



# MINUTES

## Ordinary Council Meeting

I HEREBY give NOTICE that an Ordinary Council Meeting will be held on:

29 April 2026

Shire of Victoria Plains  
Council Chambers, Calingiri

AND

via E-Meeting Protocol

Commencing – 2:00 PM

PUBLIC UNCOMPILED MINUTES



## **DISCLAIMER:**

The recommendations contained in this document are officers' recommendations only and should not be acted upon until Council has resolved to adopt those recommendations.

The resolutions of Council should be confirmed by perusing the minutes of the Council meeting at which these recommendations were considered. Resolutions are not considered final until the minutes of the meeting are confirmed or advised in writing by the CEO or authorised person.

Members of the public should also note that they act at their own risk if they enact any resolution prior to receiving official written notification of Council's decision.

### Recording of Meeting

Members of the public are advised that meetings of Council are audio recorded to assist with ensuring an accurate record of the meeting is provided for the formal minutes of the meeting. In terms of the Privacy Act 1998 this may involve the recording of personal information provided at the meeting. The provision of any information that is recorded is voluntary, however if any person does not wish to be recorded they should not address or request to address the meeting. By remaining in this meeting, you consent to the recording of the meeting.

You are not permitted to record this meeting with any recording device, unless you have the express authorisation of the Council of the Shire of Victoria Plains.

## **E – Disclaimer**

It is the Presiding Member's responsibility to preserve order in the meeting and this can be more difficult in an eMeeting. Therefore, each Council Member must consistently and respectfully follow the Local Government's Meeting Procedures Local Law, any additional eMeeting guidance provided by the Local Government and support the Presiding Member in their conduct of the eMeeting.

The pace of an eMeeting should be slow and orderly. The following practices will help avoid confusion and support effective eMeetings:

Speak clearly and slowly, as connections may be distorted or delayed;

Always state your name to indicate to the Presiding Member that you wish to speak. Restate your name if the Presiding Member has not heard you at first;

In debate, only speak after the Presiding Member has acknowledged you. Then state your name, so that others know who is speaking;

Follow the Presiding Member's directions and rulings;

If you are unclear about what is happening in an eMeeting, immediately state your name to draw the Presiding Member's attention and enable you to then seek clarification from the Presiding Member;

Avoid looking for opportunities to call Points of Order; instead, politely and respectfully gain the Presiding Member's attention and explain any deviation from your Meeting Procedures, the Local Government Act or any other relevant matter.

Commonly used abbreviations	
AAS / AASB	Australian Accounting Standard / Australian Accounting Standards Board
BF Act	Bush Fire Act 1954
BFB	Bush fire brigade
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CDO	Community Development Officer
DBCA	Dept of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions
DFES	Dept of Fire and Emergency Services
DPLH	Dept of Planning, Lands and Heritage
DWER	Dept of Water and Environmental Regulation
EHO	Environmental Health Officer
EFT	Electronic Funds Transfer
FAM	Finance and Administration Manager
JSCDL	Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation
LEMA	Local Emergency Management Arrangements
LEMC	Local Emergency Management Committee
LG Act	Local Government Act 1995
LGGC	WA Local Government Grant Commission
LPP	Local Planning Policy
LPS	Local Planning Scheme
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRWA	Main Roads WA
NNTT	National Native Title Tribunal
OAG	Office of Auditor General
OCM	Ordinary Council Meeting
PTA	Public Transport Authority
RRG	Regional Roads Group
RTR	Roads to Recovery
SAT	State Administrative Tribunal
SEMC	State Emergency Management Committee
SGC	Superannuation Guarantee Contribution
SJAA	St John Ambulance Association
SWALSC	South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council
WAEC	WA Electoral Commission
WALGA	WA Local Government Association
WSM	Works and Services Manager
WSFN	Wheatbelt Secondary Freight Network
EPA	Environmental Protection Authority
DPIRD	Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
HCWA	Heritage Council of Western Australia
WAPC	Western Australian Planning Commission
WDC	Wheatbelt Development Commission

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# MINUTES

## Ordinary Council Meeting of the Victoria Plains Shire Council

Held in the Shire of Victoria Plains, Council Chambers, Calingiri, AND, via E-Meeting Protocol

on 29 April 2026 commencing at 2:00 PM

### **1 DECLARATION OF OPENING**

#### **1.1 Opening**

The Meeting was declared open by the Presiding Member at 2.00 PM

#### **1.2 Announcements by Shire President**

The Shire President reminded Elected Members that the meeting was being recorded for the purposes of Minute Taking and uploading of the recording to the Shire Website for public viewing and the meeting will be run in accordance with the Shire's Meeting Procedures Law 2018.

### **2 REMOTE ATTENDANCE BY ELECTED MEMBERS**

#### **THAT:**

Under regulation 14C (2)(b) of the Admin Regulations, the Shire President can approve Elected Member attendance by electronic means;

In doing so, under r.14C (5) the Shire President must have regard as to whether the location that the Elected Member intends to attend the meeting, and the equipment intended to be used to attend the meeting, are suitable;

Electronic means includes, as per r.14CA(2) by telephone or video conference;

Suitable equipment would include an electronic device that can hold a Teams meeting, and perhaps, the use of headphones;

In accordance with r.14CA (5) the Elected Member must declare that they are able to maintain confidentiality during the meeting. Under r.14CA(7), the declaration by the Elected Member is recorded in the minutes of the meeting;

Summarily, according to Departmental guidance, a suitable location is one that is quiet and private e.g. a private room in your house. If there are other people at the location at the time of the meeting, an Elected Member may be required to close a door and wear headphones.

**Approval to Attend and Declaration of Confidentiality**

**THAT:**

**CR ELIZABETH WILLIAMS** has been **APPROVED** to attend the **29 APRIL 2026 ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING** by electronic means as approved by the Shire President and that a declaration has been received regarding confidentiality and other requirements as noted in Section 2 herewith.

**3 RECORD OF ATTENDANCE**

Members present	Shire President Cr P Bantock – Presiding Member Cr S Woods – Deputy Shire President Cr R Johnson Cr N Smith Cr E Williams – via teleconference
Staff attending	CEO – Mr S Fletcher DCEO – Mr C Ashe WSM – Mr S Brenzi Environmental & Building Health Officer – Mr G Houston – via teleconference Council Support Officer – Ms J Klobas
Apologies	Nil
Approved leave of absence	N/A
Visitors	Nil
Members of the public	Nil

**4 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

*Refer – Local Government Act, Regulations, Code of Conduct, and Declaration Forms in Councillor folders.*

*Type    Item    Person / Details*

Nil

**5 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

*Refer – Local Government Act, Regulations, Local Law and Submission Form & Guidelines circulated.*

**5.1 Public Questions with Notice**

Nil

**5.2 Public Question Without Notice**

Nil

**6 PRESENTATIONS AND DEPUTATIONS**

**6.1 Presentations**

Nil

**6.2 Deputations**

**7 APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Nil

**8 MINUTES OF MEETING**

**Officer Recommendation / Council Resolution / OCM 2604-01**

**Moved: Cr R Johnson**

**Seconded: Cr S Woods**

That the minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held 25 March 2026 as circulated, be **CONFIRMED** as a true and correct record.

**CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS DECISION OF COUNCIL**

Voted For Cr P Bantock, Cr S Woods, Cr R Johnson, Cr E Williams and Cr N Smith

Voted Against: Nil

PUBLIC UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

## 9 REPORTS REQUIRING DECISION

### 9.1 Accounts for Endorsement – March 2026

<b>File Reference</b>	
<b>Report Date</b>	15 April 2026
<b>Applicant/Proponent</b>	Nil
<b>Officer Disclosure of Interest</b>	Nil
<b>Previous Meeting Reference</b>	Nil
<b>Prepared by</b>	Katrina Humphries – Creditors Officer
<b>Senior Officer</b>	Colin Ashe – Deputy Chief Executive Officer
<b>Authorised by</b>	15 April 2026
<b>Attachments</b>	Agenda 9.1A - OCM - List of Payments March 2026

#### PURPOSE

This item presents the attached List of Accounts Paid, under delegated authority for March 2026.

#### BACKGROUND

As per Local Government Act and Financial Management Regulations.

#### COMMENT

Each month Council is to be advised of payments made during the preceding month, the amount, the payee, date and reason for payment.

#### CONSULTATION

DCEO

#### STATUTORY CONTEXT

*Local Government Act 1995 –*

- s.6.8(2)(b) – expenditure is to be reported to the next ordinary meeting of Council

*Local Government (Finance) Regulations 1996 –*

- r.13 Payments for municipal fund or trust fund
  - (1) the Chief Executive Officer is to provide a list of accounts paid from the Municipal fund or Trust fund, a list of all accounts paid each month showing for each account paid –
    - a) The payee's name
    - b) The amount of the payment
    - c) The date of the payment
    - d) Sufficient information to identify the transaction
  - (2) the listing to be presented to the Council at the next ordinary meeting of Council after preparation.

#### CORPORATE CONTEXT

Delegations Register –

- 3.2 – Municipal Fund and Trust Fund – Payments from Bank Accounts
  - o CEO authorised, subject to conditions
  - o Compliance with legislation and procedures
  - o Minimum of 2 signatories with varying level of authorisation

**Strategic Business Plan/Corporate Business Plan**

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	WE KNOW WE ARE SUCCEEDING WHEN
<b>4. CIVIC LEADERSHIP</b>	
4.3 Proactive and well governed Shire	External audits and reviews confirm compliance
	We have sound financial management policies and attract external funding to help achieve our goals
	Councilors attend training and feel supported in their role
	Council is supported by a skilled team

Strategic Priority 4.3 is relevant as part of sound financial management policies

**Delegation**

Nil

**Policy Implications**

3.1 Purchasing Framework

**Other Corporate Document**

Nil

**Risk Analysis**

Consequence	Consequence Rating:	Likelihood Rating:	Risk Rating	Risk Acceptance/ Controls	Mitigation and Outcome
<b>Compliance</b>	Extreme (5)  Non-compliance results in litigation, criminal charges or significant damages or penalties to Shire/Officers	Unlikely (2)  The event could occur at some time	High (10)	Senior Management Team / CEO  Risk acceptable with excellent controls, managed by senior management / executive and subject to monthly monitoring	Policies and processes including preparation by Finance staff and two-step process for payment will ensure that the residual risk is moderate.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

All payments are in accordance with Council’s adopted budget.

## VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Simple Majority

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### Officer Recommendation / Council Resolution / OCM 2604-02

Moved: Cr N Smith

Seconded: Cr R Johnson

That the **PAYMENTS** made for March 2026 from the Municipal Bank Account as per attached listing and summarised below, be **ENDORSED**:

**CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS DECISION OF COUNCIL**

Voted For: Cr P Bantock, Cr S Woods, Cr R Johnson, Cr E Williams and Cr N Smith

Voted Against: Nil

PUBLIC UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

Payment Type	References from - to	\$ Amount
Creditor EFT Payment**	EFT00069 - EFT00070	398,456.57
Direct Debit Payment**	PPIN002980 – PPIN03128 DD00049-DD00050	57,196.99
Credit Card – Bendigo Bank	PPIN03192	5,188.92
	PPIN03193	1,313.58
	PPIN03213	6,117.10
	PPIN03291	477.34
	PPIN03293	498.00
	PPIN03294	4,870.81
	PPIN03299	144.42
	PPIN03300	164.99
	PPIN03189	1,057.63
	Fuel Card – Wright Express	PPIN03065
Salaries and Wages EFT	PE11/03/26;PE25/03/26	115,274.33
Petty Cash Cheque		-
Trust Payments		-
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>590,773.86</b>

Local Spending	\$	%
Local Supplier	101,134.00	17.12%
Payroll	115,274.33	19.51%
<b>Total</b>	<b>216,408.33</b>	<b>36.63%</b>

PUBLIC UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

**9.2 Monthly Financial Statements - March 2026**

<b>File Reference</b>	
<b>Report Date</b>	21 April 2026
<b>Applicant/Proponent</b>	Shire of Victoria Plains
<b>Officer Disclosure of Interest</b>	Nil
<b>Previous Meeting Reference</b>	Nil
<b>Prepared by</b>	Colin Ashe – Deputy Chief Executive Officer
<b>Senior Officer</b>	Sean Fletcher – Chief Executive Officer
<b>Authorised by</b>	Sean Fletcher – Chief Executive Officer
<b>Attachments</b>	1. Monthly Financial Statements - Mar 26

**PURPOSE**

To receive the monthly financial statements for the period ending 31 Mar 2026.

**BACKGROUND**

Section 6.4 of the Local Government Act 1995 requires a Local Government to prepare financial reports.

The Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 34 & 35 set out the form and content of the financial reports which have been prepared for the periods as above and are presented to Council for approval.

**COMMENT**

The shire is broadly on track to meet its budgetary commitments and actuals are comparable to the YTD budget.

Much of the capital program has been completed with only finalisation of audible markers for Regional Road Safety Program (RRSP), invoicing for ESA Tourism Development and Gillingarra Water projects to be completed by EOFY.

The budget review No.2 has been incorporated into the financial statements reflected as a (\$253,431) deficit forecast at financial year end. This is likely to increase with the current fuel crisis which is yet to truly impact financially.

The other risk is Grants Commission final payment – this usually occurs on the 30 Jun 26 and \$1,060,349 is required to meet budget expectations.

The current surplus as at 31 Mar 26 is \$3,409,464 against a YTD budget of \$3,456,308, a difference of (\$46,844).

**NOTES TO ACCOUNT**

The following presents a summary and analysis of the key points in the Mar 26 Financial Statements.

**Note 1 Net Current Funding Position:**

This reflects the liquidity of the shire, calculated as current assets less current liabilities, aligning with the Statement of Financial Activity (Rate Setting Statement) amounting to \$3,409,464.

Whilst this is a positive result, some project monies have been received in advance without the offsetting expenditure which has the effect of over-inflating the position. Examples include Mitigation Activity Fund (MAF), ESA Tourism Development and Gillingarra Water Projects.

**Note 2 Cash and Financial Assets:**

The current total cash position balance is \$4,074,875 with an Unrestricted Municipal Bank Balance of \$285,909 and \$3,788,966 in Restricted Funding, the latter comprising:

\$720,671 in Reserves.

\$3,068,295 major grant funding received and quarantined fully cash backed. This amount is the Shire of Victoria Plains portion of CEI (see note 11).

