on the Committee's activities twice per annum. One of these reports will be prepared after the meeting at which the annual financial report and the annual performance statement have been considered and recommended to Council for adoption, such report indicating how the Committee has discharged its responsibilities as set out in this Charter for the previous year.



7 Performance Evaluation

The Committee shall undertake a process to evaluate its performance annually and report the outcomes of the evaluation process to Council through the Chief Executive Officer, including recommendations for any opportunities for improvement. The evaluation will include feedback from both Committee members and senior officers who have regular interactions with the Committee.



8 Committee Member Regulatory Obligations

Committee members are expected to be aware of their obligations under Section 53 of the Act. These obligations relate to misuse of position as a member of the Committee (Section 123), confidential information (Section 125) and conflict of interest (Sections 126 to 131). Details about these obligations are included in Appendix A to this Charter.



9 ARC Members Remuneration

9.1 Independent members shall be remunerated for attendance at all meetings. An exception to this shall be applied where an independent member is part of a reciprocal arrangement with another municipality. In this instance no payment shall be made.

9.2 The chair shall receive an additional 10% allowance over the allowance paid to other members.

9.3 The payment amount shall be indexed annually on 1 January by the immediately preceding December quarter Melbourne all groups CPI.

9.4 Payment shall be made via Council's Accounts Payable process upon receipt of an appropriate invoice from the member.



10 Review of Charter

The Committee shall review and assess the adequacy of the Charter every two years or earlier if necessary and submit requests to Council through the Chief Executive Officer for revisions and improvements for approval.



Appendix A Committee Member Regulatory Obligations

MISUSE OF POSITION

Section 123 (1) of Local Government Act

A Committee member must not intentionally misuse their position to:

- a. Gain or attempt to gain, directly or indirectly, an advantage for themselves or for any other person; or
- b. Cause, or attempt to cause, detriment to the Council or another person

Section 123 (3) of Local Government Act

Circumstances involving misuse of a position by a member of the Committee include:

- a. Making improper use of information acquired as a result of being a member of the Committee; or
- b. Disclosing information that is confidential information; or
- c. Directing or improperly influencing, or seeking to direct or improperly influence, a member of Council staff; or
- d. Exercising or performing, or purporting to exercise or perform, a power, duty or function that the person is not authorised to exercise or perform; or
- e. Using public funds or resources in a manner that is improper or unauthorised; or
- f. Participating in a decision on a matter in which the member has a conflict of interest.

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Section 125 of Local Government Act

A member of the Committee must not intentionally or recklessly disclose information that the member knows, or should reasonably know, is confidential information. There are some exemptions to this requirement, the key one being that if the information disclosed by the member has been determined by Council to be publicly available.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Section 126 of Local Government Act

A member of the Committee has a conflict of interest if the member has:

- a. A general conflict of interest as described in Section 127; or
- b. A material conflict of interest as described in Section 128.

Section 127 of Local Government Act

A member of the Committee has a general conflict of interest in a matter if an impartial, fair-minded person would consider that the members private interests could result in that member acting in a manner that is contrary to their public duty as a member of the Committee.

Section 128 of Local Government Act

A member of the Committee has a material conflict of interest in a matter if an affected person would gain a benefit or suffer a loss depending on the outcome of the matter.

Please Note

The above guidance is not verbatim from the Act and does not include all details as explained in Part 6, Division 1 of the Act. For a full understanding of the requirements of the Act in relation to the matters summarised above, members are expected to make themselves fully aware of the requirements of the Act.



Version 2024.1.0.1
Meeting: Adopted Date: 16 June 2024
Next Review Date: 19 June 2026





15 Infrastructure Development and Works

15.1 Tree Planting on Council Road Reserves Policy

Directorate: Infrastructure Development and Works

Report Author: Manager Planning and Environment

Report Purpose: For Decision

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to consider the Tree Planting on West Wimmera Road Reserves Policy and the Tree Plantations on Unused Road Reserves Policy. These two policies have many areas of similar information. It is proposed that the two policies be incorporated into one and the Tree Plantations on Unused Road Reserves Policy be revoked.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

1. Adopt the attached Tree Planting on West Wimmera Shire Council Road Reserves Policy.
2. Revoke the Tree Plantations on Unused Road Reserves Policy (adopted December 2017).

