

# MINUTES

## Ordinary Council Meeting

7 October 2026

Shire of Victoria Plains  
Council Chambers, Calingiri

AND

via E-Meeting Protocol

Commencing – 2:00 PM

## 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 Wednesday 7 October 2026 commencing at 2.00 PM

### 1. DECLARATION OF OPENING

#### 1.1 Opening

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

#### 1.3 Announcements by Shire President

1.4 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

N/A

### 3. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

#### Members present

Cr P Bantock – Shire President and Presiding Member  
Cr S Woods – Deputy Shire President  
Cr R Johnson  
Cr E Williams  
Cr N Smith

#### Staff attending

CEO - Mr S Fletcher  
Acting Deputy CEO – Mr A Lamb  
Council Support Officer – Mrs J Klobas (via teleconference)

#### Apologies

Works & Services Manager – Mr S Brenzi

Approved leave of absence N/A

Visitors NI

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 Questions Without Notice**

Nil

#### **6. PRESENTATIONS AND DEPUTATIONS**

##### **6.1 Presentations**

Nil

##### **6.2 Deputations**

Nil

**7. APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

**8. MINUTES OF MEETING**

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**Officer Recommendation / Council Resolution [OCM2609-01]**

**Moved: Cr S Woods**

**Seconded: Cr E Williams**

That the minutes of the Special Council Meeting held **17 August 2026** AND the Ordinary Council Meeting held **26 August 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 N Smith and Cr E Williams

Voted Against:

Nil

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## 9. REPORTS REQUIRING DECISION

### 9.1 Accounts for Endorsement – August 2026

|                                       |                                                |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| <b>File Reference</b>                 |                                                |
| <b>Report Date</b>                    | 07/09/2026                                     |
| <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>                  | CEO, Sean Fletcher                             |
| <b>Attachments</b>                    | Accounts for Endorsement August 2026 – Page 11 |

#### PURPOSE

This item presents the attached List of Accounts Paid, under delegated authority for August 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. Council should note the new format of the listing in order to minimise the risk of hacking details of cyber criminals.

#### 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 |  |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| 4. CIVIC LEADERSHIP                   |                                                                                                    |                                |  |
| 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)<br><br>Non-compliance results in litigation, criminal charges or significant damages or penalties to Shire/Officers | Unlikely (2)<br><br>The event could occur at some time | High (10)   | Senior Management Team / CEO<br><br>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**

Absolute majority required: No

**Officer Recommendation / Council Resolution [OCM2609-02]**

**Moved: Cr R Johnson**

**Seconded: Cr S Woods**

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

| Payment Type           | References from - to                       | \$ Amount         |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Creditor EFT Payment** | EFT00084 - EFT00085                        | 406,645.19        |
| Direct Debit Payment** | PPIN03872 – PPIN04002<br>DD00060; DD00061; | 183,453.06        |
| Credit Card            | PPIN03875                                  | 898.49            |
|                        | PPIN03876                                  | 949.50            |
|                        | PPIN04000                                  | 8,027.83          |
|                        | PPIN04001                                  | 1,318.80          |
| Salaries and Wages EFT | PE12/08/2026;PE26/08/26                    | 129,352.45        |
| Petty Cash Cheque      |                                            | -                 |
| Trust Payments         |                                            | -                 |
|                        | <b>TOTAL</b>                               | <b>730,645.32</b> |
|                        |                                            |                   |
| Local Spending         | \$                                         | %                 |
| Local Supplier         | 42,484.72                                  | 5.81%             |
| Payroll                | 129,352.45                                 | 17.70%            |
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>171,837.17</b>                          | <b>23.52%</b>     |

**CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS DECISION OF COUNCIL**

Voted For:

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

Voted Against:

Nil

## 9.2 Monthly Financial Statements - August 2026

|                                       |                                                    |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| <b>File Reference</b>                 |                                                    |
| <b>Report Date</b>                    | 21 Sep 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 - Aug 26 – Page 20 |

### PURPOSE

To receive the monthly financial statements for the period ending 31 Aug 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 in a strong financial position to the end of Aug 26 due to a high surplus carried forward from 25-26 and limited expenditure as expected for this time of the year.

It should be noted that now the Annual Financial Statements (AFS) 25-26 is completed, there is a slight variance between the budgeted opening surplus of \$616,121 and the final surplus of \$598,136. This is due to additional 30 Jun 26 invoices and accruals adjustments being received post the budget finalisation. This will increase the forecast budget deficit by the difference, \$17,985 to \$54,256 and will need to be included as a budget amendment in due course.

The deficit however will be managed during the FY and management is confident the final result will return to surplus at 30 Jun 27.

The shire did not require to go into overdraft at the end of Jun 26 and then into the early months of 26-27 which has saved on bank charges but also aesthetically, indicating the sound financial position.

Currently the Aug 26 monthly financial statements is indicating a surplus of \$5,453,743 which is primarily due to the raising of rates in Aug 26. This value should not be confused with the cash or cashflow, in that rates payments are due on 10 Sep 26.

### NOTES TO ACCOUNT

The following presents a summary and analysis of the key points in the Aug 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 \$5,453,743 meaning the shire can meet its short term obligations (liabilities).

**Note 2 Cash and Financial Assets:**

The current total cash position balance is \$4,845,336 with an Unrestricted Municipal Bank Balance of \$934,433 and \$3,910,902 in Restricted Funding, the latter comprising:

\$667,072 in Reserves.

\$3,243,831 major grant funding received and quarantined fully cash backed. Further details on the breakdown of this are provided at note 11.

**Note 4 – Debtors:**

An overall balance of \$4,451,627 comprising of:

- \$3,974,550 in rate debtors analysed below.
- \$479,771 in sundry debtors, the majority being invoicing to Genus Infrastructure Pty Ltd for Cocking Rd repairs .
- \$1,861 which are fines currently on payment plans through Fine Enforcement Registry (FER).

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

- \$3,826,927 in rates raised for 26-27 with a due date of 10 Sep 26 for payment in full or election to pay by instalments.
- \$110,329 of ratepayers whom have already paid their 1<sup>st</sup> instalment and therefore the balance being classed as on instalments.
- \$19,694 on ad hoc payment plans which reduced considerably last month, but with the new rating year, the balance has naturally increased. As has been the case in 25-26, this will be actively managed in accordance with council policy to ensure this balance is as close to \$0 as much as possible.
- \$19,283 with debt collection services of which amounts which is for two (2) rate assessments.

**Note 5 Reserves:**

No change from 30 Jun 26 and any interest will not be reflected until 2027 as the funds are locked in a longer term Cash Deposit Account (CDA).

**Note 6 – Plant Disposals**

The Calingiri Fire Trailer has been disposed as it is surplus to requirements and funds will utilised to purchase the Emergency Mobile Fuel Tank.

**Note 7 – Capital Program**

Minimal expenditure as expected for Aug 26 with work continuing on the subdivision (\$276,083) and completion of the Gillingarra Emergency Water project (\$89,685).

## **Note 8 – Loans**

Plant Replacement Loan 87 repayment occurred in Aug 26 with the extinguishment of this loan in Aug 29.

## **Note 9 – Payables**

Contingent Liabilities comprise the highest balance amounting to \$2,899,705 but is cash backed as per note 11. Some transfer of funds back to the municipal account for the subdivision and water projects based on expenditure occurred in Aug 26, hence the reduction in the balance from Jul 26.

## **Note 10 – Grants and Subsidies**

Some transactions occurred in Aug 26 for capital grants reflecting the funds held in Restricted Funds (and Contingent Liabilities as per note 9).

Additionally funds were received as part of the Grants Commission noting \$454,000 has been allocated as a special payment for Bridges. It is recommended this be placed in Restricted Funds pending scope of expenditure.

The first payment for Roads to Recovery (R2R) has also been received.

## **Note 11 – Restricted Funds**

The table now illustrates in a more defined way, grants that have been received and are in progress in terms of fulfilling the grant conditions and expenditure:

- The table reflects what the is to be spent against the grant received and then the actual amount that is cash backed.
- The table does not necessarily represent the total expenditure on a grant funded project; but the amount expended in relation to the grant – a good example is the Gillingarra Emergency Water Grant.
- New funds have been placed in Restricted Funds bank account pending the work to commence, as an example, R2R.
- The bottom line indicates funds can be transferred back to Municipal Account (\$255,095) as the cash backed amount is in excess of the funding required to be 'restricted'.

## **Note 12 – LGGS Program**

Minimal expenditure but it should be noted that the approved grant from DFES is \$125,000 as opposed to the budgeted amount of \$108,890 of which a budget variation will need to be undertaken in due course.

## **Note 13 – Material Variances**

Details have been provided with greater granularity on variances noting this is the first month of the financial year and variances are either under the threshold for reporting or reporting an under expenditure.

## **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)<br><br>Non-compliance results in litigation, criminal charges or significant damages or penalties to Shire/Officers | Unlikely (2)<br><br>The event could occur at some time | High (10)   | Senior Management Team / CEO<br><br>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**

Absolute majority required: No

---

**Officer Recommendation / Council Resolution [OCM2609-03]**

**Moved: Cr NSmith**

**Seconded: Cr E Williams**

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

**CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS DECISION OF COUNCIL**

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

Voted Against: Nil

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### 9.3 Adoption of Council Plan 2026 – 2036 (Major Review)

|                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>File Reference</b>                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Report Date</b>                    | 9 September 2026                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Applicant/Proponent</b>            | Shire of Victoria Plains                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Officer Disclosure of Interest</b> | Nil                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Previous Meeting Reference</b>     | SCM 16 February 2026 – Strategic Community (Integrated) Plan Major Review.                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Prepared by</b>                    | Sean Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Senior Officer</b>                 | N/A                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Authorised by</b>                  | Sean Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Attachments</b>                    | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Shire of Victoria Plains Council Plan 2026-2036 – Page 44</li> <li>2. Shire of Victoria Plains – Community Engagement Report <i>Under Confidential Cover</i></li> <li>3. Shire of Victoria Plains – Council Plan Snapshot – Page 70</li> </ol> |

#### PURPOSE

To consider and adopt the Shire of Victoria Plains Strategic Community Plan 2026-2036, titled Council Plan 2026-2036, following completion of the major review process, community engagement program and public consultation.

#### BACKGROUND

Council adopted the Strategic Community Plan 2022-2032 on 3 August 2022. The Plan established the Shire's long-term community vision and recognised that a minor review would occur in 2024 and a major review would occur in 2026.

Council completed the Minor Review of the Strategic Community Plan at the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 30 April 2025. The review concluded that the Strategic Community Plan remained fit for purpose but identified a number of emerging issues requiring further consideration through the next major review process, including youth and young people, housing, water security, energy transition, mining, space capability and regional waste management.

During late 2025 the Shire commenced planning for the major review. This included engagement of 150Square Strategic Solutions, development of the communication and engagement program, preparation of surveys and scheduling of community and Council workshops. Correspondence between the Shire and 150Square demonstrates preparatory work commenced during November and December 2025.

At the Special Council Meeting held on 16 February 2026 Council considered Item 9.1 Strategic Community (Integrated) Plan – Major Review and unanimously endorsed the Project Plan and timetable for completion of the review. The endorsed methodology included surveys, community workshops, Community Reference Panel workshops, Council and staff workshops, public consultation and final Council adoption.