**Note 4 – Debtors:**

An overall (net) balance of \$101,085 comprising of:

- \$68,834 in rate debtors analysed below.
- \$12,806 in statutory receivables or pensioner rebate claims lodged with state revenue.
- \$2,136 in sundry debtors inclusive of Fine Enforcement Registry (FER) for \$986.

In terms of Rate Debtors, this can be further analysed as:

- \$52,467 on instalment plans (60%).
- \$15,807 on ad hoc payment plans of which are actively being managed to ensure balances are cleared by 30 Jun 26 (18%).
- \$17,034 with debt collection services (19%).
- \$1,500 in mining tenements that have been surrendered. This balance has reduced significantly since last month hence reason for the rates variance.

**Note 5 Reserves:**

Funds transfer of \$77,309 from Reserves are yet to occur and will continue to be monitored for need closer to 30 Jun 26.

**Note 6 – Plant Disposals**

Except for the CEO vehicle which is due for changeover by end of Apr 26 all plant purchases and disposals have occurred. Currently this \$10,045 under the budgeted change over cost pending capital cost and disposal price for this last purchase.

**Note 7 – Capital Program**

The major expenditure in the capital program has been completed with the remaining items, post budget review expected to be completed by EOFY. Remaining projects can be summarised as follows:

Item	\$	Comment
CEO Vehicle	100,000	Replacement scheduled Apr 26
Admin Storage and Roller Doors	22,000	Completion by 30 Jun 26
Housing Development	4,567,000	Exp and funding into 26-27 no budget impact
Calingiri Sportsclub	25,000	Completion by 30 Jun 26
Calingiri Oval Scoreboard	80,000	Completion by 30 Jun 26 (TBC with Club)
Calingiri Playground	52,000	Completion by 31 May 26 (Lotterywest component)

Equipment		
Depot Renovations	60,000	Completion by 31 May 26
RRSP – Toodyay Bindi	2,428,855	Awaiting audible line marking
RRSP – WHW	823,540	Awaiting audible line marking
Gillingarra Emergency Water CWSP	86,180	Completion by 30 Jun 26
Gillingarra Community Water CWSP	93,912	Completion by 30 Jun 26
Gillingarra Truckfill CWSP	128,741	Completion by 30 Jun 26
ESA Tourism Development	350,000	Completion by 31 May 26, funding offset

### Note 8 – Loans

Self-Supporting Loan 83 for the Calingiri Football Club and Loan 85 Grader and Roller remain as the final payments for 25-26.

The loan application for replacement Graders has been submitted to Treasury and advice should be forthcoming in May 26. If successful there will be no impact too the 25-26 budget as first repayments will occur in 26-27.

### Note 9 – Payables

All legacy Contingent Liabilities have now been extinguished and whilst there is likely to be a component (CEI) at EOFY, the intent will be to have this cash backed so there is no impact on future budgets.

### Note 10 – Grants and Subsidies

Delays in audible line marking has meant the final claim cannot be made for RRSP projects. At this stage the forecast is end of May 26.

LRCI final payment was received in Mar 26 and this now officially closes this program in its entirety (but audit will still need to occur).

First milestone for the ESA Tourism Development has been received for \$300,000 and will need to be quarantined pending invoicing.

Lotterywest funding to complete the Calingiri Playground surrounds for \$13,132 has been received.

No advice on the Central Precinct Grant has been received and at this late stage of the FY is unlikely to be received. This will have no effect on the budget as no capital expenditure will occur.

For carried forward water grants, the only one remaining is the Strategic Water Plan which will be subject to council endorsement before payment is made.

The remaining 25-26 grant applications have the following status:

- Gillingarra Emergency Water – milestone 1 payment received
- Gillingarra Community Water – milestone 1 payment received
- Gillingarra Truckfill – milestone 1 payment received

Under operating grants as earlier advised a further \$\$1,060,349 is budgeted to be received from the Grants Commission by 30 Jun 26. Management is unable to forecast with any certainty what the actual amount will be but anything less will add to the budget deficit.

### **Note 11 – Restricted Funds**

The table illustrates:

- excess cash backed funds for the subdivision project
- monies owed for RRSP back to the shire; this will only adjust when the final invoice for audible line marking and the final claim to MRWA is made.
- monies received for the ESA Tourism Development Project than needs to be cash backed until invoices are received.
- Water Grants and Lotterywest are expected to be completed shortly and therefore do not need cash backing.

### **Note 12 – LRCI Program**

This program is now fully complete and acquittal is in progress.

Whilst there is now some further work to be completed on the Calingiri Playground Equipment, this is funded through Lotterywest and outside the scope of LRCI acquittal requirements.

### **Note 13 – LGGs Program**

Reallocation of budget line items has occurred in consultation with responsible officers with a small amount of expenditure to occur by EOFY. Accordingly, there is no major variance to report.

### **Note 14 – Material Variances**

Details have been provided with greater granularity on variances with most variances offsetting each other in terms of income and expenditure.

Employee Costs continue to have the largest variance (\$133,496) and are due to delays in subdivision funding which impacted on commencement of the works and subsequently, outside crew cost allocation.

An additional impact contributing to the variance is workers compensation payments amounting to \$24,419 which is categorised as an employee cost, but not normally budgeted for.

Through last months report it was communicated this variance would reduce but in fact it has increased. Whilst expenditure for the month was \$62,513, only \$14,806 of this was attributable to outside crew costs. A concerted effort will be required until the EOFY to ensure the project remains on schedule and budget variance of this type is reduced.

## **CONSULTATION**

Chief Executive Officer, Sean Fletcher.

Manager Works and Services, Silvio Brenzi.

Chief Financial Officer, Zoe Clayton.

Co-ordinator Financial Services, Glenn Deocampo.

## **STATUTORY CONTEXT**

Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996 –

r.34 – financial activity statement required each month and details of what is to be included.

**CORPORATE CONTEXT**

Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996 –

- r.34 – financial activity statement required each month and details of what is to be included.

**Strategic Business Plan/Corporate Business Plan**

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	WE KNOW WE ARE SUCCEEDING WHEN
<b>4. CIVIC LEADERSHIP</b>	
4.3 Proactive and well governed Shire	External audits and reviews confirm compliance
	We have sound financial management policies and attract external funding to help achieve our goals
	Councilors attend training and feel supported in their role
	Council is supported by a skilled team

**Delegation**

Nil

**Policy Implications**

Policy Manual –

- 3 Financial Management

**Other Corporate Document**

Nil

**Risk Analysis**

Consequence	Consequence Rating:	Likelihood Rating:	Risk Rating	Risk Acceptance/ Controls	Mitigation and Outcome
Compliance	Extreme (5)  Non-compliance results in litigation, criminal charges or significant damages or penalties to Shire/Officers	Unlikely (2)  The event could occur at some time	High (10)	Senior Management Team / CEO  Risk acceptable with excellent controls, managed by senior management / executive and subject to monthly monitoring	Policies and processes including preparation by Finance staff ensure that the residual risk is moderate.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Nil

**VOTING REQUIREMENTS**

Simple Majority

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**Officer Recommendation / Council Resolution / OCM 2604-03**

**Moved: Cr S Woods**

**Seconded: Cr R Johnson**

That Council **RECEIVE** the 31 March 2026 Monthly Financial Statements as presented.

**CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS DECISION OF COUNCIL**

Voted For: Cr P Bantock, Cr S Woods, Cr R Johnson, Cr E Williams and Cr N Smith

Voted Against: Nil

PUBLIC UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

**9.3 Amendment to Fees and Charges and ARIC Meeting Attendance Fees**

<b>File Reference</b>	
<b>Report Date</b>	20 April 2026
<b>Applicant/Proponent</b>	Nil
<b>Officer Disclosure of Interest</b>	Nil
<b>Previous Meeting Reference</b>	Nil
<b>Prepared by</b>	Colin Ashe – Deputy Chief Executive Officer
<b>Senior Officer</b>	Sean Fletcher – Chief Executive Officer
<b>Authorised by</b>	Sean Fletcher – Chief Executive Officer
<b>Attachments</b>	1. Fees and Charges Costings 2. SAT Independent Committee Members meeting fees

**PURPOSE**

For Council to approve amendments to the fees and charges and meeting fees for the 2025-26 financial year.

**BACKGROUND**

Changes council has previous endorsed the fees, charges and meeting fees during the budget process 2025-26 but due to the Edmonds St subdivision and implementation of the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee there is a need to make some adjustments before the end of financial year.

These will be included in the 2026-27 fees and charges and required to be approved again as part of the budget process.

**COMMENT**

The Community Enabling Infrastructure (CEI) secured by the Shire of Victoria Plains amounted to \$4,562,524 for the Edmonds St subdivision and includes a number of components to enable delivery of this project.

The project team discussed and decided the best path to undertake some components is to incorporate in house shire sourcing and delivery which includes:

- Limestone blocks
- Gravel
- Sand
- Fencing

Full costings for these materials and servicing has been undertaken and provided at attachment 1 noting:

- the baseline of wages, overheads and plant costs have remained the same regardless of the material.
- The reason for using a per load rate for gravel and sand as opposed to a ‘per day’ rate is because these are sourced locally.

Amendment to the fees and charges applicable to the sub division only are as follows:

Item	Material (\$)	Delivery (\$)
Limestone blocks	At Cost	\$4,918.36 per day
Gravel	At Cost	598.62 per load
Sand	At Cost	598.62 per load
Fencing	At Cost	\$4,508.36 per day

### ARIC Meeting Fees

With the implementation of the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee and in particular, the requirement for independent presiding member and independent deputy to the presiding member there is a need to allow for payment for attendance at ARIC meetings.

The Salaries and Allowances Tribunal has made the determination that independent committee members be provided with the following range per local government band:

Band	Elected members		Independent committee members	
	Minimum	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum
1	\$325	\$415	\$0	\$415
2	\$195	\$305	\$0	\$305
3	\$100	\$215	\$0	\$215
4	\$50	\$125	\$0	\$125
All regional local governments	\$50	\$125	\$0	\$125

It is recommended that \$125 (the maximum) be paid to the independent presiding chair and the deputy to independent presiding chair per meeting as the cost is relatively minor and noting the difficulty in filling the position.

Councillors who are members of the ARIC are not affected by this as an annual attendance fee was decided for 2025-26 but no allowance inclusion was made for independent committee members in the 2025-26 budget.

Travel reimbursement is also included for independent committee members noting this is already covered through the travel reimbursement process.

### CONSULTATION

Mr Sean Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer

Mr Silvio Brenzi, Manager Works and Services

### STATUTORY CONTEXT

Local Government Act (1995), Section 6.16 (2) and (3)

**CORPORATE CONTEXT**

**Strategic Business Plan/Corporate Business Plan**

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	WE KNOW WE ARE SUCCEEDING WHEN
<b>4. CIVIC LEADERSHIP</b>	
4.3 Proactive and well governed Shire	External audits and reviews confirm compliance
	We have sound financial management policies and attract external funding to help achieve our goals
	Councilors attend training and feel supported in their role
	Council is supported by a skilled team

Strategic Priority 4.3 will be facilitated ensuring compliance with the Local Government Act (1995) financial management policies.

**Delegation**

Nil

**Policy Implications**

Section 3 – Financial Management

**Other Corporate Document**

Nil

**Risk Analysis**

Consequence	Consequence Rating:	Likelihood Rating:	Risk Rating	Risk Acceptance/ Controls	Mitigation and Outcome
<b>Compliance</b>	Major (4)  Non-compliance results in termination of services or imposed penalties to Shire/Officers	Possible (3)  The event should occur at some time	High (12)	Senior Management Team / CEO  Risk acceptable with excellent controls, managed by senior management / executive and subject to monthly monitoring	Ensuring any recommendations from the audit are implemented will ensure that the residual risk is low.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- The adoption of the fees and charges for the subdivision will enable cost recovery.
- Council will incur costs for ARIC meeting fees and travel by the independent presiding chair of approximately \$500 per year (four meetings) and \$700 for travel costs (estimate).

**VOTING REQUIREMENTS**

Absolute Majority

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**Officer Recommendation / Council Resolution / OCM 2604-04**

**Moved: Cr S Woods**

**Seconded: Cr N Smith**

That Council **ADOPTS:**

1. Additional Fees and Charges as per the following table:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Material (\$)</b>	<b>Delivery (\$)</b>
Limestone blocks	At Cost	\$4,918.36 per day
Gravel	At Cost	598.62 per load
Sand	At Cost	598.62 per load
Fencing	At Cost	\$4,508.36 per day

2. \$125 per ARIC meeting for the independent presiding Chair or the deputy to the independent presiding chair.
3. A budget amendment of \$1,200 for the independent presiding chair meeting fees and travel allowance for 2025-26.

**CARRIED BY ABSOLUTE MAJORITY AND BY UNANIMOUS DECISION OF COUNCIL**

Voted For: Cr P Bantock, Cr S Woods, Cr R Johnson, Cr E Williams and Cr N Smith

Voted Against: Nil

PUBLIC UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

**9.4 Review of the Terms of Reference for the Audit Committee**

<b>File Reference</b>	
<b>Report Date</b>	20 April 2026
<b>Applicant/Proponent</b>	Audit Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC)
<b>Officer Disclosure of Interest</b>	Nil
<b>Previous Meeting Reference</b>	Nil
<b>Prepared by</b>	Colin Ashe – Deputy Chief Executive Officer
<b>Senior Officer</b>	Sean Fletcher – Chief Executive Officer
<b>Authorised by</b>	Sean Fletcher – Chief Executive Officer
<b>Attachments</b>	1. SoVP ARIC Terms of Reference – Apr 26

**PURPOSE**

For Council to approve the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) Terms of Reference (ToR).

**BACKGROUND**

Changes to the Local Government Act 1995 and associated regulations has mandated changes to the previous Audit Committee with the aim of strengthening transparency by enhancing local governments’ financial, risk, and governance practices, forming a key part of the State Government’s broader local government reforms.

From 1 January 2026, audit committees have been required to transition to Audit, Risk and Improvement Committees (ARICs) during a six-month implementation period until 30 June 2026.

Key changes include:

- Mandatory independent presiding member and deputy to the presiding member to strengthen oversight with skilled, independent experts.
- New functions of ARICs covering risk management and continuous improvement.
- Shared ARICs permitted between local governments.

Part of the local government compliance within the timeline is to ensure terms of reference and relevant policies and procedures are updated to align with amended regulations.

**COMMENT**

The Shire of Victoria Plains has already implemented the ARIC and appointed an independent presiding member and independent deputy to the presiding member.