Moved: Cr Richard Hicks

Seconded: Cr Jodie Pretlove

That Council:

1. Adopt the attached Tree Planting on West Wimmera Shire Council Road Reserves Policy, including the following amendments:

Section 1: Council will consider planting applications only if adjoining landowners have provided written consent.

Section 6: Any person or group who plants trees on road reserves without prior approval from Council will be asked to retrospectively apply to council and rectify their planting, which may include removing all of the trees, to ensure it meets the requirements within this policy. Where a person or group cannot be found responsible, Council reserve the right to remove the trees.

2. Revoke the Tree Plantations on Unused Road Reserves Policy (adopted December 2017).

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

West Wimmera Shire Council has previously had two policies regarding planting trees on road reserves, one for unused road reserves and one for road reserves on actively used roads. Both of these policies have had many areas of identical information and have been combined into the one policy that covers both types of road reserves.

Risk Management Implications

Risk identified:

Environmental risk

Reputation risk

Safety risk

Legislative Implications

Not Applicable

Environmental Implications

Environmental Risk rating has been assessed as: Low

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:

Tree Plantations on Unused Road Reserves Policy (proposed to be revoked and combined with the below policy).

Tree Planting on WWSC Road Reserves Policy.



Council Plan Implications

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

Goal 3 – Sustainable Environment

3.1 Preserve and enhance the natural environment.

Goal 4 – Good Governance

4.4 Develop a high performing accountable organisation.

Communication Implications

No Communication Implications

Equal Impact Assessment

No Equal Impact Assessment is required

Conclusion

West Wimmera Shire Council has had two similar policies that sets out requirements for the planting of trees on road reserves. The reviewed tree Planting on Council Road reserves combines both policies into the one document for ease of use for council staff and community.

Attachments

1. WWSC_Council Policy_Tree Planting on WWSC Road Reserves Policy Feb 2025 [**15.1.1** - 3 pages]
2. WWSC Council Policy Tree Plantations on Unused Road Reserves Policy adopted 20 Dec 2017 [**15.1.2** - 2 pages]



Council Policy Manual WEST WIMMERA SHIRE COUNCIL

COUNCIL POLICY							
TREE PLANTING ON WEST WIMMERA SHIRE COUNCIL ROAD RESERVES POLICY	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Policy No:</td> <td style="width: 100px;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Adopted by Council:</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">19 February 2025</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Next review date:</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">February 2029</td> </tr> </table>	Policy No:		Adopted by Council:	19 February 2025	Next review date:	February 2029
Policy No:							
Adopted by Council:	19 February 2025						
Next review date:	February 2029						
Executive Director	Director Infrastructure Development & Works						
Responsible Officer:	Manager Planning & Environment						
Functional Area:	Planning & Environment						
Introduction & Background	West Wimmera Shire Council is committed to the environment and to supporting initiatives for appropriate planting of trees on its used and unused road reserves.						
Purpose & Objectives	<p>Responsible management of tree planting on our road reserves by using the following guidelines to advise and assess applications by individuals, community groups or other entities.</p> <p>The related Council procedure will provide further detail on the requirements for an application, including management of disputes.</p>						
Response to the Overarching Governance Principles of the Local Government Act 2020	<p>Section 9 of the Local Government Act 2020 states that a Council must in the performance of its role give effect to the overarching governance principles. This policy is in response to the following overarching governance principle/s of the Local Government Act 2020:</p> <p>(b) the public transparency principles (section 58)</p>						
Policy Details							
1.	<p>Adjoining landowners and stakeholders</p> <p>Council will consider planting applications only if adjoining landowners have provided written consent.</p> <p>Except when landowner permission is provided in writing, trees are to be planted no closer than 2 metres from a landowner's fence, and no closer than 5 metres off gateways.</p> <p>The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) are to be notified of plantings on road reserves.</p>						
2.	Restrictions						