Community engagement was subsequently undertaken between February and April 2026. The engagement program comprised:

- Council and Management Workshop – 25 February 2026;
- Community Reference Panel Workshop – 26 February 2026;
- Community Workshop – 26 February 2026;
- Sporting and Community Group Survey;
- Resident and Ratepayer Survey;
- Business Survey; and
- Community Quickfire Survey.

The outcomes of the engagement process were documented by 150Square Strategic Solutions within the Shire of Victoria Plains Community Engagement Report to Council – May 2026. The report recorded a total of 61 engagements and identified emerging strategic priorities across Community, Economy, Environment and Civic Leadership.

Following consideration of the engagement outcomes, a draft Strategic Community Plan was prepared. Consistent with anticipated State Government reforms, the document was titled Council Plan 2026-2036, although it remains the Shire's Strategic Community Plan for the purposes of the current legislative framework. Council subsequently considered the draft Plan and authorised its release for public comment.

The final Council Plan 2026-2036 has now been prepared having regard to community feedback, Community Reference Panel input, Council direction and the findings contained within the Community Engagement Report. Once adopted by Council, the final plan will need to be re-issued for final comment (Attachment 3).

## **COMMENT**

### **Community Engagement Outcomes**

The Community Engagement Report (Attachment 2) identified a number of recurring themes across the engagement process eg support for youth and family, growing tourism, long term water solutions and strong regional partnerships. The Community Reference Panel discussions additionally identified the importance of housing growth, townsite development, volunteer support, accessibility, biodiversity protection and management of emerging industries as matters requiring ongoing strategic attention.

### **Strategic Direction**

The Council Plan 2026-2036 establishes the strategic direction of the Shire for the next ten years and retains the Shire's vision of "A Place to Grow". The document is structured around the four strategic pillars of:

- Community;
- Economy;
- Environment; and
- Civic Leadership.

The Plan integrates community aspirations, service priorities, major projects, advocacy objectives and organisational capability requirements into a single strategic document which will guide future planning, budgeting and reporting.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Community</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting youth and families through improved spaces, playgrounds and programs</li> <li>Planning for future sporting, recreation and community facility needs</li> <li>Strengthening support for volunteers, sporting clubs and community groups</li> <li>Supporting our seniors to age in place</li> <li>Improving accessibility and inclusion across Shire facilities</li> <li>Improving walking and cycling paths / trails</li> </ul> | <b>Economy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivery of residential subdivision and workforce housing</li> <li>Activating land for residential, industrial and commercial development</li> <li>Diversifying the local economy beyond agriculture</li> <li>Growing tourism through our natural landscapes, events and attractions</li> <li>Improving and promoting caravan parks, camping and short stay accommodation</li> <li>Supporting local business</li> <li>Maintaining and upgrading the road network</li> <li>Improving townscape presentation, public amenities and community spaces</li> </ul> |
| <b>Environment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocating for long term water security</li> <li>Supporting emergency preparedness, response and our volunteer emergency services</li> <li>Managing the benefits and impacts of renewable energy developments</li> <li>Improving waste management services and transfer stations</li> <li>Protecting biodiversity, roadside vegetation and natural landscapes</li> </ul>                                                                | <b>Civic Leadership</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthening communication and engagement with the community</li> <li>Maintaining strong regional partnerships and advocacy</li> <li>Sustaining sound financial management and organisational capability</li> <li>Ensuring equitable representation of all communities across the Shire</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

Table One: The Four Pillars

## Implementation

Following adoption, the Council Plan will continue to inform the:

- Corporate Business Plan;
- Long Term Financial Plan;
- Asset Management Plan;
- Workforce Plan; and
- other informing strategies.

Progress against the Council Plan will be monitored through the Corporate Business Plan and reported to Council and the community through quarterly and annual reporting processes.

## CONSULTATION

Consultation and engagement was conducted with the following stakeholders:

- Council;
- Community Reference Panel;
- Shire staff;
- Residents and ratepayers;
- Sporting and community organisations;
- Local businesses;
- 150Square Strategic Solutions;
- Council Briefing Sessions.

## STATUTORY CONTEXT

### Local Government Act 1995

Section 5.56 provides for regulations concerning the preparation, adoption and review of Strategic Community (Council) Plans and associated planning requirements.

### Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996

#### Regulation 19C – Strategic Community Plans, requirements for

Regulation 19C requires a local government to review its Strategic Community Plan at least once every four years and provides that Council must consider and determine whether to adopt a Strategic Community Plan or modifications to that Plan. Adoption requires an absolute majority of Council.

Regulation 19C(8) provides that an adopted Strategic Community Plan applies to the district for the period specified in the Plan.

#### Regulation 19D – Strategic Community Plans, public notice

Following adoption, the Chief Executive Officer must ensure local public notice is given that the Strategic Community Plan has been adopted and must publish the adopted Plan on the local government's official website.

### Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

The Strategic Community Plan is the principal strategic planning document within the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework. It must be community informed, have a minimum ten-year horizon, be reviewed through a major review every four years and be formally adopted by Council.

## 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

N/A

## Policy Implications

Policy 2.7 – Community Engagement Policy and Communication Plan/Strategy. The major review was undertaken in accordance with the principles and engagement methods established by the policy.

## Other Corporate Document

- Corporate Business Plan;
- Long Term Financial Plan;
- Workforce Plan;
- Asset Management Plan;
- Information and Communication Technology Plan;
- Economic Development and Tourism Strategy;
- Water Strategy;
- Sport and Recreation Management Plan

## Risk Analysis

| Consequence                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Consequence Rating: | Likelihood Rating:                                                                       | Risk Rating | Risk Acceptance/ Controls                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Mitigation and Outcome                                                                                                                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Governance and Compliance.</b><br><br>Failure to adopt a Strategic Community Plan following completion of the major review process may result in non-compliance with the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework and weaken Council's ability to strategically plan and allocate resources.. | Moderate (3)        | Possible (3)<br><br>Probably occur in most circumstances.<br><br>At least once per year. | Medium (9)  | Operational Manager<br><br>Risk acceptable with adequate controls, managed by specific procedures and subject to semi-annual monitoring.<br><br>Managed through statutory review processes, community engagement and Council consideration. | Adoption of the Strategic Community Plan provides legislative compliance and a contemporary strategic framework to guide Council's future decisions and resource allocation. |

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Provision of \$17,500 for the major review and Workforce Plan review was included within the 2025/26 Budget and then carried forward into the 2026/27 Budget. There are no additional material financial implications arising directly from adoption other than minor publication and administrative costs. Future projects arising from the Strategic Community Plan remain subject to annual budget consideration and external funding availability.

## VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Absolute majority required: **Yes**

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**Officer Recommendation / Council Resolution [OCM2609-04]****Moved: Cr S Woods****Seconded: Cr N Smith**

That Council:

1. **ADOPTS**, by absolute majority and for the purposes of section 5.56 of the *Local Government Act 1995* and regulation 19C of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*, the Shire of Victoria Plains Strategic Community Plan 2026-2036, titled Council Plan 2026-2036, as per Attachment 1
2. **NOTES** the Shire of Victoria Plains Community Engagement Report to Council – May 2026 and the Council Plan Snapshot for Community as supporting documents to the major review process (Attachment 2).
3. **NOTES** that, following adoption, the Chief Executive Officer must give local public notice that the Strategic Community Plan has been adopted and publish the adopted Strategic Community Plan on the Shire's official website in accordance with regulation 19D of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996* (Attachment 3).
4. **NOTES** that implementation of the Strategic Community Plan will occur through the Corporate Business Plan (Implementation Plan) and associated informing strategies and will be monitored through quarterly and annual reporting processes.
5. **AUTHORISES** the Chief Executive Officer to undertake any minor administrative, formatting or typographical amendments required prior to publication that do not alter the intent of the adopted Strategic Community Plan.

**CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS DECISION OF COUNCIL**

Voted For:

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

Voted Against:

Nil

## 9.4 Adoption of Workforce Plan 2026 – 2030 (Major Review)

|                                       |                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>File Reference</b>                 |                                                                            |
| <b>Report Date</b>                    | 9 September 2026                                                           |
| <b>Applicant/Proponent</b>            | Shire of Victoria Plains                                                   |
| <b>Officer Disclosure of Interest</b> | Nil                                                                        |
| <b>Previous Meeting Reference</b>     | SCM 16 February 2026 – Strategic Community (Integrated) Plan Major Review. |
| <b>Prepared by</b>                    | Sean Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer                                     |
| <b>Senior Officer</b>                 | N/A                                                                        |
| <b>Authorised by</b>                  | Sean Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer                                     |
| <b>Attachments</b>                    | 1. Shire of Victoria Plains Workforce Plan 2026-2030 – Page 76             |

### PURPOSE

To consider and adopt the Shire of Victoria Plains Workforce Plan 2026-2030 following completion of the workforce review process, staff engagement program, workforce analysis and consideration by the staff Workforce Plan Review Sub-Committee.

### BACKGROUND

The Workforce Plan is one of the informing strategies that supports delivery of the Shire's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework and Council Plan 2026-2036. It identifies the workforce resources, capabilities and organisational initiatives required to deliver Council services and strategic priorities over the next four years.

During late 2025 and early 2026, the Shire engaged 150Square Strategic Solutions to assist with the major review of the Strategic Community Plan and associated informing strategies, including the Workforce Plan. Correspondence between the Shire and Darren Mollenoyux demonstrates the Workforce Plan review commenced in January 2026 and progressed through a series of draft reports, workforce surveys, workshops and review meetings throughout the year.

As part of the review process, all employees were invited to participate in a workforce survey during February 2026, with eighteen responses received. Dedicated staff workshops were subsequently held at both the Administration Office and Depot to ensure all employees had the opportunity to contribute to workforce planning discussions.

The draft Workforce Plan was further informed through business unit SWOT analysis workshops with management and consideration by a dedicated Workforce Plan Review Sub-Committee. Matters considered included workforce attraction and retention, succession planning, organisational structure, governance capability, leadership development, workforce housing and future service delivery requirements.

The final Workforce Plan 2026-2030 has now been prepared having regard to staff feedback, management workshops, Workforce Plan Review Sub-Committee input and the strategic direction established within the Council Plan 2026-2036.