In order to finalise the ARIC – the ToR have been reviewed and adjusted as per attachment 1 with more of a focus on Part 7 of the Local Government Act (1995) and Local Government (Audit) Regulations 1996.

The functions of the ARIC include:

- receive and review reports related to local government compliance audits required under the Local Government Act 1995 and regulations.
- make recommendations to the council on actions to be taken in relation to those reports.
- receive and review reports on the effectiveness of the local government’s systems and procedures in relation to financial management, legislative compliance and risk

management, and make recommendations to the council on improvements to those systems and procedures.

- receive and review reports on any actions the local government is required to take under the Local Government Act 1995, or has decided to take in relation to a compliance audit report or report into the effectiveness of the local government’s systems and procedures.
- perform any function conferred on the ARIC prescribed in the regulations or another written law.

As part of the ARIC’s role and function it is required to review the CEO’s report of the internal review under regulation 17 and make recommendations to the council on actions that may be required to address any issues identified in the report.

Accordingly some aspects that were provided through the previous Audit Committee (ToR) have now been removed including:

- Budget reviews
- Integrated Planning and Reporting
- Training and Development
- Financial Reporting

As they are not classified as part of the functions of the ARIC.

**CONSULTATION**

Mr Sean Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer

Ms Julie Klobas

**STATUTORY CONTEXT**

Local Government Act (1995), Part 7 – Audit

Local Government Act (1995), Part 8 – Scrutiny of the affairs of local governments

Local Government (Audit) Regulations 1996

**CORPORATE CONTEXT**

**Strategic Business Plan/Corporate Business Plan**

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	WE KNOW WE ARE SUCCEEDING WHEN
<b>4. CIVIC LEADERSHIP</b>	
4.3 Proactive and well governed Shire	External audits and reviews confirm compliance
	We have sound financial management policies and attract external funding to help achieve our goals
	Councilors attend training and feel supported in their role
	Council is supported by a skilled team

Strategic Priority 4.3 will be facilitated through the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) and its Terms of Reference.

**Delegation**

Nil

**Policy Implications**

Section 3 – Financial Management

**Other Corporate Document**

Nil

**Risk Analysis**

Consequence	Consequence Rating:	Likelihood Rating:	Risk Rating	Risk Acceptance/ Controls	Mitigation and Outcome
Compliance	Major (4)  Non-compliance results in termination of services or imposed penalties to Shire/Officers	Possible (3)  The event should occur at some time	High (12)	Senior Management Team / CEO  Risk acceptable with excellent controls, managed by senior management / executive and subject to monthly monitoring	Ensuring any recommendations from the audit are implemented will ensure that the residual risk is low.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The ARIC Terms of Reference includes the requirement for meeting fees and travel. This is inclusive of current arrangements for councillors but budget (amendment / allowance) needs to be made for the independent presiding chair and independent deputy to the presiding member in 2025-26 and 2026-27.

**VOTING REQUIREMENTS**

Simple Majority

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**Officer Recommendation / Council Resolution / OCM 2604-05**

**Moved: Cr N Smith**

**Seconded: Cr R Johnson**

That Council **APPROVES** the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) Terms of Reference (ToR) 2026.

**CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS DECISION OF COUNCIL**

Voted For: Cr P Bantock, Cr S Woods, Cr R Johnson, Cr E Williams and Cr N Smith

Voted Against: Nil

**9.5 Mandatory Review of Code of Conduct for Council Members, Committee Members and Candidates**

<b>File Reference</b>	
<b>Report Date</b>	10 April 2026
<b>Applicant/Proponent</b>	The Local Government Inspector
<b>Officer Disclosure of Interest</b>	Nil
<b>Previous Meeting Reference</b>	Nil
<b>Prepared by</b>	Sean Fletcher – Chief Executive Officer
<b>Senior Officer</b>	Sean Fletcher – Chief Executive Officer
<b>Authorised by</b>	Sean Fletcher – Chief Executive Officer
<b>Attachments</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Policy 1.1 – Code of Conduct</li> <li>2. Policy 1.1A – Behaviour Complaints Management</li> <li>3. Policy 1.1B – Behaviour Complaints Committee Terms of Reference</li> <li>4. Revised Delegation 19.1 Behaviour Complaints Committee</li> </ol>

**PURPOSE**

To seek Council adoption, by absolute majority, of updates to the Shire’s Code of Conduct framework to ensure compliance with amendments to the *Local Government (Model Code of Conduct) Regulations 2021* that commenced on 1 January 2026.

**BACKGROUND**

Council adopted the Shire of Victoria Plains Code of Conduct for Council Members, Committee Members and Candidates (Policy 1.1) in May 2021, together with supporting governance policies Policy 1.1A and Policy 1.1B and Delegation 19.1.

Since that time, the Model Code of Conduct prescribed under *the Local Government Act 1995* has been amended. Local governments are required to update their adopted codes and associated procedures to reflect these changes.

**COMMENT**

The proposed amendments update the Shire’s Code of Conduct framework to ensure it fully reflects the current Model Code of Conduct requirements. The changes are legislative and procedural in nature and do not introduce new local behavioural standards or alter the expected standards of conduct for Council Members, Committee Members or Candidates.

Key changes incorporated into Policy 1.1 – Code of Conduct (new sub- clauses 4, 5, 6, 14A, 14B and the use of conduct breach to replace minor breach) include the introduction of mandatory referral pathways to the Local Government Inspector in prescribed circumstances, the inclusion of provisions allowing the Inspector to appoint a monitor to assist with complaints, and clarification that Council is responsible for complaint determinations unless it authorises a committee or suitably qualified person to act on its behalf by absolute majority. These requirements are explained more fully in the Explanation Box below.

Policy 1.1A – Code of Conduct Behaviour Complaints Management has been amended consequentially (new clauses 3.14 and 3.15 with minor adjustments throughout to reflect these additions) to align the Shire’s internal complaint-handling procedures with the updated Code. These changes ensure that complaints are referred appropriately to the Local Government

Inspector where required, that any direction to defer dealing with a complaint is complied with, and that the role of the Behaviour Complaints Committee is exercised only where properly authorised.

Policy 1.1B – Behaviour Complaints Committee Terms of Reference has been overhauled to clearly record Council’s authorisation for the Committee to perform complaint-handling functions on behalf of Council and to clarify the limits of the Committee’s authority: further subject to any conditions or limitations contained in the applicable Delegated Authority and the Code of Conduct.

Collectively, the amendments improve clarity, ensure legislative compliance, and reduce governance and procedural fairness risk, while maintaining the existing standards of conduct expected of elected members, committee members and candidates.

The changes were required to be completed by 31 March 2026. However, the author due to work priorities regarding the Energy Transition and the emerging Fuel Crisis has not been able to progress the required changes for Council’s consideration until now.

#### **EXPLANATION BOX**

##### **Mandatory referral to the Local Government Inspector**

When does this apply?

Mandatory referral to the Local Government Inspector applies only where all of the following conditions are met:

1. A complaint alleges a behavioural breach under Division 3 of the Code of Conduct (that is, behaviour such as bullying, harassment, misuse of language, conduct at meetings, etc.); **and**
2. The person who is the subject of the complaint has been found, on at least two previous occasions, to have committed a behavioural breach; **and**
3. Those previous findings occurred on or after 1 January 2026.

When these criteria are met, the complaint must be referred to the Local Government Inspector. The Shire cannot choose to continue dealing with the matter locally.

What this means in practice

- Single or first-time behavioural complaints continue to be handled locally.
- Repeated behavioural misconduct triggers external oversight.
- The referral decision is mandatory, not discretionary.

This change is designed to ensure independent escalation where there is a demonstrated pattern of behaviour, rather than one-off incidents.

##### **Appointment of a monitor by the Inspector**

When does this apply?

The appointment of a monitor applies only if and when:

- A complaint has been referred to the Local Government Inspector (either because referral is mandatory or because the Inspector has taken carriage of the matter); and
- The Inspector decides that monitoring is necessary to assist with how the complaint is being dealt with or to address broader concerns raised by the complaint.

The Inspector may then:

- Appoint a monitor, and
- Direct the local government to pause or defer further handling of the complaint until the monitor reports back.

#### What this means in practice

- The Shire continues to manage complaints unless and until the Inspector intervenes.
- If a monitor is appointed, Council and any committee must comply with any direction to defer dealing with the matter.
- The monitor's role is oversight and assurance, not day-to-day complaint handling.

This provision strengthens public confidence where complex or sensitive matters arise.

#### **Clarification of who makes complaint determinations**

##### When does this apply?

The clarified decision-making arrangements apply whenever a behaviour complaint is being determined locally, that is:

- When a complaint has not been referred to the Inspector; and
- The Shire is required to make findings under clauses 12 (findings) and 13 (dismissal) of the Code.

##### In these circumstances:

- Council is the default decision-maker, unless it has formally authorised another arrangement.

##### What authorisation is required?

Council may authorise one of the following by absolute majority resolution:

1. A committee of Council members only (such as the Behaviour Complaints Committee); or
2. A suitably qualified and independent person who meets the legislative eligibility requirements.

##### Without an absolute-majority authorisation:

- Decisions must be made by Council itself.

#### What this means in practice

- Existing committee arrangements remain valid provided Council has formally authorised them in line with the updated Code.
- The amendment removes ambiguity and ensures complaint decisions are made lawfully and transparently.
- This protects the Shire from challenges about ultra vires (unauthorised) decision-making.

#### **Proposed/Required Changes**

Changes to Policies 1, 1A and 1B are highlighted in red text. With revised Delegation 19.1, a full draft is presented as this is easier to review due to the number of changes required.

#### **CONSULTATION**

The CEO has updated Council on the changes at the February 2026 Briefing Session.

#### **STATUTORY CONTEXT**

Section 5.104 of the *Local Government Act 1995* requires every local government to adopt a code of conduct that incorporates the Model Code of Conduct prescribed by regulation. Where the

Model Code is amended, section 5.104(2) requires the local government to amend its adopted code to incorporate those changes within three months of the amendments coming into operation.

The *Local Government (Model Code of Conduct) Regulations 2021* prescribe the Model Code and set out mandatory requirements relating to standards of behaviour, complaint handling, escalation pathways and decision-making responsibilities. Amendments that commenced on 1 January 2026 introduced additional requirements, including mandatory referral of certain complaints to the Local Government Inspector, provisions for the appointment of a monitor, and clarification of who may perform complaint-handling functions on behalf of a local government.

Any adoption or amendment of a code of conduct must be made by resolution carried by an absolute majority of Council. Once adopted, the Chief Executive Officer is required to publish the updated code on the Shire's official website.

## CORPORATE CONTEXT

### Strategic Business Plan/Corporate Business Plan

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	WE KNOW WE ARE SUCCEEDING WHEN
<b>4. CIVIC LEADERSHIP</b>	
4.3 Proactive and well governed Shire	Councillors attend training and feel supported in their role
	Council is supported by a skilled team

Councillors are required to understand and support key compliance matters including the Code of Conduct. The CEO and his staff support this through providing appropriate advice to ensure an informed decision is made that reflects the statutory requirements.

### Delegation

As a result of the changes to Policies 1, 1A and 1B, Delegation 19.1 is required to be updated accordingly.

As identified in the Explanation Box, the responsibility for determining behaviour complaints rests with Council as the default decision-maker, unless Council authorises, by resolution carried with an absolute majority, a committee of council members to perform those functions on its behalf. While the Behaviour Complaints Committee has historically performed this role, the existing delegation does not expressly reflect this updated statutory decision-maker framework.

The revised delegation in Attachment 4 is therefore required to:

- clearly link the Committee's authority to Council's absolute-majority authorisation, as required by the Code of Conduct;
- ensure that the Behaviour Complaints Committee continues to operate lawfully as the standing decision-maker for behaviour complaints on behalf of Council;
- recognise mandatory referral pathways to the Local Government Inspector and circumstances where complaint-handling must be deferred, so that delegated authority is not exercised unlawfully; and
- maintain consistency between the Register of Delegations, the Code of Conduct, the Behaviour Complaints Management Policy and the Behaviour Complaints Committee Terms of Reference.

Updating the delegation does not expand the Committee’s powers, but clarifies and regularises the legal basis on which those powers are exercised, thereby reducing governance, procedural fairness and legal risk to the Shire

**Policy Implications**

Policies 1, 1A and 1B must be amended to reflect the new requirements.

**Other Corporate Document**

Nil

**Risk Analysis**

Consequence	Consequence Rating:	Likelihood Rating:	Risk Rating	Risk Acceptance/ Controls	Mitigation and Outcome
If Council does not adopt the updated policies, the Shire may continue to operate under governance documents that are inconsistent with current legislation, exposing the Shire to legal, procedural fairness and reputational risk when dealing with conduct complaints.	Moderate (3)  Short term non-compliance but with no significant regulatory requirements imposed. Single moderate litigation or numerous minor litigations.	Possible (3)  The event should occur at some time(20% chance)  At least once in 3 years	Moderate (9)	Service Manager  Risk acceptable with adequate controls, managed by specific procedures and subject to semi-annual monitoring	Through the CEO attending departmental briefings and ensuring councillors attend training will ensure that the residual risk is low

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Nil

**VOTING REQUIREMENTS**

Absolute Majority

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**Officer Recommendation / Council Resolution / OCM 2604-06**

**Moved: Cr R Johnson**

**Seconded: Cr S Woods**

That Council by absolute majority **ADOPTS**:

1. Policy 1.1 – Code of Conduct for Council Members, Committee Members and Candidates, as amended in Attachment 1.

2. Policy 1.1A – Code of Conduct Behaviour Complaints Management, as amended in Attachment 2.
3. Policy 1.1B – Behaviour Complaints Committee Terms of Reference, as amended in Attachment 3.
4. Revised Delegation 19.1 as set out in Attachment 4 and notes that the CEO will put this into the required format at the time of the Annual Review of the Delegations Register prior to 30 June 2026.

**CARRIED BY ABSOLUTE MAJORITY AND BY UNANIMOUS DECISION OF COUNCIL**

Voted For: Cr P Bantock, Cr S Woods, Cr R Johnson, Cr E Williams, Cr N Smith

Voted Against: Nil

PUBLIC UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

**9.6 Review of the Customer Service Charter 2026**

<b>File Reference</b>	
<b>Report Date</b>	20 April 2026
<b>Applicant/Proponent</b>	Nil
<b>Officer Disclosure of Interest</b>	Nil
<b>Previous Meeting Reference</b>	Nil
<b>Prepared by</b>	Colin Ashe – Deputy Chief Executive Officer
<b>Senior Officer</b>	Sean Fletcher – Chief Executive Officer
<b>Authorised by</b>	Sean Fletcher – Chief Executive Officer
<b>Attachments</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Customer Service Charter</li> <li>2. Survey Information</li> </ol>

**PURPOSE**

For Council to receive and endorse the new customer service charter and survey information.