Council Policy Manual WEST WIMMERA SHIRE COUNCIL

	<p>No trees are to be planted within:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Table drains; • 6.5 metres from the centre of the sealed road; • 5 metres from the centre of a gravel road. <p>For unused road reserves a minimum width of 7 metres in the centre of the road should be clear of any planting to enable any future use of the road. If there are future plans to reopen the road reserve for traffic, the planting must allow for a clear width for use by traffic.</p>
3.	<p>Fire breaks</p> <p>No planting to occur in fire breaks nominated in the Municipal Fire Management Plan.</p>
4.	<p>Care and Maintenance</p> <p>Council is not responsible for the ongoing maintenance or replacement of dead trees. Any group responsible for planting tree plantations on road reserves is responsible for the management of weeds for a period of 10 years.</p> <p>Any tree guards used for seedling trees must be monitored on a regular basis. If any tree guards are dislodged/blown away they must be removed from the road reserve.</p>
5.	<p>Plant species</p> <p>Preferred plantings are those that are suitable to the site location, native to Victoria and indigenous to the area.</p>
6.	<p>Application in writing</p> <p>Any community member or group who is desirous of planting trees on Council road reserves must provide a plan that identifies at a minimum, the location, the extent and estimated numbers of plants and the proposed species.</p> <p>It is recommended an establishment plan is included.</p> <p>Any person or group who plants trees on road reserves without prior approval from Council will be asked to retrospectively apply to council and rectify their planting, which may include removing all of the trees, to ensure it meets the requirements within this policy and where a person or group cannot be found responsible, Council reserve the right to remove the trees.</p>

Policy Adopted:	Ordinary Meeting 25/07/02	Minute Book Page 10300	
------------------------	---------------------------	------------------------	--



Council Policy Manual WEST WIMMERA SHIRE COUNCIL

Policy Reviewed:	Ordinary Meeting 06/04/06	Minute Book Page 13682	
	Ordinary Meeting 11/03/10	Minute Book Page 17759	
	Ordinary Council 16/07/15	Minute Book Page 31431	RecFind 15/002911
	Ordinary Council 20/12/17	Minute Book Page 37391	RecFind 17/005254
	Ordinary Council 19/02/25	NA	SRV Policies and Procedures



Council Policy Manual WEST WIMMERA SHIRE COUNCIL

COUNCIL POLICY							
TREE PLANTATIONS ON UNUSED ROAD RESERVES POLICY	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Policy No:</td> <td style="padding: 2px;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Adopted by Council:</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">20 Dec 2017</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Next review date:</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">Dec 2021</td> </tr> </table>	Policy No:		Adopted by Council:	20 Dec 2017	Next review date:	Dec 2021
Policy No:							
Adopted by Council:	20 Dec 2017						
Next review date:	Dec 2021						
Senior Manager:	Director Infrastructure, Development & Works						
Responsible Officer:	Manager Planning & Environment						
Functional Area:	Planning						
Introduction & Background	West Wimmera Shire Council is committed to the environment and to supporting initiatives to rehabilitate unused road reserves.						
Purpose & Objectives	<p>Guidelines to advise and assess applications from individuals, community groups, landholders or other entities, to establish tree plantations on unused road reserves.</p> <p>The related Council Procedure will provide further detail on the requirements for an application, including management of disputes.</p>						
Policy Details							
1.	<p>Adjoining landowners and stakeholders</p> <p>Council will consider planting applications only if adjoining landowners have been consulted.</p> <p>The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) are to be notified of any plantings on road reserves.</p> <p>Except when landowner permission is provided in writing, trees are to be planted no closer than 2 metres from a landowner's fence, and no closer than 5 metres off gateways.</p> <p>A minimum width of seven (7) metres in the centre of the road should be clear of any planting to enable any future use of the road.</p>						
2.	<p>Care and Maintenance</p> <p>West Wimmera Shire Council is not responsible for the care and maintenance of the tree plantations.</p> <p>Any group responsible for planting tree Plantations on unused road reserves is responsible for the management of weeds for a period of 10 years.</p> <p>Any tree guards used for seedling trees must be monitored on a regular basis. If any</p>						



Council Policy Manual WEST WIMMERA SHIRE COUNCIL

	tree guards are dislodged/blown away they must be removed from the road reserve.
3.	Unused road future use If there are future plans to reopen the road reserve for traffic, the planting must allow for a clear width for use by traffic.
4.	Plant species Preferred plantings are those that are suitable to the site location, native to Victoria and indigenous to the area.
5.	Application in writing Any individual, community member or group who is desirous of planting trees on unused road reserves must provide the Shire with a plan that identifies at a minimum, the location, the extent and estimated numbers of plants and the proposed species. It is recommended an establishment plan is included.