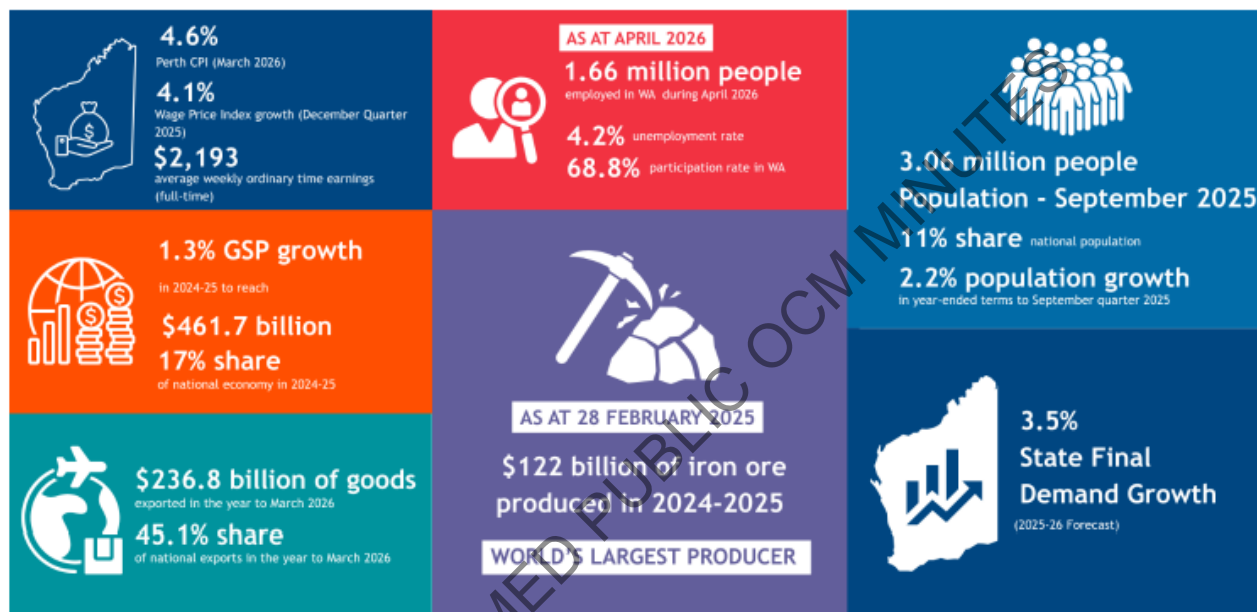
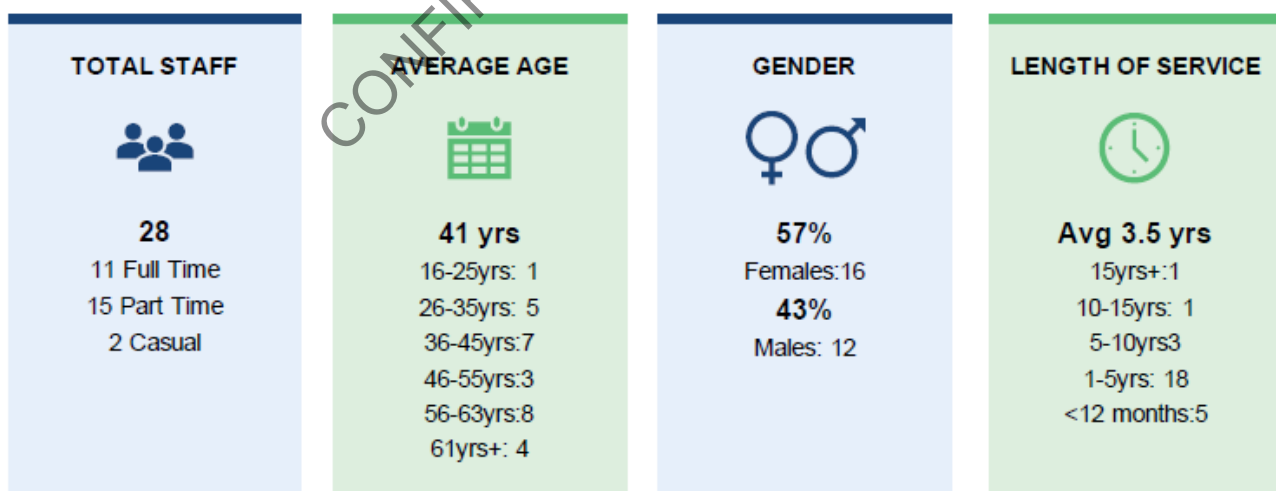
## COMMENT

### Workforce Planning Context

The Workforce Plan forms one of the four key components of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework and identifies workforce requirements and strategies required to support current and future operations. The Plan has been prepared having regard to the strategic priorities adopted within the Council Plan 2026-2036.

### Current Workforce Profile

#### Western Australia Economic Profile for May 2026 relevant to this Workforce Plan



As at April 2026 the Shire employed 28 employees comprising 11 full-time employees, 15 part-time employees and two casual employees. The average employee age was 41 years, with an average length of service of 3.5 years. Workforce data indicates employee turnover has remained relatively stable over recent years, averaging seven departures annually.

The review identified a number of workforce strengths including strong leadership, positive workplace culture, flexible work practices, training opportunities and supportive management. Staff also identified opportunities to improve communication between business units, strengthen workplace safety systems and address workforce capacity constraints created by housing shortages.

## **Workforce Challenges**

The Workforce Plan identifies several key workforce risks and challenges facing the organisation over the next four years, including:

- ❖ Attraction and retention of employees due to limited workforce housing availability. This is a key issue for the Works Crew as there are currently three vacancies (p13);
- ❖ Increasing governance and compliance obligations;
- ❖ Retention and succession planning for senior and specialist roles;
- ❖ Skills shortages in technical and regulatory professions;
- ❖ Maintaining workplace safety standards;
- ❖ Workforce ageing and knowledge transfer; and
- ❖ Reliance on contractors and specialist resources in certain operational areas.

## **Strategic Priorities**

The Workforce Plan establishes four strategic workforce priorities for the period 2026-2030:

1. Ensuring workforce sustainability through attraction, retention and succession planning;
2. Enhancing employee growth through training, development and resource sharing;
3. Optimising organisational efficiency through improved systems, processes and policies; and
4. Fostering a positive workplace culture through leadership, communication and staff engagement.

Actions supporting these priorities include implementation of the Staff Attraction and Retention Strategy, advocacy for workforce housing, succession planning, leadership development, AI capability development, governance training, shared service arrangements and continued workforce engagement initiatives.

## **Future Workforce Requirements**

The Workforce Plan identifies the need for additional specialist capability to support long-term service sustainability and statutory compliance. Future opportunities include the establishment of a Manager Regulatory and Development Services position, together with regional collaboration opportunities through AMP-UP member councils to strengthen planning, building and environmental health services.

## **Implementation**

Following adoption, the Workforce Plan will inform workforce budgeting, recruitment activities, succession planning, staff development programs and implementation of the Corporate Business Plan. Progress will be monitored through Integrated Planning quarterly reporting to Council.

## **CONSULTATION**

Consultation and engagement was conducted with the following stakeholders:

- Workforce Plan Review Sub-Committee;
- Shire staff;
- Senior Management Team;

- 150Square Strategic Solutions;
- Administration and Depot workshops;
- Workforce Survey participants; and
- Council Briefing Sessions – 17 August 2026.

## STATUTORY CONTEXT

### Local Government Act 1995

Section 5.56 provides for regulations concerning strategic planning and associated informing strategies.

### Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996

#### Regulation 19C – Strategic Community Plans, requirements for

Regulation 19C requires local governments to prepare and review a Strategic Community Plan and ensure that associated planning processes support integrated planning and reporting. The Workforce Plan is an informing strategy that supports implementation of the Strategic Community Plan (Council Plan) and assists Council in identifying workforce capability, succession planning, recruitment and organisational development requirements necessary to achieve adopted community outcomes.

### Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework and Guidelines

The Department of Local Government's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework identifies the Workforce Plan as one of the informing strategies supporting the Strategic Community Plan and Corporate Business Plan.

The Framework requires local governments to:

- Identify current and future workforce requirements;
- Assess workforce capability and capacity;
- Consider workforce risks and succession planning;
- Identify workforce strategies and actions to address future needs; and
- Ensure workforce planning is aligned with long-term financial planning and organisational objectives.

The Workforce Plan 2026-2030 has been prepared in accordance with these principles and forms part of the Shire's integrated planning framework.

## 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 |  |

The Workforce Plan supports organisational capability requirements necessary to deliver Council priorities and services.

## Delegation

N/A

## Policy Implications

N/A

## Other Corporate Document

The Workforce Plan supports implementation of the Shire's:

- Corporate Business Plan;
- Long Term Financial Plan;
- Attraction and Retention Strategy;
- AI Governance Policy and Strategy;
- Work Health and Safety Framework; and
- Human Resource Management Policies and Procedures.

## Risk Analysis

| Consequence                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Consequence Rating: | Likelihood Rating:                                                                       | Risk Rating | Risk Acceptance/ Controls                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Mitigation and Outcome                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Compliance</b><br>Failure to adopt and implement a contemporary Workforce Plan may result in workforce shortages, succession planning failures, loss of corporate knowledge and inability to recruit or retain suitably qualified staff. This may adversely affect the Shire's ability to meet statutory obligations, maintain service levels, deliver capital projects, implement strategic priorities and respond to increasing governance and compliance requirements. Workforce housing constraints remain the most significant contributing factor to this risk. | Moderate (3)        | Possible (3)<br><br>Probably occur in most circumstances.<br><br>At least once per year. | Medium (9)  | Service Manager / Executive oversight.<br><br>Risk acceptable with adequate controls, managed through workforce planning, succession planning, training and development, performance management, workforce housing advocacy and ongoing organisational review. | Adoption of the Workforce Plan provides a structured framework to identify workforce risks, build organisational capability, support succession planning and maintain the workforce required to meet the Shire's statutory, governance and service delivery obligations.. |

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Provision of \$17,500 for the major review of the Strategic Community Plan and Workforce Plan was included within the 2025/26 Budget and carried forward into the 2026/27 Budget. Future workforce costs have been

incorporated within the Long-Term Financial Plan, which forecasts employee expenditure increasing from \$2.93 million in 2026/27 to \$3.39 million in 2029/30.

## VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Absolute majority required: No

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### Officer Recommendation / Council Resolution [OCM2609-05]

**Moved: Cr R Johnson**

**Seconded: Cr N Smith**

That Council:

1. **ADOPTS** the Shire of Victoria Plains Workforce Plan 2026-2030 as provided in Attachment 1.
2. **NOTES** that the Workforce Plan is an informing strategy supporting implementation of the Shire's Council Plan 2026-2036, Corporate Business Plan (Implementation Plan) and Long-Term Financial Plan.
3. **NOTES** that implementation of the Workforce Plan will occur through annual budgeting, workforce planning, organisational development activities and associated Corporate Business Plan actions.
4. **AUTHORISES** the Chief Executive Officer to undertake any minor administrative, formatting or typographical amendments required prior to publication that do not alter the intent of the adopted Workforce Plan

**CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS DECISION OF COUNCIL**

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

CONFIRMED PUBLIC CCM MINUTES

## 9.5 Economic Development Strategy Update

|                                       |                                                                                                                                                |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>File Reference</b>                 |                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Report Date</b>                    | 9 September 2026                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Applicant/Proponent</b>            | Shire of Victoria Plains                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Officer Disclosure of Interest</b> | Nil                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Previous Meeting Reference</b>     | OCM 23 October 2024 - Adoption of Economic Development Strategy 2024-2029.<br>OCM 28 May 2025 - Economic Development Strategy Progress Report. |
| <b>Prepared by</b>                    | Sean Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer                                                                                                         |
| <b>Senior Officer</b>                 | N/A                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Authorised by</b>                  | Sean Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer                                                                                                         |
| <b>Attachments</b>                    | Nil                                                                                                                                            |

### PURPOSE

To assess implementation of the Shire of Victoria Plains Economic Development Strategy 2024-2029 and consider progress achieved against the Strategy's objectives since its adoption.