**BACKGROUND**

The customer service charter was first put in place during 2023 as one of the outcomes of the Strategic Community Plan (SCP) and Corporate Business Plan (CBP). Since then, council has received regular updates through the quarterly reporting mechanism of the SCP / CBP including annual surveys.

Given it has been sometime since the customer service charter was originally put in place, it is appropriate that a review be undertaken to ascertain its current fit for purpose, taking into account recent surveys.

**COMMENT**

Attachment 1 provides the reviewed customer service charter and based on feedback, has not changed its intent from the previous version, however does now include improvements such as:

- Measurable commitments.
- Timeframes, communication channels and what customers can expect.
- More externally customer focused.

In addition, it expands on the Shire of Victoria Plains values (ICARE) in terms of what it means for customers.

The recent survey as part of the new Council Plan survey was utilised as a baseline for the annual customer service survey (to ensure ratepayers are not survey fatigued) and is included in attachment 2.

This did not reveal any issues or changes with regard to the customer service charter.

It should be noted that customer service is managed through the customer relations management system (CRMS) which has been a resounding success since being implemented in 2023 and council receive this report monthly in the briefing sessions.

**CONSULTATION**

Mr Sean Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer.

Customer Service Officers.

**STATUTORY CONTEXT**

Nil

**CORPORATE CONTEXT**

**Strategic Business Plan/Corporate Business Plan**

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	WE KNOW WE ARE SUCCEEDING WHEN
<b>4. CIVIC LEADERSHIP</b>	
4.2 Shire communication is regular, clear and transparent	Residents and community groups believe they are being listened to and fairly treated
	Positive feedback through our customer survey
	Council and Staff work closely with the community to successfully achieve projects or outcomes that deliver upon priorities

Strategic Priority 4.2 is delivered through both the customer service charter and customer surveys.

**Delegation**

Nil

**Policy Implications**

Nil

**Other Corporate Document**

Nil

**Risk Analysis**

Consequence	Consequence Rating:	Likelihood Rating:	Risk Rating	Risk Acceptance/ Controls	Mitigation and Outcome
<b>Community &amp; Social Risk</b>	Minor (2)  Substantiated, low impact, low news profile	Possible (3)  The event should occur at some time	Moderate (6)	Senior Management Team / CEO  Risk acceptable with controls, managed by senior management through CRMS tracking	Ensuring customer service requests are captured through CRMS, acted upon in a reasonable time and communicated.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Nil

**VOTING REQUIREMENTS**

Simple Majority

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**Officer Recommendation / Council Resolution / OCM 2604-07**

**Moved: Cr R Johnson**

**Seconded: Cr S Woods**

That Council **ENDORSES** the Customer Service Charter 2026 noting further minor adjustments to formatting and photographs and receives the customer service survey 2026.

**CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS DECISION OF COUNCIL**

Voted For: Cr P Bantock, Cr S Woods, Cr R Johnson, Cr E Williams and Cr N Smith

Voted Against: Nil

PUBLIC UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

**9.7 March Quarterly IPR Update Including March 2026 Keywork Plan (CBP)**

<b>File Reference</b>	
<b>Report Date</b>	16 April 2026
<b>Applicant/Proponent</b>	Nil
<b>Officer Disclosure of Interest</b>	Nil
<b>Previous Meeting Reference</b>	Council Briefing Sessions – January, February and March 2026
<b>Prepared by</b>	Sean Fletcher – Chief Executive Officer
<b>Senior Officer</b>	Sean Fletcher – Chief Executive Officer
<b>Authorised by</b>	Sean Fletcher – Chief Executive Officer
<b>Attachments</b>	Attachment 1: Key Work Plan 2025–26 – March 2026 Quarterly Update

**PURPOSE**

For Council to receive the March 2026 (three-quarter) Key Work Plan progress update, including a consolidated update on the Strategic Community Plan (SCP) Review, Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) Review and Workforce Plan Review.

**BACKGROUND**

The Key Work Plan 2025–26 operationalises the Shire’s strategic priorities and provides a structured framework for monitoring progress across five themes: Community, Economy, Environment, Civic Leadership and the Capital Program. Quarterly reporting supports Council oversight by providing transparency on delivery, sequencing, performance trends and emerging risks.

At the January–March 2026 Council briefings and through prior agenda reports, Council has received progressive updates on the Major Strategic Community Plan Review, the Long-Term Financial Plan Review and the Workforce Plan Review. These three governance-critical workstreams are deliberately aligned and interdependent and have therefore been scheduled for substantive completion during the final quarter of the financial year.

**COMMENT**

**March 2026 Key Work Plan Progress (Three-Quarter Position)**

Theme	Status				% Complete	Key Focus
	S	D	M	J		
Community	●	●	●		72%	Health, access, emergency services
Economy	●	●	●		79%	Major projects, precinct planning
Environment	●	●	●		75%	Waste, biodiversity, land management
Civic Leadership	●	●	●		60%	Governance and compliance
Capital Program	●	●	●		77%	Roads, housing, infrastructure

**Diagram 1 – Council Dashboard**

The March quarter represents the three-quarter point of the 2025–26 financial year. Overall performance demonstrates steady and disciplined progress across all five Key Work Plan themes, with the majority of actions tracking as planned and several complex or governance-critical items intentionally sequenced for Quarter 4 completion.

Average completion rates across Community (72%), Economy (79%), Environment (75%) and the Capital Program (77%) are consistent with expectations at this stage of the year. Community is marginally below the nominal 75% benchmark due to timing, engagement and delivery dependencies and does not reflect underperformance.

Civic Leadership is tracking comparatively lower at 60% at the March reporting point. This reflects the deliberate sequencing and dependency management associated with the Major SCP Review, LTFP Review, Workforce Plan Review, legislative reform implementation and compliance-related actions. These workstreams require coordinated finalisation to ensure governance integrity, financial sustainability and workforce alignment and are scheduled for completion in Quarter 4.

Importantly, as at the March 2026 reporting period, there are no actions formally assessed as requiring urgent remediation. Actions identified as Amber reflect timing, sequencing or external dependencies and remain recoverable within current planning, resourcing and governance frameworks.

### **Major Strategic Reviews – Status Summary**

- **Strategic Community Plan Review:** Initial Community and stakeholder engagement has been completed. Youth/Schools issued with surveys and a further short survey issued to Community. Drafting underway and final alignment dependent on workforce and financial modelling outcomes.
- **Long-Term Financial Plan Review:** Framework preparation is complete, with population, service and asset data currently being finalised to ensure consistency with the emerging SCP (Council Plan).
- **Workforce Plan Review:** Engagement and analysis phases are complete, with draft alignment occurring alongside SCP priorities and LTFP affordability parameters.

These three reviews will be brought together in Quarter 4 to ensure an integrated and defensible governance outcome for Council consideration.

### **CONSULTATION**

Council Briefing Sessions –February, March and April2026

The CEO compiled the update of the Key Work Plan in consultation with the officers responsible for each strategic action.

### **STATUTORY CONTEXT**

#### ***Local Government Act 1995 –***

- s.1.3 – Principles of good governance
- s.5.56 – CEO responsible for the day-to-day operations of a local government

#### **Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996**

19DA. Corporate business plans, requirements for (Act s. 5.56)

(4) A local government is to review the current corporate business plan for its district every year.

### **Integrated Planning and Reporting – Framework and Guidelines**

Apart from the Annual Report providing progress towards the achievement of the four-yearly Shire priorities as established through the Corporate Business Plan (Intermediate Standard), the Departmental IPR Guidelines require that as a minimum, a quarterly review is conducted on the status of the CBP for each year.

**CORPORATE CONTEXT**

**Strategic Business Plan/Corporate Business Plan**

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	WE KNOW WE ARE SUCCEEDING WHEN
4. CIVIC LEADERSHIP	
4.1 Forward planning and implementation of plans to achieve community priorities	Performance against targets are regularly reported to the community
	Demonstrated progress towards achievement of the Corporate Business Plan

**Delegation**

Nil

**Policy Implications**

Nil

**Other Corporate Document**

Nil

**Risk Analysis**

Risk associated with delayed or misaligned strategic governance documents is mitigated through deliberate sequencing, integrated review processes and regular Council briefing, with residual risk assessed as acceptable and manageable within existing controls.

Consequence	Consequence Rating	Likelihood Rating:	Risk Rating	Risk Acceptance	Mitigation and Outcome
Reputation and Compliance  Not adhering to the Corporate Business Plan and hence the Strategic Community Plan	Major (4)  Substantiated, public embarrassment, widespread high impact on community trust, high media profile, third party actions	Unlikely (2)  The event could occur at some time - -10 years	Moderate (8)	Operational Manager  Risk acceptable with adequate controls, managed by specific procedures and subject to semi-annual monitoring  Adequate: The Shire continues to ensure that the CBP Quarterly Review is available publicly through a report to Council each quarter.	CEO to ensure all staff undertake and follow CBP  Elected Members have undertaken further training in IPR requirements.  The above will ensure that the appropriate manager can assess the risk and correct it accordingly through quarterly reporting. This will ensure that the risk is low

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Nil

**VOTING REQUIREMENTS**

Simple Majority

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**Officer Recommendation / Council Resolution / OCM 2604-08**

**Moved: Cr S Woods**

**Seconded: Cr R Johnson**

That Council **RECIEVES** the March 2026 Key Work Plan Quarterly Update, including the progress update on the Strategic Community Plan Review, Long-Term Financial Plan Review and Workforce Plan Review.

**CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS DECISION OF COUNCIL**

Voted For: Cr P Bantock, Cr S Woods, Cr R Johnson, Cr E Williams and Cr N Smith

Voted Against: Nil

PUBLIC UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

**9.8 Adoption of Edmonds Street Concept Plan Major Land and Trading Undertaking Business Case**

<b>File Reference</b>	
<b>Report Date</b>	15 April 2026
<b>Applicant/Proponent</b>	Sean Fletcher – Chief Executive Officer
<b>Officer Disclosure of Interest</b>	Nil
<b>Previous Meeting Reference</b>	Ordinary Council Meeting – 26 November 2025 (Item 9.1)
<b>Prepared by</b>	Sean Fletcher – Chief Executive Officer
<b>Senior Officer</b>	Sean Fletcher – Chief Executive Officer
<b>Authorised by</b>	Sean Fletcher – Chief Executive Officer
<b>Attachments</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Major Land and Trading Undertaking Business Case</li> <li>2. Revised Project Gantt Chart</li> </ol>

**PURPOSE**

For Council to adopt the final Major Land Trading and Trading Undertaking Business Plan for the Edmond Street Concept Plan (Attachment 1) following completion of the statutory public consultation period under section 3.59 of the *Local Government Act 1995*.

**BACKGROUND**

At its Ordinary Council Meeting of 26 November 2025, Council resolved to endorse the Major Land Trading and Trading Undertaking Business Plan for the Edmond Street Concept Plan for the purposes of public consultation and to invite submissions for a period of not less than six weeks. Council further resolved that the Business Plan be presented back to Council for final consideration following the consultation period.

The Business Plan relates to a proposed staged development of Lot 42 Edmond Street, Calingiri, classified as a Major Land Transaction under section 3.59 of the *Local Government Act 1995*, intended to address key worker housing shortages and deliver associated community infrastructure.

**COMMENT**

Since commencement of the public consultation period, the Shire has continued discussions with key delivery partners and funding agencies to refine implementation detail and strengthen funding applications associated with the project.

Recent correspondence and discussions with reputable builders confirmed that alternative funding and rental/lease arrangements may be explored and reported to Council as part of delivery options, should this be required in the context of funding outcomes. This was identified as an option to be considered rather than a change to the adopted project scope.

Further liaison has occurred with the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) and Whitney Consulting to provide additional clarification and supporting material for the Shire's Regional Housing Support Program (RHSP) application to build up to 10 homes on the Edmond Street development. This engagement relates to funding evaluation requirements and does not alter the intent, governance framework or risk profile of the Business Plan itself.

In parallel with the above, the Shire is also working through the Wheatbelt Regional Housing Initiative (WRHI) governance framework to assess whether it is worthwhile submitting an Expression of Interest (EOI) under the Commonwealth Housing Australia Future Fund – Social and Affordable

Housing Funding Round 3 (HAFF3) for housing construction associated with the Edmond Street project.

Preliminary advice provided to the Shire through WRHI indicates that, while the scale and housing mix across the regional program may align in principle with HAFF eligibility settings, there are material constraints for local governments, including the structure of availability payment funding, the requirement for an eligible non-local-government lead proponent, and the need for construction capital to be secured upfront. These constraints may limit the practical viability of a HAFF3 submission for local government-owned and managed key worker housing.

This assessment work is ongoing at the regional level and is being progressed as a complementary funding exploration only. It does not alter the intent, scope, governance framework or delivery pathway set out in the Major Land Trading and Trading Undertaking Business Plan, nor does it form part of the statutory decision before Council.

### **Explanation of the Project Gantt Chart (Attachment 2)**

As a result of the engagement with DPLH mentioned above, the author has revised the Gantt Chart for the project. This has been inserted into the final business plan and can be found in Attachment 2.

The Project Gantt Chart sets out the anticipated sequencing of key statutory, funding and delivery milestones for the Edmond Street development, from late 2025 through to final completion in 2027. The Gantt Chart is intended to provide Council with a high-level program view, illustrating task dependencies, funding gateways and critical delivery stages, rather than representing fixed contractual dates for each individual activity.

It is noted that some early task timelines identified in the Gantt Chart have now expired, particularly those associated with public advertising, funding negotiations and advisory processes. This reflects the practical realities of progressing a multi-stage project that is dependent on external approval processes, funding program timeframes and inter-agency coordination.

Notwithstanding this, the Shire remains fully committed to achieving the overall project outcomes and completion milestones, including delivery of Stage 1 and Stage 2 guest / visitor modular housing and final occupation within the indicative program period. Where individual activities have shifted, this has occurred without altering the scope, intent or governance framework of the endorsed Major Land Trading and Trading Undertaking Business Plan.