Policy Adopted:	Ordinary Meeting 16/05/95	Minute Book Page 154	
Policy Reviewed:	Ordinary Meeting 26/09/02	Minute Book Page 10410	
	Ordinary Meeting 06/04/06	Minute Book Page 13682	
	Ordinary Meeting 11/03/10	Minute Book Page 17759	
	Ordinary Council 16/07/15	Minute Book Page 31431	RecFind 15/002910
	Ordinary Council 20/12/17	Minute Book Page 37387	RecFind 17/005253



16 Sealing Schedule

Nil

17 Late Items of Business

Pursuant to West Wimmera Shire Council Governance Rules – Division 3 Section 20:

20. Urgent Business

If the agenda for a Council meeting makes provision for urgent business, business cannot be admitted as urgent business other than by resolution of Council, and only then if it:

- *20.1 relates to or arises out of a matter which has arisen since distribution of the agenda; and*
- *20.2 cannot safely or conveniently be deferred until the next Council meeting.*

Moved: Cr Richard Hicks

Seconded: Cr Tom Houlihan

That Council consider the following items as late business:

- 1. Fire Services Property Levy (FSPL)**
- 2. West Wimmera Shire Council donation to Blaze aid mobilisation cost**

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5 / 0)

Moved: Cr Richard Hicks

Seconded: Cr Jodie Pretlove

That Council commit to writing to the Premier and Minister for Local Government to express our concerns regarding the collection of the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund. Specifically, that the collection of this fund be managed directly by the State Government, rather than local governments, to ensure a more streamlined and efficient process for all parties involved.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5 / 0)



Moved: Cr Richard Hicks

Seconded: Cr Tom Houlihan

That Council donates \$2,500 from the Quick Response Grant funding to Blaze aid mobilisation cost to support property owners with recovery after the recent fires.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5 / 0)

18 Confidential Reports

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council pursuant to Section 66 (2)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020 close the meeting to members of the public to resolve on matters pertaining to the following items:

18.1 Business Streetscape Grant Application

Reasons for Confidentiality - Local Government Act 2020, Section 3 - Private commercial information

18.2 Unused Road Licence – Todd Malone

Reasons for Confidentiality - Local Government Act 2020, Section 3 – Personal information

18.3 Provision of Maternal & Child Health Services

Reasons for Confidentiality - Local Government Act 2020, Section 3 - Council business information

18.4 Provision of Youth Services

Reasons for Confidentiality - Reasons for Confidentiality - Local Government Act 2020, Section 3 - Private commercial information

18.5 Provision of Early Years Services

Reasons for Confidentiality - Local Government Act 2020, Section 3 - Council business information



Moved: Cr Jodie Pretlove

Seconded: Cr Tom Houlihan

That Council pursuant to Section 66 (2)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020 close the meeting to members of the public at 3:13pm to resolve on matters pertaining to the following items:

18.1 Business Streetscape Grant Application

Reasons for Confidentiality - Local Government Act 2020, Section 3 - Private commercial information

18.2 Unused Road Licence – Todd Malone

Reasons for Confidentiality - Local Government Act 2020, Section 3 – Personal information

18.3 Provision of Maternal & Child Health Services

Reasons for Confidentiality - Local Government Act 2020, Section 3 - Council business information

18.4 Provision of Youth Services

Reasons for Confidentiality - Reasons for Confidentiality - Local Government Act 2020, Section 3 - Private commercial information

18.5 Provision of Early Years Services

Reasons for Confidentiality - Local Government Act 2020, Section 3 - Council business information

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5 / 0)

19 Close of Meeting

Next Meeting:

19 March 2025

Gymbowen