### BACKGROUND

Council adopted the Shire of Victoria Plains Economic Development Strategy 2024-2029 at its Ordinary Council Meeting held on 23 October 2024. The Strategy was prepared to support long-term economic growth, investment attraction, increased housing choice, tourism development and revitalisation of local communities.

The Strategy established four key outcome areas:

1. Economic Diversity and Opportunities;
2. Visitors and Investment;
3. Greater Housing Choice; and
4. Revitalised Towns and Communities.

A progress report regarding implementation of the Strategy was subsequently presented to Council on 28 May 2025 by the then Economic Development Officer. Since that time a number of significant projects, advocacy initiatives and strategic partnerships have progressed, warranting a broader assessment of outcomes achieved since adoption of the Strategy.

### COMMENT

#### Strategic Assessment

The Economic Development Strategy was designed as a five-year implementation framework rather than a standalone project. Since adoption, implementation activities have become increasingly integrated into Council's Corporate Business Plan, Council Plan, advocacy agenda and capital works program.

The assessment demonstrates that the Strategy has successfully transitioned from planning and concept development into project delivery and implementation, particularly in the areas of housing development, tourism investment, precinct planning, economic diversification and regional advocacy.

## Implementation Assessment Matrix

| Strategic Outcome Area                      | Status | Key Actions Identified in Strategy                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Outcomes Achieved Since Adoption                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|---------------------------------------------|--------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Economic Diversity and Opportunities</b> | ●      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase economic diversity;</li> <li>• Support emerging industries;</li> <li>• Strengthen business and industry attraction;</li> <li>• Facilitate investment and employment growth.</li> </ul> | <p>Significant progress has occurred through renewable energy advocacy, mining and resource sector engagement, housing advocacy, regional partnerships and planning for emerging industries. Economic diversification priorities have been embedded within the Council Plan 2026-2036 and Corporate Business Plan.</p> <p>Since adoption of the Strategy, the Shire has secured more than \$5.2 million in Regional Road Safety Program funding for Toodyay-Bindi Bindi Road and Wongan Hills-Waddington Road, completed Wheatbelt Secondary Freight Network works valued at \$3 million for strategic freight route upgrades including Mogumber-Wannamal Road and other priority freight corridors, and delivered the \$1.6 million Calingiri-New Norcia Intersection project.</p> <p>The new Council Plan also identifies approximately \$19.84 million in planned road construction over four years, including Piawaning-Waddington Road, Yerecoin South East Road, Toodyay-Bindi Bindi Road North, ongoing road renewal, regional road upgrades, transport safety improvements and connectivity works supporting freight, visitor access and industry growth.</p> <p>The Calingiri Bypass Business Case is also included to support future heavy vehicle movement and economic connectivity advocacy.</p> |
| <b>Visitors and Investment</b>              | ●      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase visitation;</li> <li>• Attract investment;</li> <li>• Develop tourism experiences;</li> <li>• Improve destination marketing and visitor infrastructure.</li> </ul>                     | <p>Tourism Action Plan completed and implemented. Destination branding and tourism marketing collateral produced. ESA New Norcia Visitor Precinct Stage 1 substantially completed, with the Council Plan identifying ESA Tourism investment of approximately \$233,012 and progression towards final acquittal. Tourism signage upgrades and visitor infrastructure improvements have also progressed, supported by membership of Northern Valleys and Tourism Council of WA.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Greater Housing Choice</b>               | ●      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase housing supply;</li> <li>• Facilitate workforce housing;</li> <li>• Support residential development;</li> <li>• Attract new residents.</li> </ul>                                      | <p>Edmond Street residential development progressed from planning into funded delivery, including subdivision and servicing works estimated at approximately \$4.56 million under the Housing Support Program and \$3.2 million secured through the Regional Housing Support Fund to deliver eight key worker homes in Calingiri. Housing advocacy has also expanded through the Wheatbelt Regional Housing Initiative and Commonwealth HAFF engagement.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Revitalised Towns and Communities</b>    | ●      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve town presentation;</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                           | <p>Precinct planning activities progressed through the Victoria Plains Central Precinct Project, with related community infrastructure priorities reflected in the Council Plan. Tourism infrastructure and visitor facilities have been</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

|                                             |   |                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                             |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance community infrastructure;</li> <li>Activate key precincts;</li> <li>Improve visitor amenities and local facilities.</li> </ul>                       | upgraded, including ESA New Norcia Visitor Precinct Stage 1 and caravan park planning. The Council Plan identifies future investment of approximately \$820,000 for other infrastructure and \$233,012 for ESA Tourism, with further delivery dependent on grants and capital investment.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Regional Partnerships and Advocacy</b>   | ● | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop strategic partnerships;</li> <li>Support economic growth;</li> <li>Attract investment;</li> <li>Strengthen regional collaboration.</li> </ul>        | Strong partnerships established with Yued Aboriginal Corporation, Wheatbelt Development Commission, Regional Development Australia Wheatbelt, neighbouring local governments and government agencies. Regional advocacy has delivered significant outcomes for housing, infrastructure and economic development, including the Wheatbelt Regional Housing Initiative, AMP-UP advocacy, \$3.2 million Regional Housing Support Fund funding for Edmond Street housing and continued Commonwealth engagement on HAFF reform. |
| <b>Governance and Strategic Integration</b> | ● | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish governance arrangements;</li> <li>Monitor implementation;</li> <li>Integrate strategy priorities into corporate planning and reporting.</li> </ul> | Economic Development Strategy priorities are now incorporated into the Council Plan 2026-2036, Corporate Business Plan, Long Term Financial Plan and ongoing strategic reporting processes. The Council Plan now identifies major project investment relevant to economic development, including \$4.10 million for the Edmond Street Development, \$3.34 million for regional housing, \$233,012 for ESA Tourism and \$25,000 for the Calingiri Bypass Business Case.                                                     |

### Summary Table:

| Status | Assessment                                                                                     |
|--------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ●      | 3 Strategic Outcome Areas substantially achieved or embedded into business-as-usual activities |
| ●      | 3 Strategic Outcome Areas progressing through ongoing projects, advocacy and partnerships      |
| ●      | 0 Strategic Outcome Areas identified as requiring corrective action                            |

Overall Implementation Status: ● Progressing Well

The assessment indicates that implementation of the Economic Development Strategy 2024-2029 is progressing strongly. Of the six major implementation areas assessed, three are considered substantially achieved and embedded within ongoing operations, while the remaining three continue to progress through major projects, advocacy programs and partnership initiatives. No strategic theme is assessed as having limited progress. The review demonstrates that the Strategy remains relevant, contemporary and aligned with Council's current priorities regarding housing, tourism, economic diversification, regional advocacy and place activation.

## CONSULTATION

Consultation and engagement was conducted through the following mechanisms:

- Council Briefing Sessions;
- Economic Development Officer reports;
- Corporate Business Plan reporting;
- Council Plan major review engagement;
- Local businesses;
- Tourism stakeholders;
- Yued Aboriginal Corporation;
- Wheatbelt Development Commission;
- Regional Development Australia Wheatbelt;
- Tourism Council of WA;
- State Government agencies.

## STATUTORY CONTEXT

### Local Government Act 1995

Section 5.56 requires local governments to plan for the future of their districts and establish strategic planning frameworks to guide future decision-making.

### Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

The Economic Development Strategy is an informing strategy supporting delivery of the Strategic Community Plan (Council Plan), Corporate Business Plan and Long Term Financial Plan.

## CORPORATE CONTEXT

### Strategic Business Plan/Corporate Business Plan

| STRATEGIC PRIORITIES                                                       | WE KNOW WE ARE SUCCEEDING WHEN                                                   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>2. ECONOMY</b>                                                          | Sustainable economic growth and investment occurs across the district.           |
| <b>2.1 Support local business, employment and investment opportunities</b> | Increased housing, business and tourism development opportunities are delivered. |
| <b>2.2 Diversify the local economy</b>                                     | Emerging industries contribute to economic growth and community prosperity.      |
| <b>2.3 Promote tourism and visitation</b>                                  | Tourism initiatives are implemented and visitor numbers increase.                |

**Delegation**

N/A

**Policy Implications**

Nil

**Other Corporate Document**

- Council Plan 2026-2036;
- Corporate Business (Integration) Plan;
- Long Term Financial Plan;
- Workforce Plan;
- Asset Management Plan;
- Tourism Action Plan

**Risk Analysis**

| Consequence                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Consequence Rating: | Likelihood Rating:                                                                       | Risk Rating | Risk Acceptance/ Controls                                                                                                                              | Mitigation and Outcome                                                                                                                         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Financial</b><br>Failure to periodically assess implementation of the Economic Development Strategy may result in reduced accountability, ineffective prioritisation of resources and missed economic opportunities | Moderate (3)        | Possible (3)<br><br>Probably occur in most circumstances.<br><br>At least once per year. | Medium (9)  | Operational Manager<br><br>Managed through annual reporting, Council oversight and integration with the Corporate Business Plan Council consideration. | Regular assessment ensures priorities remain contemporary and resources are directed towards projects delivering measurable economic outcomes. |

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The assessment has been undertaken using existing officer resources. There are no direct financial implications associated with this report. Financial implications associated with individual projects identified within the Strategy remain subject to separate Council consideration through annual budget and external funding processes.

## VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Absolute majority required: No

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### Officer Recommendation / Council Resolution [OCM2609-06]

Moved: Cr R Johnson

Seconded: Cr N Smith

That Council:

1. **RECEIVES** the assessment of the Shire of Victoria Plains Economic Development Strategy 2024-2029 implementation outcomes;
2. **NOTES** the achievements outlined within the Economic Development Strategy Implementation Assessment Matrix;
3. **DETERMINES** that the Economic Development Strategy 2024-2029 remains fit for purpose and continues to provide an appropriate framework for economic development activities within the district;
4. **ACKNOWLEDGES** the integration of the Strategy into the Council Plan 2026-2036, Corporate Business Plan and associated informing strategies; and
5. **REQUIRES** that future reporting occur through Council's integrated planning and reporting framework.

**CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS DECISION OF COUNCIL**

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

Voted Against: Nil

CONFIRMED PUBLIC OCM MINUTES

## 9.6 Asset Management Plan Improvement Actions – Progress Assessment

|                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>File Reference</b>                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Report Date</b>                    | 11 September 2026                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Applicant/Proponent</b>            | Shire of Victoria Plains                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Officer Disclosure of Interest</b> | Nil                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Previous Meeting Reference</b>     | OCM 26 April 2023 - 2204-07                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Prepared by</b>                    | Sean Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Senior Officer</b>                 | N/A                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Authorised by</b>                  | Sean Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Attachments</b>                    | Attachment 1 – Asset Management Plan 2023–2033 – Page 116<br>Attachment 2 – Asset Management Plan Improvement Actions Progress Assessment Report – Page 162<br>Attachment 3 – Building Maintenance Framework – Page 169<br>Attachment 4 – Parks and Gardens Maintenance Framework - Page 174<br>Attachment 5 – Road Maintenance Framework - Page 180 |

### PURPOSE

To present a progress assessment of the improvement actions identified within the Shire's Asset Management Plan and determine whether the initiatives implemented since adoption have adequately addressed identified gaps and recommendations.