The Gantt Chart has therefore been updated to reflect a realistic and current project pathway, while retaining alignment with funding conditions (including the Housing Support Program – Community Enabling Infrastructure milestones), statutory planning processes and the Shire's capacity to deliver the project in an orderly and compliant manner. The updated Gantt Chart should be read as a dynamic management tool that will continue to be refined as approvals are finalised and delivery contracts are awarded.

### **Conclusion**

The statutory consultation requirements have been satisfied, no objections or submissions were received, and only a minor administrative update is proposed. Adoption of the final Business Plan will allow the Shire to progress funding negotiations, detailed design and delivery activities associated with the Edmond Street Concept Plan.

### **CONSULTATION**

In accordance with section 3.59 of the *Local Government Act 1995* and regulation 8A of the *Local Government (Functions and General) Regulations 1996*, a formal Public Notice was issued advertising the proposed Major Land Transaction and inviting written submissions. The Public Notice was published on 11 December 2025 and closed for submissions on Thursday, 30 January 2026, consistent with the minimum six-week statutory consultation period.

The Business Plan was made available for inspection at the Shire Administration Office and on the Shire's website during the consultation period.

No submissions were received by the closing date.

**STATUTORY CONTEXT**

Section 3.59 of the *Local Government Act 1995* requires Council to consider submissions received during the public consultation period prior to undertaking a major land transaction. As no submissions were received, Council is now in a position to proceed to final adoption of the Business Plan.

**CORPORATE CONTEXT**

**Strategic Business Plan/Corporate Business Plan**

The Major Land Trading and Trading Undertaking Business Plan for the Edmond Street Concept Plan directly supports Outcome 2.1 as follows:

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	WE KNOW WE ARE SUCCEEDING WHEN
<b>2. ECONOMY</b>	
2.1 We understand traditional and emerging industries across the Shire	Townsite amenities are welcoming and attractive
	Our population increases
	We can attract and retain staff because we maintain and increase our housing stock
	Communities and opportunities are promoted by the Shire
	We forward plan for emerging industries

**Delegation**

Nil

**Policy Implications**

Nil

**Other Corporate Document**

Nil

**Risk Analysis**

Proceeding with the Plan presents a Strategic Risk relating to reliance on external funding; however, this risk is mitigated by builder-provided contingency delivery and leasing options should grant funding not be secured, reducing the associated financial exposure and preserving Council's decision-making flexibility.

Consequence	Consequence Rating:	Likelihood Rating:	Risk Rating	Risk Acceptance/ Controls	Mitigation and Outcome
<p>If external grant funding (including RHSP) is not secured, there is a risk that delivery of the Edmond Street housing project could be delayed or require alternative financing or leasing arrangements, potentially affecting timing and affordability outcomes.</p>	<p>Moderate (3) Probable foreseeable financial impact in the range \$50,001–\$250,000</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No committed construction contracts</li> <li>No irreversible capital expenditure</li> <li>Alternative delivery / leasing options available</li> </ul>	<p>Possible (3) RHSP outcome uncertain and competitive Event could occur, but not expected in most circumstances Occurrence benchmark: "At least once in 3 years"</p>	<p>Moderate (9)</p>	<p>Operational Manager Risk acceptable with adequate controls, managed by specific procedures and subject to semi-annual monitoring Council adoption of the Business Plan does not commit the Shire to construction expenditure Staged project structure with funding gateways Explicit Council decision points prior to any contractual commitment Ongoing engagement with funding bodies during assessment Builder-provided alternative financing and leasing options (Plan B) Updated Gantt Chart used as a dynamic management tool Oversight by CEO under the Second Line of Defence</p>	<p>Financial exposure remains controlled and proportionate The Shire retains flexibility to proceed, defer or pivot delivery model Strategic housing objectives remain achievable Risk remains within the Shire's accepted risk appetite</p>

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Nil

PUBLIC UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

## VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Simple Majority

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### Officer Recommendation / Council Resolution / OCM 2604-09

Moved: Cr N Smith

Seconded: Cr S Woods

### Officer Recommendation

That Council

1. **NOTE** the outcomes of the public consultation process undertaken in accordance with section 3.59 of the Local Government Act 1995, including that no submissions were received; and
2. **ADOPT** the final Major Land Trading and Trading Undertaking Business Plan – Edmond Street Concept Plan (Lot 42, Calingiri), as attached, including the updated Project Gantt Chart.

**CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS DECISION OF COUNCIL**

Voted For: Cr P Bantock, Cr S Woods, Cr R Johnson, Cr E Williams and Cr N Smith

Voted Against: Nil

PUBLIC UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

**9.9 Proposed Amendment No.4 to Shire of Victoria Plains Local Planning Scheme No.5**

<b>File Reference</b>	
<b>Report Date</b>	21 April 2026
<b>Applicant/Proponent</b>	Shire of Victoria Plains
<b>Officer Disclosure of Interest</b>	Nil
<b>Previous Meeting Reference</b>	Resolution No.2408-06 on 28 August 2024
<b>Prepared by</b>	Joe Douglas – Planning Officer
<b>Senior Officer</b>	Not applicable
<b>Authorised by</b>	Sean Fletcher – Chief Executive Officer
<b>Attachments</b>	Nil

**PURPOSE**

This report considers all submissions received during public advertising of proposed Amendment No.4 to the Shire of Victoria Plains Local Planning Scheme No.5 to modify the Scheme as follows including recommendations in respect of each submission and the scheme amendment proposal as a whole:

- i) Change the residential density coding applicable to the 7,250m<sup>2</sup> portion of Lot 42 (No.52) Edmonds Street, Calingiri currently zoned 'Residential' from R12.5 to R20 and update the scheme map accordingly;
- ii) Rezone the 8,476m<sup>2</sup> balance portion of Lot 42 (No. 52) Edmonds Street, Calingiri from 'Residential' to 'Special Use' with the designated purpose 'Caravan Park and Tourist and Visitor Accommodation';
- iii) Amend the Scheme Text in various parts to account for new tourist accommodation use classes prescribed in the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Amendment (Short-Term Rental Accommodation) Regulations 2024* including use class permissibility and land use definitions; and
- iv) Amend the Scheme Text to address any administrative errors/correct item numbering as a result of the abovementioned modifications.

**BACKGROUND**

At its Ordinary Meeting held on 28 August 2024 Council considered and unanimously resolved to initiate a standard amendment to the Shire of Victoria Plains Local Planning Scheme No.4 to facilitate the proposed development of:

- i) ten (10) new residential lots on Lot 42 (No.52) Edmonds Street, Calingiri to accommodate the future anticipated demand for new housing in the Calingiri townsite; and
- ii) a new caravan park and tourist development (i.e. holiday cabins) on Lot 42 to replace the existing caravan park which is constrained due to its limited size and location in the centre of the Calingiri townsite.

Following completion of the required scheme amendment documentation, including the required bushfire planning assessment, the proposal was referred to the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) for review in accordance with the specific requirements of section 81 of the *Planning and Development Act 2005*.

On 16 September 2025 the EPA determined and subsequently advised the scheme amendment proposal is unlikely to have a significant effect on the natural environment and does not warrant formal assessment under Part IV of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (see Attachment 1).

In accordance with the procedural requirements of section 83A of the *Planning and Development Act 2005* the scheme amendment proposal was then referred to the Western Australian Planning Commission requesting the Minister for Planning's approval to commence public advertising.

On 15 January 2026 the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage provided written confirmation of the Minister for Planning's approval to advertise the scheme amendment for public comment pursuant to the specific requirements of section 84 of the *Planning and Development Act 2005* subject to a number of minor modifications to the scheme amendment documentation. A final copy of the modified scheme amendment document that was advertised for public comment is provided in Attachment 2.

The scheme amendment was subsequently advertised for public comment for the minimum required period of forty two (42) days which included:

- i) publication of a notice in a local newspaper circulating throughout the Shire's municipal district (i.e. The West Australian) as well as the Shire's newsletter and Facebook page;
- ii) public display of the advertising notice and scheme amendment documentation at the Shire administration centre;
- iii) correspondence to all immediately adjoining and other nearby landowners;
- iv) correspondence to a number of public authorities considered likely to have an interest in the proposed amendment; and
- v) publication of the advertising notice and scheme amendment documentation on the Shire's website.

At the conclusion of the public advertising on Friday 3 April 2026 a total of two (2) submissions had been received by the Shire, both of which were from State government agencies (see Attachment 3). A summary of the submissions received and a recommendation in respect of each is provided in Attachment 4. It is significant to note no objections were raised.

Under the terms of regulation 50 of the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015* Council is now required to consider all submissions received and determine whether to:

- a) support the amendment without modification; or
- b) support the amendment with proposed modifications to address any issues raised in the submissions; or
- c) not support the amendment.

## **COMMENT**

Having regard for:

- a) the scheme amendment proposal's general consistency with the aims and objectives of the State, regional and local planning frameworks as they apply specifically to the development of new housing and tourist accommodation facilities to accommodate future anticipated demand;
- b) the need for additional suitably zoned land in the Calingiri townsite to accommodate future demand for residential development given the current limited supply of vacant lots and limited opportunity for infill development;
- c) the ability to develop and use the subject land for residential and short term tourist accommodation purposes in accordance with all regulatory requirements and standards with minimal potential impacts;
- d) the potential local economic and community benefits; and
- e) the outcomes from public advertising, including agency referrals, during which no objections were raised,

it is concluded the proposal is well founded, has considerable merit and is therefore worthy of Council's final approval/endorsement. As such it is recommended Council support the scheme amendment without modification and refer it to the Western Australian Planning Commission for review, assessment and final determination by the Minister for Planning.

Council should note the proposal will be subject to further detailed assessment at State government level with significant scope for further discussion and negotiation with the Shire if required. For now however Council is required to follow due process regarding final adoption of the scheme amendment to enable it to be formally referred to the Western Australian Planning Commission for further consideration and final determination by the Minister for Planning. The recommendation provided in this report enables the proposal to proceed to the final stage of the scheme amendment process without delay.

If the Minister for Planning ultimately approves the proposed amendment a formal subdivision application may then be prepared by the Shire and submitted to the Western Australian Planning Commission for consideration and final determination.

### **CONSULTATION**

Consultation was undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements of the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015* as they apply specifically to standard amendments to local planning schemes, the outcomes from which are documented above and in Attachment 4 (i.e. Schedule of Submissions).

### **STATUTORY CONTEXT**

- Environmental Protection Act 1986
- Planning and Development Act 2005
- Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015
- Shire of Victoria Plains Local Planning Scheme No.5

### **CORPORATE CONTEXT**

The scheme amendment proposal for Lot 42 is consistent with the Shire's Local Planning Strategy for the following reasons:

- i) It will reinforce the Calingiri townsite's role as a main urban centre in the Shire;
- ii) It is clearly identified in the Strategy as a preferred location for future residential development to accommodate future need and demand;
- iii) It will help to increase current residential density in the Calingiri townsite to capitalise on existing infrastructure;
- iv) It will provide a greater choice of lot sizes and housing types to suit the needs of the local community;
- v) It will be served by an internal local road system that permits access to lots independent of main roads and highways;
- vi) It will help to create a local neighbourhood with community identity and high levels of safety, accessibility and amenity; and
- vii) It will help to attract and retain key workers and encourage greater visitation by tourists; and
- viii) It will help to stimulate and sustain local economic development and growth.

The proposal is also consistent with the following elements of the Shire's Integrated Strategic Plan 2022-2032:

COMMUNITY	
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	WE KNOW WHEN WE ARE SUCCEEDING WHEN
1.3 Recreational, social and heritage spaces are safe and are activated.	Sport and recreation facilities are planned, maintained and developed in a coordinated manner, aligned with community need

ECONOMY	
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	WE KNOW WHEN WE ARE SUCCEEDING WHEN
2.1 We understand traditional and emerging industries across the Shire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Townsite amenities are welcoming and attractive.</li> <li>- Our population increases.</li> <li>- We can attract and retain staff because we maintain and increase our housing stock.</li> <li>- We forward plan for emerging industries</li> </ul>
2.3 Visitors have a positive experience across our communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Our parks and community spaces are green, tidy and accessible.</li> <li>- Caravan Parks are attractive, expanded and well utilised.</li> </ul>

CIVIC LEADERSHIP	
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	WE KNOW WHEN WE ARE SUCCEEDING WHEN
4.1 Forward planning and implementation of plans to achieve community priorities.	Demonstrated progress towards achievement of the Corporate Business Plan.
4.2 Shire communication is regular, clear and transparent.	Council and Staff work closely with the community to successfully achieve projects or outcomes that deliver upon priorities.

**Delegation**

Nil

**Policy Implications**

Nil

**Other Corporate Document**

Nil

**Risk Analysis**

The risks associated with the scheme amendment proposal are considered to be low given the comprehensive process that must be followed pursuant to the specific requirements of the *Planning and Development Act 2005* and associated regulations in order to obtain the necessary approval.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

All administrative costs associated with progressing the scheme amendment proposal are provided for in Council's annual budget and will be offset by funding that has been made available to the Shire by the Commonwealth government under its Housing Support Program.

## VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Simple Majority

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### Officer Recommendation / Council Resolution / OCM 2604-10

Moved: Cr S Woods

Seconded: Cr R Johnson

That Council **RESOLVE** to:

1. **ACKNOWLEDGE** receipt of and determine each submission received in respect of Amendment No.4 to the Shire of Victoria Plains Local Planning Scheme No.5 during public advertising in accordance with the recommendations contained in the Schedule of Submissions provided in Attachment 4 to this report;
2. **SUPPORT** Amendment No.4 to the Shire of Victoria Plains Local Planning Scheme No.5 as proposed without modification; and
3. **AUTHORISE** the Shire Administration to refer Amendment No.4 to the Shire of Victoria Plains Local Planning Scheme No.5 to the Western Australian Planning Commission confirming Council's resolution and requesting the Honourable Minister for Planning's favourable consideration and final approval, including final endorsement of the scheme amendment documentation by affixing the Shire's common seal and authorising the Shire President and Chief Executive Officer to sign the documentation accordingly.

**CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS DECISION OF COUNCIL**

Voted For: Cr P Bantock, Cr S Woods, Cr R Johnson, Cr E Williams, Cr N Smith

Voted Against: Nil

PUBLIC UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

**9.10 WALGA Climate Change Advocacy Position**

<b>File Reference</b>	
<b>Report Date</b>	16 April 2026
<b>Applicant/Proponent</b>	WALGA
<b>Officer Disclosure of Interest</b>	Nil
<b>Previous Meeting Reference</b>	Nil
<b>Prepared by</b>	Sean Fletcher – Chief Executive Officer
<b>Senior Officer</b>	Sean Fletcher – Chief Executive Officer
<b>Authorised by</b>	Sean Fletcher – Chief Executive Officer
<b>Attachments</b>	Nil

**PURPOSE**

For Council to consider feedback to WALGA to inform finalisation of the revised advocacy position and its ongoing representations to State and Commonwealth Governments.

**BACKGROUND**

The Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA) has released a consultation paper (Attachment 1) seeking Council-endorsed feedback on a revised Climate Change Advocacy Position. The proposed update reflects material changes in the legislative, policy and operating environment for Local Government since the existing position was adopted in 2018.

Since that time, climate change has moved from a largely policy-driven issue to one with direct statutory, governance and service delivery implications for Local Government. In response, WALGA is updating its advocacy position to ensure it remains contemporary, evidence-based and focused on securing appropriate support for the sector (pp 3-4).

Page 14 of the consultation paper sets out the revised advocacy position as follows;

1. Local Government acknowledges the risks associated with, and is committed to, addressing climate change.
2. WALGA calls on the Australian and Western Australian Governments to:
  - provide leadership and coordination; and
  - provide dedicated funding, guidance and practical support.

WALGA has requested Council-endorsed feedback by 1 May 2026 to inform finalisation of the revised advocacy position and its ongoing representations to State and Commonwealth Governments.

**COMMENT**

**Key Context and Evidence Base**

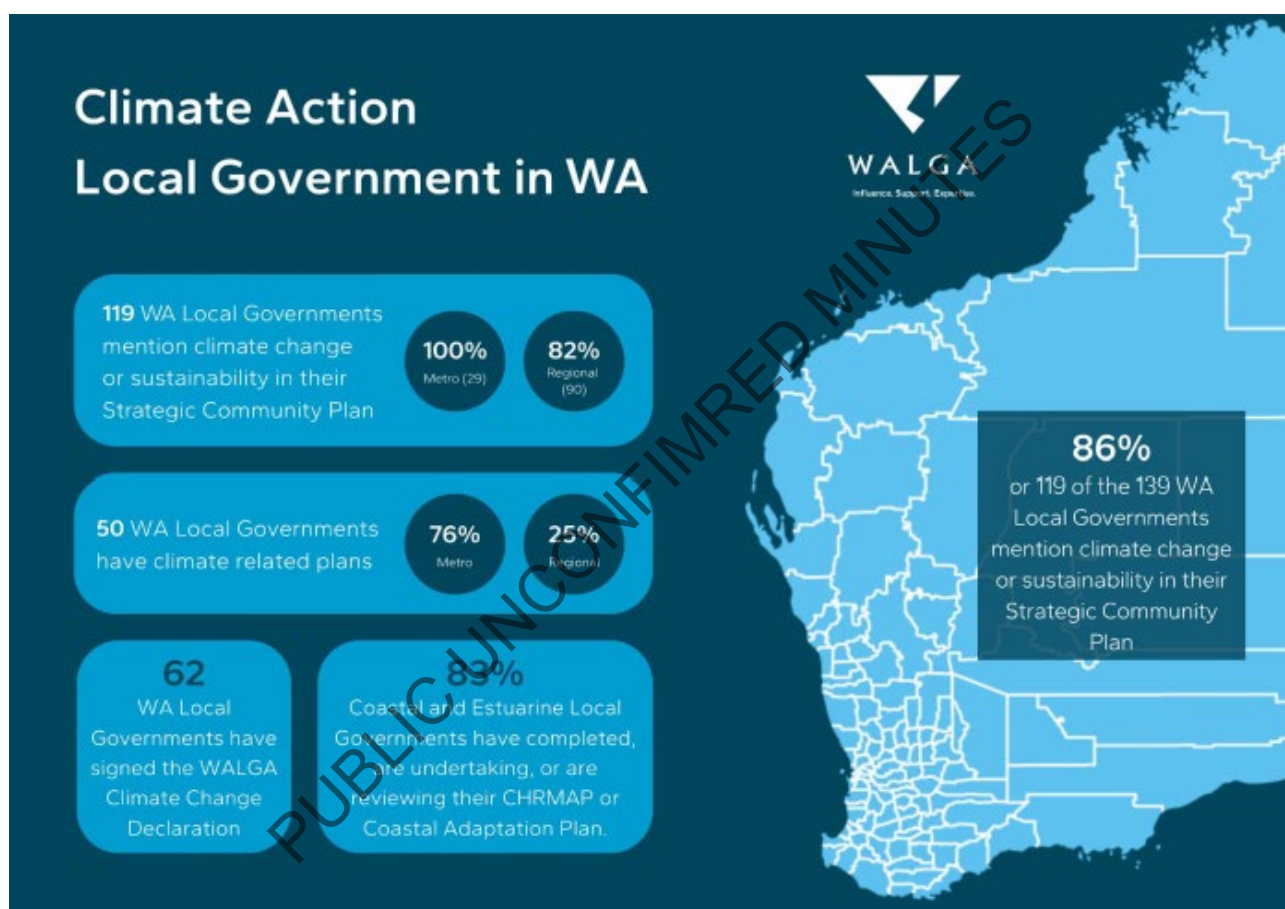
The consultation paper outlines a substantially strengthened legislative and policy framework. At a national level, the *Climate Change Act 2022* legislates Australia’s emissions reduction targets, including a 43 per cent reduction on 2005 levels by 2030 and net zero emissions by 2050. At a State level, the *Local Government Amendment Act 2023* amended the *Local Government Act 1995* (page 6) to expressly expand Local Government’s general functions to include planning for and mitigating risks associated with climate change and considering long-term and intergenerational impacts in decision-making.

These expanded statutory responsibilities were introduced without a dedicated or sustainable funding and resourcing model.

The paper also draws on updated climate science and risk assessment material. Western Australia has warmed by approximately 1.3 degrees Celsius since 1910, with observed impacts including increased heat, longer and more severe bushfire seasons and a rise in days with dangerous fire weather. While rainfall changes vary across the State, south-west Western Australia has experienced a marked long-term decline.

The 2025 National Climate Risk Assessment provides a consolidated evidence base identifying significant risks to regional and rural communities, agricultural productivity, infrastructure and emergency management systems. The consultation paper highlights that Local Government bears a disproportionate share of the immediate response, recovery and longer-term adaptation burden associated with these risks (pp 9-10).

### Local Government Capacity and Regional Context



**Figure 1 – Local Government Climate Change Commitments and Activities (page 10)**

Based on WALGA’s climate change surveys undertaken since 2018, the consultation paper consistently identifies limited funding, staffing capacity and technical expertise as the principal barriers preventing Local Governments from undertaking effective emissions reduction and adaptation actions.

These capacity constraints are most pronounced for, as we know, small and regional Local Governments, which often manage extensive asset bases, large geographic areas and significant emergency management responsibilities with comparatively limited financial and organisational capacity. The paper makes it clear that climate change now represents a material governance, financial and service delivery risk for Local Government rather than a discretionary policy issue.

### Relevance to the Shire of Victoria Plains

The consultation paper is directly relevant to the Shire of Victoria Plains as a regional Wheatbelt local government. The Shire is exposed to many of the climate-related risks outlined in the paper,

including increasing heat stress for communities and staff, impacts on agricultural resilience, infrastructure exposure and ongoing emergency management pressures.

The acknowledgement that Local Government climate responsibilities have expanded without an accompanying funded delivery model is of particular relevance to Victoria Plains. These obligations have implications for strategic planning, asset management, long-term financial sustainability and risk management across the organisation.

The paper's discussion of the Energy Transition is also locally relevant. The Australian Government's target of 82 per cent renewable energy in the national electricity grid by 2030, combined with the rapid escalation of renewable energy development, means regional local governments such as Victoria Plains are increasingly engaged in the on-ground impacts of the transition. WALGA's emphasis that the transition must be orderly, coordinated and deliver reliable, affordable energy and tangible community benefits aligns with the Shire's experience and current engagement in renewable energy-related initiatives (as a member of the WALGA Large Scale Renewable Energy Projects Group and the State Community Benefits Pilot Program).

The consultation paper appropriately recognises that regional Local Governments are not only hosts to this transition but have planning, infrastructure, community and governance roles that require clarity, certainty and support.

### **Matters for Council Consideration in Responding to WALGA's Draft Climate Change Advocacy Position**

On balance, it is the author's view that, in providing Council-endorsed feedback to WALGA on its draft Climate Change Advocacy Position, Council should indicate support for the Position subject to the following emphasis being reflected through WALGA's ongoing advocacy:

1. WALGA proceed with updating its Climate Change Advocacy Position to reflect the contemporary legislative, policy and operating environment for Local Government, including legislated emissions reduction targets, clearer climate risk projections and expanded statutory responsibilities.
2. WALGA's advocacy place strong emphasis on the need for dedicated, ongoing funding and practical implementation support for Local Governments to meet climate change mitigation and adaptation obligations, noting that these responsibilities have expanded without an accompanying funded delivery model.
3. WALGA explicitly recognise in its advocacy the disproportionate impact on smaller and regional Local Governments, including limited organisational capacity, extensive infrastructure holdings and heightened exposure to climate-related risks and emergency management demands.
4. WALGA continue to advocate for acknowledgement by State and Commonwealth Governments that Local Governments now have explicit statutory functions relating to climate change risk mitigation and long-term planning, requiring appropriate policy alignment, funding certainty and governance clarity.
5. WALGA's advocacy on climate change and energy transition emphasise that the renewable energy transition must be orderly and coordinated, that Local Governments require certainty in their planning and decision-making roles, that community benefit and local economic participation are central considerations, and that cost-shifting to Local Government be avoided.
6. WALGA continue to promote regional, alliance-based and shared-capability approaches as a preferred mechanism for delivering climate mitigation and adaptation outcomes, particularly for regional and rural Local Governments.
7. WALGA ensure that climate change advocacy remains practical, implementable and grounded in Local Government operational realities, rather than aspirational expectations unsupported by funding or capacity

### **CONSULTATION**

Council re March and April Briefing Sessions 2026

## STATUTORY CONTEXT

Section 2.7 of the *Local Government Act 1995* establishes Council as the governing body responsible for determining the Local Government's policies and strategic position on matters affecting its district. Amendments to the Act in 2023 expanded Local Government's general functions to include planning for and mitigating risks associated with climate change and considering long-term impacts on future generations.

WALGA is the recognised peak body representing Local Government interests in Western Australia. The provision of Council-endorsed feedback to WALGA on its draft advocacy position is consistent with Council's governance role and does not give rise to statutory or financial obligations.

## CORPORATE CONTEXT

### Strategic Business Plan/Corporate Business Plan

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	WE KNOW WE ARE SUCCEEDING WHEN
<b>4. CIVIC LEADERSHIP</b>	
4.1 Forward planning and implementation of plans to achieve community priorities	<p>We attend meetings of key local and regional organisations to jointly plan for our community</p> <p>Demonstrated progress towards achievement of the Corporate Business Plan</p>
4.3 Proactive and well governed Shire	External audits and reviews confirm compliance
	We have sound financial management policies and attract external funding to help achieve our goals

This matter aligns primarily with the *Civic Leadership / Governance* area of the Shire's Strategic Community Plan 2022–2032. The Plan recognises increasing compliance obligations, Local Government reform, reliance on external government funding and the need for effective advocacy and representation as key strategic considerations. Council consideration of recommendations to WALGA on its advocacy position is consistent with Council's governance role and its responsibility to engage collectively with the sector on matters affecting Local Government sustainability and long-term decision-making.

The matter also has a secondary relationship to the *Community* pillar, given the identified impacts of climate-related risks on community safety, service continuity and resilience; however, the decision itself is strategic and governance-focused rather than operational.

### Delegation

Nil

### Policy Implications

Nil

**Other Corporate Document**

Nil

**Risk Analysis**

The Shire’s Risk Register (2025–26) identifies a number of strategic and operational risks that are influenced by climate change and broader policy settings, including:

- disaster recovery and business continuity;
- workforce capacity and volunteer fatigue;
- asset sustainability;
- service disruption during emergencies; and
- increasing regulatory and compliance obligations.

These risks are reported through the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) and regularly reviewed by the Senior Management Team and Council, reinforcing the relevance of sector-wide advocacy aimed at securing appropriate support, funding and clarity for Local Government

Consequence	Consequence Rating:	Likelihood Rating:	Risk Rating	Risk Acceptance/ Controls	Mitigation and Outcome
<p>The risk arising from not providing feedback to WALGA is reputational in nature. While there is no statutory obligation to respond, non-participation may reduce the Shire’s influence and standing within the Local Government sector and limit its ability to have regional and organisational circumstances reflected in peak-body advocacy. The risk is sector-facing rather than community-facing and does not give rise to compliance or service delivery impacts.</p>	<p>Minor (2)</p> <p>Substantiated, localised impact on community trust or low media item</p>	<p>Likely (4)</p> <p>Probably occur in most circumstances.</p> <p>At least once per year</p> <p>WALGA will finalise and progress its advocacy position whether or not the Shire responds.</p> <p>If Council does not respond, the Shire will not be reflected in the consolidated advocacy position.</p>	<p>Moderate (8)</p>	<p>Operational Manager</p> <p>Risk acceptable with adequate controls, managed by specific procedures and subject to semi-annual monitoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> WALGA Participation</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Shire led advocacy</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Council Briefings and Meetings</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Through relevant forums</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> No other risk impacts</li> </ul>	<p>This risk is mitigated through the Shire’s ongoing engagement with WALGA, President/Deputy President/CEO-led advocacy, established Council briefing and reporting processes, and the availability of alternative mechanisms for sector representation. Given there is no statutory obligation to respond and no direct service, financial or compliance impacts, the reputational risk is considered manageable and capable of being accepted if Council determines that a response is not warranted.</p>

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Nil

**VOTING REQUIREMENTS**

Simple Majority

**Officer Recommendation / Council Resolution / OCM 2604-11**

**Moved: Cr S Woods**

**Seconded: Cr R Johnson**

That Council **AUTHORISES** the CEO to **RESPOND** to WALGA regarding the revised WALGA Climate Change Advocacy position as follows:

1. The Shire of Victoria Plains **SUPPORTS** WALGA proceeding with the draft Climate Change Advocacy Position as presented.