### BACKGROUND

The Shire of Victoria Plains Asset Management Plan 2023–2033 (Attachment 1) provides the strategic framework for management of transport, property, recreation, fleet and equipment assets over a ten-year planning horizon. The Plan identified a number of improvement opportunities relating to condition inspections, maintenance schedules, lifecycle planning, works programming and asset information quality. The Asset Management Plan specifically identified the need to continue developing and refining the works program, review planned asset operation and maintenance schedules, review assets recorded in poor or very poor condition, establish an inventory and condition information for car parks, and implement a cyclical building condition inspection program and five-year capital works program.

Since adoption of the Asset Management Plan, Council has supported implementation of the:

- Building Maintenance Framework;
- Parks and Gardens Maintenance Framework;
- Road Maintenance Framework.

The Building Maintenance Framework, Parks and Gardens Maintenance Framework and Road Maintenance Framework were noted as completed as part of the April 2026 CEO KPI quarterly review, reported to the May 2026 Ordinary Council Meeting.

The Shire has also implemented the Sport and Recreation Master Plan (adopted by Council 23 October 2024), Bridge Asset Management Program and Bridge Inspection Regime, STED Asset Management and Hydraulic Assessment Program, and Plant Replacement Program. Collectively, these initiatives provide the operational, strategic and technical systems needed to implement the Asset Management Plan in practice, improve data quality, strengthen risk management, support service-level delivery and inform future capital works programming.

**The Building Maintenance Framework** establishes annual inspections for all Shire buildings, bi-annual inspections for aged housing, risk-based prioritisation, annual scheduling and a rolling maintenance pipeline.

**The Parks and Gardens Maintenance Framework** establishes a service-level hierarchy based on function, public use, risk profile and service expectations, which informs annual inspection frequencies, maintenance standards and allocation of resources.

**The Road Maintenance Framework** establishes a road hierarchy-based prioritisation model, mandatory priority treatment of school bus routes and an annual process for reviewing defects, condition, risk, available budgets and resources.

The attached progress assessment report reviews these initiatives against the improvement actions contained within the Asset Management Plan and records that the Shire has materially progressed from high-level improvement actions to practical delivery systems (Attachment 2).

## COMMENT

The review demonstrates that implementation of the Asset Management Plan has materially progressed, with key frameworks and programs now in place across buildings, parks and gardens, roads, bridges, STED infrastructure, sport and recreation facilities, and plant and fleet assets.

Importantly, the Building Maintenance Framework (Attachment 3), Parks and Gardens Maintenance Framework (Attachment 4) and Road Maintenance Framework (Attachment 5) establish practical annual systems that convert strategic asset management objectives into inspection-driven maintenance programs.

Similarly, the Bridge Asset Management Program and STED Asset Management Program are operational documents that have been used to improve understanding of asset condition, lifecycle risk and future investment requirements, and have been referred to through Council briefing processes.

The Sport and Recreation Master Plan was previously adopted by Council and supports longer-term planning and investment prioritisation for sport and recreation facilities, including facility review, asset rationalisation, co-location opportunities, lease and memorandum of understanding responsibilities, business case requirements and integration with the Long Term Financial Plan.

The Plant Replacement Program 2026–27 to 2032–33 forms part of the annual budget process and provides the mechanism for managing fleet and plant lifecycle requirements through documented replacement cycles, estimated acquisition costs, trade-in values, net changeover costs and forward capital forecasting.

The assessment also identifies tangible funding outcomes associated with improved asset planning. A Special Project Grant allocation of \$454,000 has been confirmed for bridges in 2026–27. Housing Support Program Community Enabling Infrastructure funding for the Edmonds Street project includes \$692,505 for Stage 1 headworks and connections and a further \$465,715 for Stage 2 headworks and connections associated with the caravan park component.

## Assessment Matrix Summary

The Assessment Matrix compares the principal gaps and improvement actions identified within the Asset Management Plan against the operational frameworks, programs and funding outcomes now in place. The following table provides a summary of the assessment and includes the relevant RAG status.

| <b>AMP gap or improvement action</b>                                                  | <b>Response implemented</b>                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>RAG assessment</b>                                 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Building condition information incomplete                                             | Annual inspections of all Shire buildings and bi-annual aged housing inspections have been established through the Building Maintenance Framework.                                                     | ● <b>Completed</b>                                    |
| Lack of structured building maintenance program                                       | Inspection-driven prioritisation, a rolling maintenance pipeline and annual works scheduling have been established.                                                                                    | ● <b>Completed</b>                                    |
| Recreation asset maintenance not linked to service levels                             | The Parks and Gardens Maintenance Framework establishes a service hierarchy, maintenance frequencies and asset classifications.                                                                        | ● <b>Completed</b>                                    |
| Recreation asset prioritisation inconsistent                                          | The Parks and Gardens Asset Register documents hierarchy levels and service priorities across Shire locations.                                                                                         | ● <b>Completed</b>                                    |
| Sport and recreation asset planning requires prioritised investment framework         | The Sport and Recreation Master Plan provides investment principles, facility review, rationalisation, agreement review, business case requirements and integration with the Long Term Financial Plan. | ● <b>Completed / Managed through SRMP</b>             |
| Maintenance schedules require development                                             | Annual maintenance schedules, documented priorities and review arrangements have been established across roads, buildings, parks and gardens.                                                          | ● <b>Completed</b>                                    |
| Road maintenance and renewal prioritisation requires structured operational framework | A road hierarchy, annual inspection and defect review process, prioritisation methodology, mandatory school bus route designation and budget integration have been established.                        | ● <b>Completed</b>                                    |
| Bridge asset lifecycle management not sufficiently detailed                           | Level 1 routine inspections, Level 2 engineering assessments, structural assessments, renewal planning and a \$454,000 Special Project Grant allocation are in place.                                  | ● <b>Completed</b>                                    |
| Sewer and STED infrastructure not addressed in the Asset Management Plan              | Condition review, maintenance planning, capacity modelling, renewal assessment and funded Calingiri sewer and evaporation pond works are in place.                                                     | ● <b>Completed</b>                                    |
| Fleet and plant lifecycle planning requires ongoing renewal programming               | The Plant Replacement Program 2026–27 to 2032–33 provides replacement-cycle planning, annual budget review, trade-in assumptions and forward capital forecasting.                                      | ● <b>Completed / Managed through separate program</b> |
| Long-term capital works planning requires improvement                                 | Asset-specific forward programs now support roads, plant, bridges and STED infrastructure, together with annual budget and Asset Management Plan review processes.                                     | ● <b>Substantially Completed</b>                      |

## Traffic Light (RAG) legend

- **Completed:** Action implemented or managed through an adopted or established program.
- **Partially Addressed:** Operational arrangements exist, with further Asset Management Plan review required.
- **Not Yet Addressed:** No current framework or program has been identified.

The Assessment Matrix records all 11 principal improvement areas as completed, managed through an adopted or established program, or substantially completed. No principal action within the matrix is assessed as red.

The detailed review also identifies residual minor asset components, including cemeteries, street furniture, footpaths, drainage-related assets and other minor civil or community infrastructure. These assets are generally managed through existing operational maintenance, road and parks activities, renewal works and annual budget processes, and should be specifically considered as part of the next Asset Management Plan update.

The review concludes that the majority of identified improvement actions have now been completed or substantially completed, resulting in a significant increase in the Shire's overall asset management maturity.

Continued refinement will be managed through future Asset Management Plan reviews, annual budget processes and service-level monitoring, particularly in relation to long-term capital forecasting, integration of inspection outcomes into renewal programs, alignment with the Long Term Financial Plan and review of residual minor asset components.

## CONSULTATION

Consultation and engagement was conducted through the following mechanisms:

- Council Briefing Sessions;
- Senior Management Team.

## STATUTORY CONTEXT

Although there is no statutory requirement for Council to adopt or review this specific assessment report, the item relates to the Shire's obligations under:

1. Section 5.56 of the *Local Government Act 1995* requiring local governments to plan for the future of the district;
2. Part 2, Division 3 of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*, including Regulations 19AA to 19DA relating to strategic planning;
3. Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework and Guidelines.

The Asset Management Plan is an informing strategy supporting the Council Plan, Corporate Business Plan and Long Term Financial Plan. This assessment provides Council with information regarding implementation of recommendations identified within that informing strategy.

The report is therefore presented for Council information and noting rather than for adoption as a statutory plan.

## CORPORATE CONTEXT

### Strategic Business Plan/Corporate Business Plan

| STRATEGIC PRIORITIES                  |                                                                                                    | WE KNOW WE ARE SUCCEEDING WHEN |  |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| 4. CIVIC LEADERSHIP                   |                                                                                                    |                                |  |
| 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 |                                |  |
|                                       | Councillors attend training and feel supported in their role                                       |                                |  |
|                                       | Council is supported by a skilled team                                                             |                                |  |

The progress assessment reviews the implementation and effectiveness of improvement actions identified within the Asset Management Plan. It demonstrates progress in strengthening asset condition information, maintenance programming, lifecycle planning, renewal forecasting and alignment between asset management and long-term financial planning.

The assessment also supports the Resource Management objective of integrating asset, finance and workforce planning by using the Shire's people and resources to protect and enhance infrastructure, deliver services sustainably, improve risk management and support well-informed investment decisions. Key inputs include asset condition data, community service-level expectations, the Long Term Financial Plan, and relevant technical and service requirements.

### Policy Implications

Asset Management Policy 14.4

The Asset Management Plan, Asset Management Strategy and associated operational frameworks have been developed and implemented in accordance with Asset Management Policy 14.4.

### Other Corporate Documents

1. Asset Management Strategy;
2. Asset Management Plan;
3. Council Plan;
4. Corporate Business Plan;
5. Long Term Financial Plan;
6. Workforce Plan;
7. Annual Building Maintenance Framework;
8. Annual Parks and Gardens Maintenance Framework;
9. Annual Road Maintenance Framework;
10. Bridge Asset Management Program;
11. STED Asset Management Program;
12. Sport and Recreation Master Plan; and
13. Plant Replacement Program 2026–27 to 2032–33.

The Sport and Recreation Master Plan and Plant Replacement Program operate as separate but aligned planning instruments that address recreation facility planning and fleet and plant lifecycle management respectively.

## Risk Analysis

| Consequence                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Consequence Rating:                                                                                                                                           | Likelihood Rating:                                                                             | Risk Rating  | Risk Acceptance/ Controls                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Mitigation and Outcome                                                                                                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Financial Impact/Service Interruption</b><br>Failure to implement asset management improvement actions results in deterioration of asset information quality, ineffective maintenance planning, poor asset investment decisions and increased whole-of-life infrastructure costs. | Moderate (3)<br>Medium term service interruption with backlog cleared by additional resources (< 1 week).<br>Financial impact between \$50,001 and \$250,000. | Possible (3)<br>The event should occur at some time (20% chance).<br>At least once in 3 years. | Moderate (9) | Operational Manager<br>A Moderate residual risk is acceptable with established controls, specific procedures and semi-annual monitoring. Residual improvement areas will be addressed through future Asset Management Plan reviews, annual budgets and long-term financial planning. | The risk has reduced but remains Moderate while residual minor asset components are progressively incorporated into future condition, renewal and long-term financial planning. |

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications associated with receiving this report.