2. In doing so, the Shire emphasises the importance of WALGA's advocacy clearly recognising the expanded statutory responsibilities of Local Government, the disproportionate impact on small and regional Local Governments, and the need for dedicated, ongoing funding and practical implementation support to avoid cost-shifting.

**CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS DECISION OF COUNCIL**

Voted For: Cr P Bantock, Cr S Woods, Cr R Johnson, Cr E Williams, Cr N Smith

Voted Against: Nil

PUBLIC UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

**9.11 Yued Aboriginal Heritage Agreement**

<b>File Reference</b>	
<b>Report Date</b>	22 April 2026
<b>Applicant/Proponent</b>	Yued Aboriginal Corporation
<b>Officer Disclosure of Interest</b>	Nil
<b>Previous Meeting Reference</b>	Nil
<b>Prepared by</b>	Sean Fletcher – Chief Executive Officer
<b>Senior Officer</b>	Sean Fletcher – Chief Executive Officer
<b>Authorised by</b>	Sean Fletcher – Chief Executive Officer
<b>Attachments</b>	1 Noongar Heritage Agreement for Local Governments 2. Yued Heritage Protection Agreement

**PURPOSE**

For Council to consider the appropriate Aboriginal heritage agreement framework between the Shire and Yued Aboriginal Corporation, noting Yued Aboriginal Corporation’s preferred agreement position, the governance, operational and financial implications of the Noongar Heritage Agreement for Local Government (NHALG) when compared with the Yued Aboriginal Heritage Protection Agreement (YHPA), and to endorse a structured work program to progress a defensible agreement outcome for further Council consideration.

**BACKGROUND**

Discussions between the Shire of Victoria Plains and Yued Aboriginal Corporation regarding Aboriginal heritage agreements have been occurring since January 2025.

From 15 January 2025, Aboriginal heritage processes and agreement frameworks began forming part of the Shire’s broader engagement with the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) on land, tenure and heritage matters. This early engagement informed subsequent consideration by the Chief Executive Officer and Council regarding appropriate heritage agreement models suitable for local government.

By early April 2025, discussions had progressed directly with Rewi Lyall, Chief Executive Officer of Yued Aboriginal Corporation. On 4 April 2025, Mr Lyall provided formal correspondence enclosing two agreement templates:

- the Yued Aboriginal Heritage Protection Agreement (YHPA); and
- the Noongar Heritage Agreement for Local Government (NHALG).

In that correspondence, Mr Lyall advised that the YHPA is Yued Aboriginal Corporation’s preferred agreement, and that the NHALG was provided for comparison purposes.

On 11 April 2025, the Chief Executive Officer acknowledged receipt of the documentation and referred to the outcomes of a recent meeting with Mr Lyall, noting the constructive and positive nature of that engagement.

Given the significance of selecting an appropriate agreement framework, Council requested direct advice from the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage to clarify:

- the nature of Aboriginal heritage agreements;
- the distinction between Government-endorsed agreements and proponent-style agreements; and
- the suitability of different agreement models for local government.

As a result, Glenn Shaw, Manager – Partnerships and Agreements, Heritage and Property Services, Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage, attended the Shire and briefed Council on Aboriginal heritage agreement pathways on 30 July 2025, accompanied by a Senior Heritage Officer. This briefing was undertaken at Council's request.

The Department's advice, both through correspondence and the Council briefing, was that while Regional Corporations may develop alternative agreements, the Noongar Standard Heritage Agreement (NSHA) and the Noongar Heritage Agreement for Local Government (NHALG) remain the only Government-endorsed heritage agreement forms, and that local governments should seek independent advice to ensure any agreement aligns with their governance, financial and operational requirements.

This report brings those discussions together and provides Council with a consolidated assessment to guide the next stage of consideration.

## **COMMENT**

### **Overview of the NHALG (Attachment 1)**

The Noongar Heritage Agreement for Local Government establishes a standing framework governing how the Shire and Yued Aboriginal Corporation engage in relation to proposed activities within the Agreement Area. The agreement addresses Activity Notices, assessment of whether surveys are required, survey methodologies, timeframes, confidentiality, dispute resolution and reporting.

The NHALG expressly excludes emergency activities that are urgently required to secure life, health or property, or to prevent or address an imminent hazard, allowing such works to proceed immediately.

### **Yued Aboriginal Corporation's Preferred Agreement (Attachment 2) and Comparison**

The Yued Aboriginal Corporation has identified the Yued Aboriginal Heritage Protection Agreement (YHPA) as its preferred agreement model.

The YHPA is drafted as a proponent-style, project-based agreement, reflecting an agreement structure typically used for commercial entities or discrete development projects. This model includes higher indicative daily survey rates, a percentage-based administration fee without a cap, and more limited termination and flexibility provisions.

By contrast, the NHALG:

- is expressly designed for local government operations;
- recognises the Shire's ongoing, multi-project service delivery role;
- includes fixed and capped administration fees;
- provides clearer pathways for low ground disturbance and routine works;
- includes express emergency exemptions; and
- allows termination for convenience, providing governance flexibility.

The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage has advised that the NHALG is the appropriate Government-endorsed agreement for local government use.

Accordingly, the issue for Council is not whether to engage with Yued Aboriginal Corporation, but which agreement framework best aligns with the Shire's statutory responsibilities, service delivery role, financial stewardship and governance framework.

### **Operational Implications**

The NHALG does not prevent the Shire from undertaking tourism infrastructure, emergency management treatment works or cooperative projects.

Planned works proceed through a structured Activity Notice and assessment process, emergency works may proceed immediately where urgency applies, and cooperative or joint initiatives with Yued Aboriginal Corporation (including ranger-led activities) can be progressed within the framework of the agreement, subject to appropriate scoping and procurement requirements.

### **Application of NHALG Principles Pending Finalisation**

Advice provided to Council by Glenn Shaw, Manager – Partnerships and Agreements, Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage, confirmed that the Noongar Heritage Agreement for Local Government (NHALG) is not only a contractual instrument, but also reflects a set of principles that local governments may lawfully apply in practice while a formal agreement is being developed.

These principles provide a practical and governance-appropriate framework for engagement and decision-making and can be applied by the Shire on an interim basis.

#### 4.1 Recognition of Aboriginal Interests

The NHALG is founded on the principle that Aboriginal people hold particular cultural, historical and heritage interests within the district. Early recognition of these interests supports informed planning and decision-making and aligns with the Shire's statutory obligations under section 3.1 of the *Local Government Act 1995*.

#### 4.2 Proportional and Risk-Based Approach

The NHALG adopts a proportional, risk-based approach to heritage management. Activities are assessed according to their potential heritage impact, distinguishing between low-ground-disturbance or routine works and higher-risk activities that may require surveys or further investigation. This ensures appropriate focus of time, cost and effort.

#### 4.3 Early Engagement and Due Diligence

A key principle is early engagement and due diligence, enabling potential heritage considerations to be identified before works are committed. This reduces the risk of project delay, non-compliance or reactive decision-making.

#### 4.4 Certainty, Consistency and Transparency

The NHALG promotes consistent and transparent processes across multiple projects, including clear notice procedures, assessment pathways and cost structures. For local government, this supports repeatable decision-making and financial predictability across ongoing works programs.

#### 4.5 Good-Faith and Respectful Engagement

The framework is underpinned by respectful, good-faith engagement, characterised by open communication, timely responses and a collaborative approach. This principle can and should be applied regardless of whether a final agreement has been executed.

#### 4.6 Appropriateness to the Local Government Role

A defining principle of the NHALG is that obligations and procedures must be appropriate to the role of local government, recognising that councils are not commercial proponents but continuous service providers operating within public accountability and budgetary constraints.

#### 4.7 Emergency and Public Safety Priority

The NHALG recognises that emergency response and public safety are core functions of local government. Urgent works required to protect life, health or property, or to address an imminent hazard, should not be delayed, with heritage considerations addressed appropriately once immediate risks are managed.

### **Conclusion**

The consideration of an Aboriginal heritage agreement is not a question of whether the Shire should engage with Yued Aboriginal Corporation, but how that engagement is structured in a manner that is lawful, proportionate and appropriate to the local government role.

The information set out in this report demonstrates that:

- Yued Aboriginal Corporation has identified a preferred proponent-style agreement;
- the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage has advised that the Noongar Heritage Agreement for Local Government is the appropriate Government-endorsed agreement framework for local governments; and
- the NHALG provides a principled, transparent and workable model that aligns with the Shire's statutory obligations, financial stewardship responsibilities and ongoing service delivery role.

Council has also been advised that the principles underpinning the NHALG can be applied in practice while a formal agreement is being developed, enabling the Shire to continue to engage respectfully and in good faith with Yued Aboriginal Corporation, while ensuring appropriate governance oversight and risk management.

Accordingly, this matter is now at a point where Council's role is to provide strategic direction on the preferred framework, enabling further detailed work to proceed and a final agreement and implementation approach to be brought back to Council for consideration.

### **CONSULTATION**

Rewi Lyall, Chief Executive Officer – Yued Aboriginal Corporation including with CEO and Council.  
Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (including Glenn Shaw) including with CEO and Council  
Internal consultation: Deputy CEO, Planning, Works, Emergency Management / Ranger functions, Community Development Officer

## STATUTORY CONTEXT

### **Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972 (WA)**

The *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* provides for the protection and preservation of Aboriginal heritage in Western Australia. The Act makes it an offence to excavate, damage, destroy or alter an Aboriginal site unless authorised, and establishes the framework for consultation, investigation and approval where activities may impact Aboriginal heritage.

In particular:

- the Act places a responsibility on land users and decision-makers to avoid harm to Aboriginal heritage where possible;
- where harm cannot be avoided, a statutory approval process applies (including referral and decision-making mechanisms under the Act); and
- Aboriginal heritage agreements are recognised as an important due diligence and risk-management mechanism to support lawful activity and informed decision-making.

The Noongar Heritage Agreement for Local Government operates alongside the Act, providing a structured process for engagement, assessment and surveys prior to works occurring. It does not displace the Act, nor does it remove the need for formal statutory approvals where required. Rather, it supports compliance with the Act by clarifying consultation pathways, information flows and agreed procedures.

### **Local Government Act 1995 (WA)**

The *Local Government Act 1995* establishes the system of local government in Western Australia and defines the general function of local governments at section 3.1.

Section 3.1(1) provides that the general function of a local government is to *provide for the good government of persons in its district*. Section 3.1(1A) further requires that, in performing that function, a local government must have regard to a number of matters, including:

- the need to recognise the particular interests of Aboriginal people; and
- the need to involve Aboriginal people in decision-making processes.

These provisions place a clear statutory responsibility on local governments to ensure that Aboriginal people are appropriately recognised and involved where decisions affect land, heritage, services or place-based outcomes.

In this context, the Shire's engagement with Yued Aboriginal Corporation, and its consideration of an Aboriginal heritage agreement, is a lawful and necessary exercise of its general function under the Act. The choice of agreement framework must therefore support meaningful Aboriginal involvement while remaining appropriate to the Shire's statutory role, governance obligations and service-delivery responsibilities.

**CORPORATE CONTEXT**

**Strategic Business Plan/Corporate Business Plan**

The Heritage Agreement is applicable across the Shire’s strategies:

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	WE KNOW WE ARE SUCCEEDING WHEN
<b>1. COMMUNITY</b>	
1.2 Inclusive community activities, events and initiatives	Community Development Officer jointly plans and works with local groups
	We increase the number and diversity of sport, recreation, learning and cultural events
1.3 Recreational, social and heritage spaces are safe and are activated	Shire owned community buildings and places of interest are well maintained and used

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	WE KNOW WE ARE SUCCEEDING WHEN
<b>2. ECONOMY</b>	
2.1 We understand traditional and emerging industries across the Shire	Communities and opportunities are promoted by the Shire We forward plan for emerging industries

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	WE KNOW WE ARE SUCCEEDING WHEN
<b>3. ENVIRONMENT</b>	
3.2 Conservation of our natural environment and resources	Responsive and a high standard of Ranger services
	Nature reserves in our control are managed and protected
	Shire water resources are efficient, equitable and we advocate for improvements in the network

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES		WE KNOW WE ARE SUCCEEDING WHEN	
4. CIVIC LEADERSHIP			
4.2 Shire communication is regular, clear and transparent	Residents and community groups believe they are being listened to and fairly treated		

**Delegation**

Nil

**Policy Implications**

Nil

**Other Corporate Document**

Nil

**Risk Analysis**

Failure to appropriately manage Aboriginal heritage obligations and engagement processes if the Shire does not adopt or implement a consistent Noongar Heritage Agreement framework, potentially resulting in non-compliance with heritage legislation, project delays, reputational damage, or legal challenge.

Consequence	Consequence Rating:	Likelihood Rating:	Risk Rating	Risk Acceptance/ Controls	Mitigation and Outcome
<p>Delays or cessation of Shire works and projects due to heritage disputes;</p> <p>Increased exposure to legal challenge or regulatory action;</p> <p>Damage to relationships with Noongar Traditional Owners and regional Aboriginal Corporations;</p> <p>Reputational impact to the Shire as a public authority.</p>		At least once per year		<p>Existing heritage due diligence processes undertaken on a project-by-project basis;</p> <p>Engagement with State agencies (DPLH) and sector guidance through WALGA;</p> <p>Governance oversight by the CEO and reporting through Council and the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee</p> <p>Aboriginal heritage risks captured within the Shire's Governance and Compliance risk profile.</p>	<p><b>Mitigation Measures</b></p> <p>Adoption of the <b>Noongar Heritage Agreement for Local Government (NHALG)</b> to provide a consistent, transparent, and legally aligned framework for heritage engagement;</p> <p>Clear governance and delegation arrangements for heritage matters;</p> <p>Early and structured engagement with the YAC;</p> <p>Ongoing monitoring and review of heritage-related risks</p>

					<p>through the Shire's Risk Register.</p> <p><b>Outcome</b> With the above controls in place, the <b>residual likelihood reduces to Unlikely (2)</b> and the <b>residual risk rating reduces to Moderate (6)</b>, which is acceptable with routine monitoring under the Shire's Risk Acceptance Criteria</p>
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## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

### CEO Context on Cost and Risk

In considering the financial implications of an Aboriginal heritage agreement, it is important to distinguish between unavoidable heritage costs and the degree of certainty and control available to the Shire in managing those costs over time. The issue for Council is not whether costs will be incurred, but whether the agreement framework provides predictable, transparent and proportionate cost exposure across multiple projects, consistent with local government budgeting and accountability requirements.