The implementation of asset management improvement initiatives supports more informed budgeting, lifecycle planning, renewal forecasting and long-term financial sustainability.

The assessment records existing funding outcomes that demonstrate the connection between asset planning, project readiness and external funding. These include the \$454,000 bridge Special Project Grant allocation for 2026–27 and Housing Support Program Community Enabling Infrastructure funding supporting sewer extension, connection and evaporation pond upgrade works associated with the Edmonds Street development.

Future financial implications arising from inspections, condition assessments, renewal programs or updated asset information will be considered through the annual budget, Long Term Financial Plan and future capital works programming processes.

**VOTING REQUIREMENTS**

Absolute majority required: No

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**Officer Recommendation / Council Resolution [OCM2609-07]**

**Moved: Cr E Williams**

**Seconded: Cr S Woods**

That Council:

1. **RECEIVES** the Asset Management Plan Improvement Actions Progress Assessment Report included as Attachment 2.
2. **NOTES** that the Building Maintenance Framework (Attachment 3), Parks and Gardens Maintenance Framework (Attachment 4) and Road Maintenance Framework (Attachment 5) establish the key operational systems that have substantially addressed the principal improvement actions identified within the Shire's Asset Management Plan.
3. **NOTES** that ongoing refinement, including review of residual minor asset components and alignment with operational, adopted and budget-based planning documents, will be managed through future reviews of the Asset Management Plan, Asset Management Strategy, Long Term Financial Plan and Corporate Business Plan (Implementation Plan).

**CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS DECISION OF COUNCIL**

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

Voted Against: Nil

## 9.7 Communications Update

|                                       |                                         |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <b>File Reference</b>                 |                                         |
| <b>Report Date</b>                    | 08/09/2026                              |
| <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>                    | Candice Watson, PACEO                   |
| <b>Senior Officer</b>                 | Sean Fletcher – Chief Executive Officer |
| <b>Authorised by</b>                  | Sean Fletcher – Chief Executive Officer |
| <b>Attachments</b>                    | Nil                                     |

### PURPOSE

To provide Council with an update on communications, marketing, community engagement and promotional activities undertaken during the period August 2025 to August 2026, including social media performance, audience engagement and the outcomes of the Community Newsletter distribution review.

### BACKGROUND

Council has identified effective communication as an important component of transparent governance and community engagement. Throughout the reporting period, the Shire has continued to promote Council projects, services, events and strategic initiatives through a range of communication channels including Facebook, the Shire website and printed publications.

This report provides an overview of communications activities undertaken during the reporting period and highlights key performance outcomes, community engagement results and opportunities for future improvement.

### COMMENT

#### Social Media and Digital Communications

Facebook continues to be a key communication channel for distributing community updates, emergency messaging, employment opportunities, events and local initiatives.

During the reporting period, the Shire's Facebook page achieved:

- 310,000 total views.
- 35,200 individual viewers reached.
- 2,100 content interactions.
- 2,200 link clicks.
- 13,900 page visits.
- 228 new followers.

These results demonstrate strong community engagement and continued audience growth throughout the year. The page reached more than 35,000 individual users and generated significant interaction across a variety of content types.

The Shire continued to use Facebook, Instagram and the Shire website as primary communication channels to:

- Promote Council decisions and meeting outcomes.
- Advertise community grants and funding opportunities.
- Share road, works and infrastructure project updates.
- Promote community events and sporting activities.
- Provide emergency services and community safety messaging.
- Promote economic development and tourism initiatives.

### **Audience Demographics**

The Shire's Facebook audience remains predominantly female, representing approximately 65% of followers, with males accounting for 35%.

The largest audience segment falls within the 45 to 54 years age group, with strong engagement also recorded among residents aged 35 to 44 years and 55 to 64 years. These results indicate Facebook remains an effective platform for reaching residents, ratepayers and local stakeholders.

### **Top Performing Content**

The Shire's five highest-performing Facebook posts achieved a combined 30,999 views and reached more than 17,000 people.

The most viewed post recorded 7,982 views, while a community advisory notice published in February achieved the greatest reach of 4,332 people. Content relating to local announcements, community safety information, major projects and community events consistently performed strongly.

A post relating to the European Space Agency initiative generated the highest level of sharing, demonstrating strong community interest in projects with broader regional significance.

### **Website and Publications**

Regular updates were undertaken throughout the reporting period to ensure information on the Shire website remained current, accurate and accessible to residents, visitors and stakeholders. Activities included:

- Updating project information, public notices and statutory advertising requirements.
- Maintaining community, tourism, employment and event-related content.
- Publishing Council meeting information, governance documentation and public consultation material.
- Preparing communication materials to support Council projects, initiatives and community engagement activities.

The Shire website continues to be a key communication platform, recording more than 25,500 users, 24,100 new users and 56,200 page views during the 2025/26 reporting period. Search engines remained the primary source of website traffic, while direct visits demonstrated strong community awareness and use of the website as an information resource. Mobile devices accounted for the majority of website usage, highlighting the importance of maintaining accessible and mobile-friendly content.

Community engagement through the website remained strong, with approximately 3,270 document downloads and 1,170 online form submissions recorded during the reporting period. Frequently accessed content included the Home page, Employment Opportunities, Council Meetings, Contact Us, Key Staff Contacts, Local Towns and tourism-related information.

## Newsletter Review

A review of the newsletter distribution process was undertaken following community feedback sought through the newsletter, Facebook page and Shire website.

A flyer was distributed encouraging residents to provide feedback on preferred newsletter delivery methods. Eight responses were received:

- One respondent requested both electronic and printed copies.
- Three respondents requested electronic copies only.
- Four respondents requested printed copies only.

As a result of the review, newsletter distribution has been streamlined, with a maximum of 20 printed copies now supplied to collection points throughout the Shire. Additional copies remain available for collection from the Shire Administration Office as required.

## Community Engagement and Promotion

Communications support continued to be provided to a range of community initiatives, including:

- Community events and activities.
- Sporting and recreation initiatives.
- Grant-funded projects.
- Local government information and consultation activities.
- Promotion of local achievements and community success stories.

Ongoing engagement with community groups, progress associations and stakeholders continues to support the Shire's commitment to transparent and proactive communication.

## Future Priorities

Key communications priorities for the coming reporting period include:

- Continued promotion of major Shire projects.
- Support for Strategic Community Plan engagement activities.
- Increased promotion of community organisations and volunteers.
- Ongoing improvement of website content and user experience.
- Monitoring social media performance and audience engagement.

Overall, communication activities continue to align with the objectives of the Shire's Communication Strategy by providing regular, clear and transparent information to the community while supporting Council's strategic priorities.

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on communications activities undertaken during the period August 2025 to September 2025 and to highlight key achievements and areas of focus moving forward.

## CONSULTATION

Mr Sean Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer

Ms Bridget Ralph, Community Development Officer

## STATUTORY CONTEXT

Nil

## CORPORATE CONTEXT

This report supports Strategy 4.2 and demonstrates Council's ongoing commitment to effective communication with residents, ratepayers and stakeholders.

### Strategic Business Plan/Corporate Business Plan

#### 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                                        |
|                                                           | Positive feedback through our customer survey                                                                               |
|                                                           | Council and Staff work closely with the community to successfully achieve projects or outcomes that deliver upon priorities |

### Delegation

Nil

### Policy Implications

Policy 2.7 Community Engagement Policy and Communication Plan/Strategy.

### Other Corporate Document

Nil

### Risk Analysis

| Consequence                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Consequence Rating:                                                                                                                                                  | Likelihood Rating:                                                                                                                    | Risk Rating      | Risk Acceptance/ Controls                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Mitigation and Outcome                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Reputation</p> <p>Not adhering to the Communication Strategy will lead to a lack of trust and confusion regarding the Shire's commitment to good governance and meeting the needs of its communities as set out in the SCP and CBP</p> | <p>Minor (2)</p> <p>Substantiated, low impact, low news profile</p> <p><b>Example</b> Local paper / Industry news article, Facebook item seen by multiple groups</p> | <p>Almost Certain (5)</p> <p>The event is expected to occur in most circumstances (&gt;90% chance)</p> <p>More than once per year</p> | <p>High (10)</p> | <p>Executive Team (SMT)</p> <p>Risk acceptable with adequate controls, managed by specific procedures and subject to semi-annual monitoring</p> <p><b>Adequate (There is some scope for improvement)</b> Processes (Controls) generally operating as intended, however inadequacies exist.</p> <p>Limited monitoring. Reviewed and tested, but not regularly.</p> | <p>The CEO will oversee implementation of the Communication Strategy and ensure communication activities are regularly monitored and reviewed.</p> <p>Council will receive updates as required through policy reviews and communications reporting.</p> <p>This will ensure any identified communication risks are managed appropriately and that the residual risk remains low.</p> |

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Nil

**VOTING REQUIREMENTS**

Absolute majority required: No

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**Officer Recommendation / Council Resolution [OCM2609-08]**

**Moved: Cr S Woods**

**Seconded: Cr N Smith**

That Council **ACCEPTS** the Communications Update Report for the period August 2025 to August 2026.

**CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS DECISION OF COUNCIL**

Voted For:

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

Voted Against:

Nil

CONFIRMED PUBLIC OCM MINUTES

## 9.8 Council Policy Manual Part 3 Financial Management - Purchasing Framework Clarification

|                                       |                                        |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| <b>File Reference</b>                 |                                        |
| <b>Report Date</b>                    | 23 September 2026                      |
| <b>Applicant/Proponent</b>            | Shire of Victoria Plains               |
| <b>Officer Disclosure of Interest</b> | Nil                                    |
| <b>Previous Meeting Reference</b>     | OCM2405-06 - 22 May 2024               |
| <b>Prepared by</b>                    | Sean Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer |
| <b>Senior Officer</b>                 | N/A                                    |
| <b>Authorised by</b>                  | Sean Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer |
| <b>Attachments</b>                    | 1. Policy Manual Part 3 – Page 198     |

### PURPOSE

To correct and clarify an inconsistency between Resolution OCM2405-06, the wording subsequently incorporated into the Council Policy Manual and the Policy Register concerning procurements undertaken through the WALGA Preferred Supplier Panel or a State Government Common Use Agreement.

### BACKGROUND

At its Ordinary Council Meeting held on 22 May 2024, Council considered amendments to Policy 3.1 Purchasing Framework and Schedule 3.1(b) Purchasing Thresholds and Requirements. The officer report explained that the amendments were intended to align the policy with the \$250,000 statutory tender threshold and clarify that procurement through the WALGA Preferred Supplier Panel is exempt from the requirement to publicly invite tenders and does not require a Council decision.

Resolution OCM2405-06 approved amendments to the Purchasing Framework. However, the detailed threshold table included in the resolution retained the earlier wording, 'Refer to Council for decision unless prior delegation to CEO', for procurements of \$250,001 and above, including procurements through the WALGA Preferred Supplier Panel or a State Government Common Use Agreement. This wording was inconsistent with the stated purpose and explanatory text of the officer report.

The Council Policy Manual was subsequently updated using wording that reflected the intended outcome of the report. The current manual states that a Council decision is required only where a public tender has been conducted, unless delegated authority applies, and that procurement through the WALGA Preferred Supplier Panel or a State Government Common Use Agreement does not require presentation to Council for decision.

A later review identified that the resolution, current policy wording and Policy Register were not fully aligned. This report therefore returns the matter to Council so that the intended policy position can be expressly confirmed and the governance records corrected.

## COMMENT

The proposed resolution does not create a new procurement pathway or change the statutory tender threshold. It confirms the policy position intended by the May 2024 officer report and already reflected in the current Council Policy Manual.

The clarification distinguishes between a public tender process and a procurement undertaken under an exemption provided by the Local Government (Functions and General) Regulations 1996. Where a public tender is conducted for procurement above \$250,000, the outcome is to be presented to Council unless delegated authority applies. Where procurement is undertaken through the WALGA Preferred Supplier Panel or a State Government Common Use Agreement, a separate Council decision is not required by the policy, although officers may seek a Council decision where the circumstances warrant it.

Formal confirmation will remove ambiguity, ensure the resolution and policy record are aligned, and provide a clear basis for future procurement decisions. Following Council's determination, the Policy Register and the history recorded in Policy 3.1 will be updated to cite the new resolution and review date.

## CONSULTATION

Chief Executive Officer.

T/Deputy Chief Executive Officer

## Statutory Context

Local Government (Functions and General) Regulations 1996:

Regulation 11 - when tenders must be publicly invited and applicable exemptions.

Regulation 11A - requirement for a purchasing policy for contracts below the tender threshold.

Corporate Context

## Strategic Business Plan/Corporate Business Plan

| STRATEGIC PRIORITIES                                                    | WE KNOW WE ARE SUCCEEDING WHEN                                                                                                                                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>4. CIVIC LEADERSHIP</p> <p>4.3 Proactive and well governed Shire</p> | <p>External audits and reviews confirm compliance.</p> <p>We have sound financial management policies and attract external funding to help achieve our goals.</p> |

## Delegation

Delegation Register: 3.1 Municipal Fund - Incurring Expenditure; and 3.7 Tenders - authority to set specifications, criteria, call, accept and vary.

Policy Implications

Council Policy Manual Part 3 Financial Management - Policy 3.1 Purchasing Framework and Schedule 3.1(b) Purchasing Thresholds and Requirements will be confirmed and the policy history updated following Council determination.

## Other Corporate Document

Policy Register.

Risk Analysis

| Consequence                                                                                                                     | Consequence Rating | Likelihood Rating | Risk Rating | Risk Acceptance / Controls   | Mitigation and Outcome                                                                                                                                                        |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Compliance Inconsistent governance records may create uncertainty over procurement authority and expose decisions to challenge. | Major (4)          | Possible (3)      | High (12)   | Senior Management Team / CEO | Council confirmation and updating the Policy Register and policy history will align the governance records and provide an unambiguous basis for future procurement decisions. |

### Financial Implications

Nil. The clarification does not alter an adopted budget or create additional expenditure.

### Voting Requirements

Absolute majority required: No

### Officer Recommendation / Council Resolution [OCM2609-09]

Moved: Cr R Johnson

Seconded: Cr S Woods

### That Council:

- 1 **NOTES** the inconsistency between Resolution OCM2405-06, the current Council Policy Manual and the Policy Register relating to Policy 3.1 Purchasing Framework and Schedule 3.1(b) Purchasing Thresholds and Requirements;
- 2 **CONFIRMS** the following wording in Policy 3.1 Purchasing Framework:
  - a Request for Quote (RFQ) procurement up to the threshold of \$250,000 (excl. GST) is not required to be presented to Council for a decision.
  - b Procurements in excess of \$250,000 (excl. GST) may be sourced through the WA Local Government Association Preferred Supplier Panel or a State Government Common Use Agreement, which are exempt from the requirement to publicly invite tenders and do not require a Council decision.
  - c Where a public tender is conducted for procurement in excess of \$250,000 (excl. GST), the outcome is to be presented to Council for a decision unless delegated authority applies.
  - d Nothing in this clause prevents officers from seeking a Council decision where considered appropriate under specific circumstances.

- 3 CONFIRMS** the following wording in Schedule 3.1(b) Purchasing Thresholds and Requirements:
- a** General purchasing threshold - \$250,001 and above: Conduct a public tender process or use a WALGA Preferred Supplier / State Government Common Use Agreement. Council decision required only where a public tender has been conducted, unless delegated authority applies.
  - b** WALGA Preferred Supplier or State Government Common Use Agreement threshold - \$250,001 and above: Seek a single or up to three quotations containing price and specification of goods and services depending on the risk and knowledge of both the Officer and Supplier. No requirement to present to Council for decision when procurement is undertaken via WALGA Preferred Supplier Panel or State Government Common Use Agreement.
- 4 DIRECTS** the Chief Executive Officer to update the Policy Register, the policy history and associated governance records to reference this resolution and ensure consistency with Council's confirmed policy position.

**CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS DECISION OF COUNCIL**

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

CONFIRMED PUBLIC OCM MINUTES

## 10. MEMBER MOTIONS OF WHICH PREVIOUS NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

### 10.1 Notice of Motion: Calingiri–New Norcia Road Rail Crossing

|                                       |                                        |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| <b>File Reference</b>                 |                                        |
| <b>Report Date</b>                    | 29 September 2026                      |
| <b>Applicant/Proponent</b>            | Cr Pauline Bantock, Shire President    |
| <b>Officer Disclosure of Interest</b> | Nil                                    |
| <b>Previous Meeting Reference</b>     | N/A                                    |
| <b>Prepared by</b>                    | Sean Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer |
| <b>Senior Officer</b>                 | N/A                                    |
| <b>Authorised by</b>                  | Sean Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer |
| <b>Attachments</b>                    | Nil                                    |

#### Purpose

To present a Notice of Motion submitted by Cr Pauline Bantock concerning safety and sight-line concerns at the Calingiri–New Norcia Road rail crossing, and to provide Council with the Chief Executive Officer's report on the history, current status, jurisdictional responsibilities and proposed actions associated with the matter.

#### NOTICE OF MOTION

The following Notice of Motion was received from Cr Pauline Bantock, Shire President, following her meeting with Malcolm McCusker and Peter Hewlett of Martindale Pty Ltd:

#### Notice of Motion submitted by Cr Pauline Bantock

That Council:

1. **ACKNOWLEDGES** the work undertaken to date by the Chief Executive Officer and Shire officers in relation to safety concerns at the Calingiri-New Norcia Road rail crossing, including engagement with Arc Infrastructure, Main Roads Western Australia, Infrastructure Australia and the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator (ONRSR).
2. Through the Chief Executive Officer **ADVOCATES** to Arc Infrastructure, the Public Transport Authority (PTA), Main Roads Western Australia and the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator (ONRSR) for the timely improvement of sight lines at the Calingiri-New Norcia Road rail crossing, having regard to concerns regarding vegetation within the rail corridor and the increased traffic movements associated with the forthcoming harvest season.

3. **REQUESTS** the Chief Executive Officer to seek written advice from Arc Infrastructure and the Public Transport Authority regarding:
  - a. the scope, timing and approval requirements associated with the rectification works currently being progressed by Arc Infrastructure; and
  - b. any interim safety measures that may be implemented pending completion of those works.
4. **REQUESTS** the Chief Executive Officer to provide ongoing updates to Council regarding:
  - a. the progress of vegetation remediation and sight-line improvement works; and
  - b. advice received from Arc Infrastructure, the Public Transport Authority, Main Roads Western Australia and the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator regarding rail crossing safety.
5. **REQUESTS** the Chief Executive Officer communicate Council's position to Lachlan Hunter MLA, Member for Central Wheatbelt, noting community concerns regarding rail crossing safety and the increased movement of agricultural traffic during harvest.

## Background

### Rail crossing relocation

The current Calingiri–New Norcia Road rail crossing forms part of the broader realignment of the Calingiri–New Norcia Road and Toodyay–Bindi Bindi Road intersection associated with the expansion of the CBH grain handling facility at Calingiri.

The project involved relocating the crossing from approximately the 61.4 kilometre mark to the 61.8 kilometre mark on the Toodyay West–Miling railway line. The relocation was progressed through arrangements involving the Shire, the Public Transport Authority and Arc Infrastructure. Arc Infrastructure installed the new crossing as part of the intersection project.

The project records include a Licence to Use and Occupy Corridor Land between Arc Infrastructure and the Shire, executed on 29 May 2025, relating to the Shire's use and occupation of the relevant corridor land. The licence identifies Arc Infrastructure as the manager of, and the party responsible for, rail safety in respect of the corridor land and railway infrastructure. Main Roads Western Australia subsequently assessed the relocated Calingiri–New Norcia Road rail crossing in June 2025 and found the sighting distances compliant at that time.

The project required coordination involving road construction, railway infrastructure, land acquisition and road closure processes, environmental approvals, and engagement with CBH, Main Roads Western Australia, the Public Transport Authority, Arc Infrastructure and the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage.

### Main Roads assessment

In a response to correspondence from Mr Silvio Brenzi, the Manager Works and Services, dated 21 September 2026, Arc Infrastructure advised that it maintains sighting distances within the rail corridor through vegetation management. Arc Infrastructure further advised that Main Roads Western Australia formally assessed the crossing in June 2025 and found all sighting distances compliant at that time, while acknowledging that conditions may have changed since the assessment.

This assessment is relevant to the history of the matter. However, it does not remove the need to review current conditions where concerns have subsequently been raised regarding vegetation growth and sight lines.

### **Initial concerns raised by Peter Hewlett**

In October 2025, Peter Hewlett raised concerns with the Chief Executive Officer during an informal discussion immediately before the Shire's Spring Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting. The concerns related to visibility for vehicles approaching the relocated crossing from the west and the absence of active warning lights.

The Chief Executive Officer advised Peter Hewlett that he was due to meet with the Regional Manager of Main Roads Western Australia's Wheatbelt Region the following day and would raise the matter at that meeting.

The crossing was subsequently discussed with Main Roads Western Australia. Main Roads agreed to take the matter forward for clarification and further review, including providing advice regarding the decision to install active warning lights at other crossings but not at the relocated Calingiri–New Norcia Road crossing.

On 9 November 2025, Peter Hewlett wrote to the Shire and restated his concerns. He expressed the view that the sight lines were particularly difficult for drivers of long-bonneted trucks approaching from the west. He also sought the removal of vegetation as an interim measure and continued advocacy for active warning lights.

The Chief Executive Officer responded in writing on 10 November 2025. The response confirmed that the matter had been discussed at length with Main Roads Western Australia and that it had been taken forward for further clarification and review. The Chief Executive Officer also advised that vegetation management would require consultation with CBH and Arc Infrastructure before work could be undertaken.

The matter was subsequently raised by the author with Infrastructure Australia representatives at the National Roads, Transport and Infrastructure Congress held in Bendigo in November 2025. Infrastructure Australia advised that it was aware of the earlier correspondence raised by the Chief Executive Officer as it had been passed on by Main Roads WA and confirmed that the matter had been discussed.

### **Further concerns raised by Martindale Pty Ltd**

In December 2025, Malcolm McCusker also raised concerns regarding vegetation and sight lines at the crossing. The Shire advised that the vegetation was situated within the rail corridor and recommended that Arc Infrastructure be approached because the corridor and vegetation fell within its area of responsibility.