The comparison below assists Council in understanding how each agreement structures survey rates and administration charges.

### Comparison of Indicative Survey Rates and Costs

Cost Component	NHALG – Local Government Agreement	YHPA – Preferred by Yued
Principal Aboriginal Heritage Consultant (per day)	\$1,800	\$2,200 – \$2,800
Heritage Survey Team Member / Knowledge Holder (per day)	\$1,200	\$1,500 – \$2,000
Youth / Trainee participation (per day)	\$850 (where applicable)	Not specified
Administration fee	Fixed, capped fee per survey	Percentage of total cost, uncapped
Cost certainty	High	Lower

While heritage survey costs are unavoidable where required, the NHALG provides greater predictability and financial control across the Shire's capital and operational programs. These implications will be further refined through the independent financial review proposed in this report.

## VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Simple Majority

**Officer Recommendation / Council Resolution / OCM 2604-12**

**Moved: Cr R Johnson**

**Seconded: Cr S Woods**

That Council:

1. **NOTES** the information contained in this report, including:
  - o Yued Aboriginal Corporation's preferred heritage agreement position;
  - o The advice of the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage regarding Government-endorsed heritage agreement frameworks; and
  - o The statutory obligations of the Shire under the *Local Government Act 1995* and the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972*.
2. **ACKNOWLEDGES** that section 3.1 of the *Local Government Act 1995* requires the Shire, in performing its general function, to recognise the particular interests of Aboriginal people and to involve Aboriginal people in decision-making processes.
3. **ENDORSES**, in principle, the Noongar Heritage Agreement for Local Government as the Shire's preferred agreement framework for progressing heritage engagement with Yued Aboriginal Corporation, noting its appropriateness to the local government role.
4. **SUPPORTS** the application of the key principles of the NHALG, as outlined in this report, as an interim governance and engagement framework while a formal agreement is being developed.
5. **REQUESTS** the Chief Executive Officer to:
  - o Undertake the necessary legal, financial and operational review of the NHALG;
  - o Continue engagement with Yued Aboriginal Corporation in good faith; and
  - o Return a final agreement and proposed implementation framework to Council for consideration and execution.

**CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS DECISION OF COUNCIL**

Voted For: Cr P Bantock, Cr S Woods, Cr R Johnson, Cr E Williams, Cr N Smith

Voted Against: Nil

**9.12 Adoption of Shire Strategic Water Plan – November 2025**

<b>File Reference</b>	
<b>Report Date</b>	4 March 2026
<b>Applicant/Proponent</b>	Katrina Humphries
<b>Officer Disclosure of Interest</b>	Nil
<b>Previous Meeting Reference</b>	Nil
<b>Prepared by</b>	Katrina Humphries – Creditors Officer
<b>Senior Officer</b>	Sean Fletcher – Chief Executive Officer
<b>Authorised by</b>	Sean Fletcher – Chief Executive Officer
<b>Attachments</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strategic Water Plan - November 2025</li> <li>2. Strategic Water Plan Action Plan</li> </ol>

**PURPOSE**

To present the Shire of Victoria Plains Strategic Water Plan 2025 for Council adoption.

**BACKGROUND**

The Shire of Victoria Plains has contracted Pinion Consultancy to prepare a Strategic Water Plan to guide sustainable water management across the Shire.

The plan has been developed to address water security challenges, improve local water infrastructure, and ensure the efficient and sustainable use of water resources for the community, environment, and industry.

The document provides a strategic framework for planning, implementation, and monitoring of water-related initiatives across the Shire, including stormwater management, alternative water sources, rural supply reliability, and community education.

The Strategic Water Plan includes an Implementation Action Plan (attached as Appendix 1) which outlines priority actions, timeframes, and responsibilities to guide delivery of the Plan.

The draft plan has been reviewed by Shire officers and relevant stakeholders to ensure it aligns with State water strategies and local government best practice. It is now presented to Council for formal adoption.

**COMMENT**

The Strategic Water Plan outlines the Shire’s vision, objectives, and actions to support sustainable water management into the future. It identifies key priorities such as:

- Improving the resilience of community water supplies;
- Enhancing water efficiency within Shire operations and facilities;
- Supporting landholders to adopt waterwise practices;
- Integrating water management considerations into land use planning and infrastructure design.

Adoption of the plan will enable the Shire to pursue funding opportunities, partnerships, and implementation programs consistent with its strategic objectives and sustainability commitments.

The Strategic Water Plan was presented to Council on the 20<sup>th</sup> April 2026 at the Policy Briefing session with the request to provide any other feedback by the 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2026. All feedback received has been incorporated into the document.

## CONSULTATION

Mr. Sean Fletcher – Chief Executive Officer

Mr. Silvio Brenzi – Works & Services Manager

Mr. Colin Ashe – Deputy Chief Executive Officer

Council – Policy Briefing Session

## STATUTORY CONTEXT

Local Government Act 1995 –

*Section 3.1 – The general function of a local government is to provide for the good government of persons in its district.*

The preparation and adoption of a Strategic Water Plan aligns with this provision by supporting responsible environmental and resource management.

## CORPORATE CONTEXT

**Strategic Business Plan/Corporate Business Plan**

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	WE KNOW WE ARE SUCCEEDING WHEN
1.4 Support emergency services planning, risk mitigation, response and recovery	We collaboratively plan service delivery and respond to emergency situations (LEMC)
	Emergency service volunteers are supported and the community understands how to respond to emergencies / natural disasters

2.3 Visitors have a positive experience across our communities	Our parks and community spaces are green, tidy and accessible
	Visitors receive timely and accurate information about attractions and amenities
	Clean, accessible and modern public toilets
	Caravan Parks are attractive, expanded and well utilised
3.2 Conservation of our natural environment and resources	Responsive and a high standard of Ranger services
	Nature reserves in our control are managed and protected
	Shire water resources are efficient, equitable and we advocate for improvements in the network

**Delegation**

Nil

**Policy Implications**

Nil

**Other Corporate Document**

Nil

PUBLIC UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

**Risk Analysis**

<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Consequence Rating:</b>	<b>Likelihood Rating:</b>	<b>Risk Rating</b>	<b>Risk Acceptance/ Controls</b>	<b>Mitigation and Outcome</b>
Financial Failure to adopt the Strategic Water Plan may reduce access to external funding and demonstrate a lack of strategic direction in water management.	Moderate (3) \$50,001 to \$250,000	Possible (3)  Should occur at some time.  At least once in three years.	Moderate (9)	Operational Manager  Risk acceptable with adequate controls, managed by specific procedures and subject to semi-annual monitoring.	Through the adoption of the Strategic Water Plan this will give Shire staff and residents guidance as to projects needed and have the opportunity to budget accordingly for future projects.
Environmental Reactive or unplanned water management could lead to inefficient use of resources, reduced groundwater resilience and unmanaged runoff.	Minor (2) Contained, reversible impact managed by internal response	Possible (3)  Should occur at some time.  At least once in three years.	Moderate (6)	Operational Manager  Risk acceptable with adequate controls, managed by specific procedures and subject to semi-annual monitoring	Through the adoption of the Strategic Water Plan being used a guidance for future projects.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial implications associated with adoption of a Strategic Water Plan. The Implementation Action Plan will guide future prioritisation of water infrastructure projects and inform annual budget development and long-term financial planning.

PUBLIC UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

## VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Simple Majority

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Officer Recommendation

That Council **ADOPTS** the Strategic Water Plan, including the attached Implementation Action Plan (Appendix 1).

### Council Resolution / OCM 2604-13

**Moved: Cr R Johnson**

**Seconded: Cr S Woods**

That Council **ADOPTS** the Strategic Water Plan, including the attached Implementation Action Plan (Appendix 1) as amended.

**CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS DECISION OF COUNCIL**

Voted For: Cr P Bantock, Cr S Woods, Cr R Johnson, Cr E Williams, Cr N Smith

Voted Against: Nil

#### Reason for Variation

- Correct description of the Mogumber soak - Figure 10 - section 2.6 Mogumber
- Inclusion of Shire buildings in the first sentence of section 2.6 Mogumber
- Recognition of defunct piping system at Mogumber
- Replace the volunteer emergency volunteers data with up to date information
- Include a reference to the relocation of the Office Standpipe to the Calingiri Recreational Hall

PUBLIC UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

**9.13 EHOBS - Community Engagement Significant Matters 2026**

<b>File Reference</b>	
<b>Report Date</b>	21 April 2026
<b>Applicant/Proponent</b>	CEO
<b>Officer Disclosure of Interest</b>	Nil
<b>Previous Meeting Reference</b>	OCM 25 February 20206 – (Resolution No. OCM260225-8)
<b>Prepared by</b>	Gordon Houston - EHOBS
<b>Senior Officer</b>	CEO
<b>Authorised by</b>	Mr Sean Fletcher, CEO
<b>Attachments</b>	Nil

**PURPOSE**

The CEO is seeking Council’s support for staff to be given more time to prepare additional advice for Council on the adjourned matter **Item 9.6 Draft Policy – Community Engagement: Significant Matters; February 2026 OCM** (Resolution No. OCM260225-8), for presentation of that advice to the May 2026 Briefing Session and OCM.

**BACKGROUND**

Item **9.6 Draft Policy – Community Engagement; Significant Matters** from the OCM of the 25 February 2026 was help over to the March meeting of 2026 for further clarification regarding Council and/or Community members to join the reference group.

The matter regarding the formation of the Major Development Community Reference Group (CRG) was adjourned at the February meeting, with staff required to bring the matter back to the March meeting with clarification regarding the membership and the role of the community members. Item 9.6 Draft Policy – Community Engagement; Significant Matters from the OCM of the 25 February 2026 was held over to the March meeting of 2026 for further clarification regarding Council and/or Community members to join the reference group.

Subsequent to the February meeting, the State released the *Community Benefits Guideline for Large-scale Renewable Energy Projects in the South West Interconnected System* which presented the principles for Community Benefit Arrangements and Community Benefit Plans.

The release of the Guideline and the Shire’s involvement in the Renewable Energy Community Benefits Pilot (“the Pilot”) has required a review of the role of the proposed reference group and its membership in the implementation of community benefits aligned with energy projects.

**COMMENT**

The Guideline presented the principles for Community Benefit Arrangements and Community Benefit Plans. To support communities directly impacted by renewable energy development in achieving the Guideline’s objectives, PoweringWA are to engage an independent organisation to facilitate the delivery of a Community Benefits Plan Pilot and establish Community Benefits Advisory Groups.

To this end, leave is being sought to prepare an additional background document for consideration by Council, to address the Guidelines expectations in relation to community consultation, the preparation of a Community Benefits Plan and inclusion of the role of “Community Reference Panel” into the reference group’s operation.

## **CONSULTATION**

CEO

Council Briefing Session February 2026

CEO OCM February 2026

## **STATUTORY CONTEXT**

Local Government Act 1995

### **3.1. General function**

- (1) The general function of a local government is to provide for the good government of persons in its district.
- (1A) Without limiting subsection (1), the general function of a local government must be performed having regard to the following —
  - (a) the need —
    - (i) to promote the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the district; and
    - (ii) to plan for, and to plan for mitigating, risks associated with climate change; and
    - (iii) in making decisions, to consider potential long-term consequences and impacts on future generations;
  - (b) the need —
    - (i) to recognise the particular interests of Aboriginal people; and
    - (ii) to involve Aboriginal people in decision-making processes;
  - (c) the need to consider collaboration with other local governments.

**CORPORATE CONTEXT**

**Strategic Business Plan/Corporate Business Plan**

<b>STRATEGIC PRIORITIES</b>		<b>WE KNOW WE ARE SUCCEEDING WHEN</b>
<b>2. ECONOMY</b>		
2.1 We understand traditional and emerging industries across the Shire		We forward plan for emerging industries
<b>STRATEGIC PRIORITIES</b>		<b>WE KNOW WE ARE SUCCEEDING WHEN</b>
<b>4. CIVIC LEADERSHIP</b>		
4.2 Shire communication is regular, clear and transparent		Residents and community groups believe they are being listened to and fairly treated
		Staff work closely with the community to successfully achieve projects or outcomes that deliver upon priorities

**Delegation**

Nil

**Policy Implications**

Nil

**Other Corporate Document**

Nil

**Risk Analysis**

<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Consequence Rating:</b>	<b>Likelihood Rating:</b>	<b>Risk Rating</b>	<b>Risk Acceptance/ Controls</b>	<b>Mitigation and Outcome</b>
Reputation  Lack of a clear policy regarding formal engagement of proponents of significant matters with the Shire and its communities	Insignificant (1)  Substantiated, low impact, low news profile	Unlikely (2)  The event could occur at some time (10% chance)  At least once in 10 years	Low (2)	Acceptable  Risk acceptable with adequate controls, managed by routine procedures and subject to annual monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New communications policy for Matters of Strategic Significance adopted by Council</li> <li>• CRG formed and operational</li> <li>• Minutes of CRG meetings circulated and accessible.</li> </ul>

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no known meaningful financial implications relative to this matter. Costs will be limited to officer time and minor administrative costs.

**VOTING REQUIREMENTS**

Simple Majority

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**Officer Recommendation / Council Resolution / OCM 2604-14**

**Moved: Cr R Johnson**

**Seconded: Cr S Woods**

That Council **SUPPORT** the request for staff be given an extension of time to prepare additional advice for Council on the adjourned matter Item 9.6 Draft Policy – Community Engagement: Significant Matters; February 2026 OCM (Resolution No. OCM260225-8) and **PRESENT** the advice to the May 2026 Briefing Session and OCM.

**CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS DECISION OF COUNCIL**

Voted For: Cr P Bantock, Cr S Woods, Cr R Johnson, Cr E Williams and Cr N Smith

Voted Against: Nil

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**10 MEMBER MOTIONS OF WHICH PREVIOUS NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN**

**11 NEW BUSINESS OF AN URGENT NATURE REQUIRING DECISION**

**12 MEETING CLOSED TO PUBLIC**

**13 CLOSURE OF MEETING**

There being no further business, the Presiding Member declared the meeting closed at 2.35PM

These minutes were confirmed at the Ordinary Council Meeting held on

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Presiding member at the meeting which confirmed the minutes)

**Council Minutes are unconfirmed until they have been adopted at the following meeting of Council.**

PUBLIC UNCONFIRMED MINUTES