The response also explained that the Shire could support Arc Infrastructure if assistance were requested, but the Shire could not independently enter the corridor and undertake the work without the necessary authority and safety arrangements.

### **ONRSR engagement**

In August 2026, the Chief Executive Officer and Mr Silvio Brenzi, Manager of Works and Services, met with representatives of the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator during the National Roads, Transport and Infrastructure Congress.

The Shire raised the Calingiri–New Norcia Road crossing, including the concerns about vegetation, sight lines and the earlier decision not to install active warning lights.

Following those discussions, ONRSR agreed to review the crossing and engage with Arc Infrastructure and Main Roads Western Australia regarding rail safety requirements and potential improvement measures. A date for the proposed review or site inspection has not yet been confirmed.

## September 2026 correspondence

On 13 September 2026, Peter Hewlett wrote to Lachlan Hunter MLA, Member for Central Wheatbelt, and again raised concerns about sight lines and vegetation. The correspondence referred to the route's use by agricultural freight vehicles, tourists and local traffic and sought action before harvest. This matter was referred to the Chief Executive Officer by Mr Lachlan's office and he responded to the honourable member on the same day.

On 14 September 2026, the Chief Executive Officer provided Peter Hewlett with a detailed update outlining the Shire's earlier engagement with Main Roads Western Australia and Infrastructure Australia and the more recent commitment secured from ONRSR. The update confirmed that the matter had remained active and continued to be progressed through the relevant agencies.

On 16 September 2026, Malcolm McCusker wrote to the Shire and supported the concerns raised by Peter Hewlett. He sought vegetation removal before harvest and questioned whether the Shire could arrange for the vegetation to be cut back.

A detailed briefing note was prepared for Cr Pauline Bantock before her meeting with Malcolm McCusker and Peter Hewlett on 24 September 2026. The briefing note set out the project history, the concerns raised, actions undertaken by the Shire, the responsibilities of external agencies, the original environmental approvals and the latest advice from Arc Infrastructure.

On 22 September 2026, the Shire formally responded to Malcolm McCusker. The response explained that:

- Arc Infrastructure manages the railway corridor;
- the Public Transport Authority retains statutory authority over the corridor land;
- the Shire cannot independently enter the corridor or remove vegetation without the involvement and approval of the relevant rail authorities;
- Main Roads Western Australia had assessed the sighting distances in June 2025 and found them compliant at that time;
- Arc Infrastructure acknowledged that conditions may change; and
- Arc Infrastructure's regional and environmental teams were progressing the permits required for rectification works.

Later on 22 September 2026, Malcolm McCusker requested the contact details of the relevant officer at Arc Infrastructure so that he could raise the matter directly.

The Chief Executive Officer provided the contact details of Igor Colic, Senior Project Engineer, External Projects, and reiterated that the Shire could not dispense with applicable approvals or independently undertake vegetation removal within the rail corridor. The response explained that additional vegetation work must occur through the appropriate rail corridor access, rail safety and environmental approval processes.

On 25 September 2026, Malcolm McCusker wrote again following his meeting with the Shire President and Peter Hewlett. He maintained that the matter required urgent action before harvest, questioned what practical steps had been taken by the Shire beyond discussions with other organisations, and expressed the view that the Shire and Chief Executive Officer carried a duty of care in relation to road safety.

These comments represent the position expressed by Malcolm McCusker. They do not alter the legal and operational requirement that vegetation removal within the rail corridor must be undertaken or authorised through the parties responsible for the corridor and in accordance with applicable safety and environmental approvals.

Following the meeting with representatives of Martindale Pty Ltd, Cr Pauline Bantock submitted the Notice of Motion now before Council.

## **Comment**

### **Work Undertaken to Date**

As detailed in the Background section of this report, the Shire has actively progressed concerns regarding the Calingiri-New Norcia Road rail crossing since they were first raised by Peter Hewlett during 2025.

Those actions have included:

- raising the matter with Main Roads Western Australia following discussions with Peter Hewlett;
- seeking clarification regarding the decision not to install active warning lights at the crossing;
- raising the matter with Infrastructure Australia;
- engaging directly with Arc Infrastructure regarding visibility, vegetation management and sight line concerns;
- raising the crossing with the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator (ONRSR) at the National Roads, Transport and Infrastructure Congress;
- obtaining ONRSR's agreement to review the crossing and engage with Arc Infrastructure and Main Roads Western Australia;
- providing updates to the Bush Fire Advisory Committee regarding the concerns raised and the advocacy being undertaken by the Shire;
- maintaining ongoing correspondence with Peter Hewlett and Malcolm McCusker; and
- obtaining updated advice from Arc Infrastructure regarding the progression of rectification works.

The evidence before Council demonstrates that the matter has remained active for a considerable period and has been escalated through the organisations responsible for rail corridor management, rail safety and road infrastructure. The Background section of this report outlines that history in detail.

### **Notice of Motion**

The Chief Executive Officer supports the intent of the Notice of Motion.

However, Council should note that a significant proportion of the outcomes sought by the Notice of Motion have already been achieved through work undertaken by the Shire administration.

### **Acknowledgement of Work Undertaken**

The Notice of Motion formally recognises work already undertaken by the Shire.

The Shire has advocated to Main Roads Western Australia, Arc Infrastructure, Infrastructure Australia and ONRSR over an extended period regarding rail crossing safety, sight lines and associated concerns. The Notice of Motion formally recognises work that has already been undertaken rather than initiating a new program of action.

## **Advocacy to Relevant Agencies**

The advocacy contemplated by the Notice of Motion is already underway and continues to be pursued.

The concerns raised by Martindale Pty Ltd have been communicated to the organisations responsible for the rail corridor and rail safety. The Shire has consistently pursued the matter with those organisations and continues to do so.

## **Investigation of Rectification Works**

This has largely already occurred.

The Shire has sought and obtained advice from Arc Infrastructure regarding the current status of the matter. Arc Infrastructure has confirmed that its regional and environmental teams are actively progressing the permits and approvals required to undertake rectification works.

## **Reporting to Council**

This report itself provides Council with a detailed update regarding the matter and establishes a basis for future reporting should further information be received from Arc Infrastructure, the Public Transport Authority or ONRSR.

## **Remaining Gaps**

While substantial work has already been undertaken, several matters remain unresolved.

## **Scope of Proposed Rectification Works**

Arc Infrastructure has confirmed that rectification works are being progressed through its internal approval processes. However, the Shire has not yet received definitive advice regarding:

- the precise works proposed;
- the extent of vegetation removal contemplated;
- whether additional safety treatments are being considered; and
- the approvals and implementation requirements associated with the proposed works.

## **Timeframe for Implementation**

At present, no timeframe has been provided by Arc Infrastructure.

Given the impending harvest season, this remains a legitimate concern and is likely to be the issue of greatest interest to Council and the community.

## **Interim Measures**

The Shire has not yet received advice regarding whether any interim measures can be implemented before completion of the permanent works.

This is an area where further clarification from Arc Infrastructure and the Public Transport Authority would be beneficial.

## **ONRSR Review**

ONRSR has agreed to review the crossing and engage with Arc Infrastructure and Main Roads Western Australia. However, a date for that review has not yet been confirmed.

## **Officer Assessment**

In the Chief Executive Officer's view, the current position differs significantly from the circumstances that existed when the issue was first raised.

At that time, concerns regarding vegetation and sight lines had not resulted in any specific commitment from the responsible rail authorities.

The position has now progressed to a point where:

- Arc Infrastructure has acknowledged the issue;
- Arc Infrastructure has referred the matter to its regional and environmental teams;
- Arc Infrastructure has confirmed that permit and approval processes are underway;
- ONRSR has agreed to review the crossing; and
- the matter remains under active consideration by the responsible organisations.

Accordingly, the key outstanding issue is no longer whether the matter is being progressed. The available information confirms that the matter remains under active consideration by the responsible agencies. The remaining requirement is to obtain certainty regarding the scope of the proposed rectification works, the approvals required, the timeframe for implementation, any interim measures that may be available pending completion of those works, and the timing of the proposed review by the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator (ONRSR).

## **Conclusion**

The Chief Executive Officer considers that the Shire has already undertaken and achieved a substantial proportion of the actions contemplated by the Notice of Motion.

The primary value of the Notice of Motion is therefore not to initiate action, but rather to reinforce Council's support for the advocacy already being undertaken and to formally seek resolution of the remaining information gaps regarding the scope, timing and implementation of rectification measures being progressed by the responsible agencies.

## **Consultation**

The following consultation and engagement has occurred:

- Cr Pauline Bantock, Shire President
- Sean Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer
- Silvio Brenzi, Manager of Works and Services
- Peter Hewlett, Martindale Pty Ltd
- Malcolm McCusker, Martindale Pty Ltd
- Igor Colic, Arc Infrastructure
- Arc Infrastructure
- Public Transport Authority
- Main Roads Western Australia
- Infrastructure Australia
- Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator
- Lachlan Hunter MLA, through correspondence initiated by Martindale Pty Ltd

## Statutory Context

### Local Government Act 1995

#### Section 2.7: Role of council

Section 2.7 provides that Council governs the local government's affairs and is responsible for the performance of the local government's functions. Consideration of advocacy relating to local transport infrastructure and community concerns is consistent with Council's governing role.

#### Section 5.41: Role of CEO

Section 5.41 establishes the Chief Executive Officer's executive role and provides that the CEO is Council's principal adviser. This includes advising and procuring advice for Council and ensuring Council has the information and advice required to make informed and timely decisions.

### Rail Safety National Law Application Act 2024

The Rail Safety National Law Application Act 2024 applies the Rail Safety National Law as a law of Western Australia. The national framework provides for the regulation of railway operations, including the responsibilities of accredited rail transport operators and rail infrastructure managers for managing rail-safety risks.

### Rail Freight System Act 2000

The legislation provides the statutory framework applying to the State's freight rail system and associated corridor land. The Shire **cannot independently** undertake work within the rail corridor without the required authority and approval.

### Environmental Protection Act 1986

The original intersection and rail crossing relocation works were undertaken under Native Vegetation Clearing Permit CPS 8357/1. The existing approval **does not** provide unrestricted authority for additional clearing outside its approved scope or conditions.

## Corporate Context

### Strategic Community Plan/Corporate Business Plan

The proposal aligns with the following strategic priorities contained within the Shire's Strategic Community Plan:

| Strategic Priority                                                      | Alignment                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1.1 Healthy, connected and safe communities</b>                      | The proposal seeks to address community concerns regarding visibility and sight lines at the Calingiri-New Norcia Road rail crossing and supports Council's objective of maintaining safe communities.              |
| <b>2.2 Safe and efficient transport network enables economic growth</b> | The proposal supports the ongoing safety and functionality of an important transport route utilised by local, agricultural and heavy-vehicle traffic and the continued movement of freight throughout the district. |

## Delegation

Nil.

The Notice of Motion concerns an advocacy position to be determined by Council. Implementation of any Council resolution will be managed administratively by the Chief Executive Officer.

## Policy Implications

There are no direct policy implications arising from the Notice of Motion.

The proposed actions are consistent with Council's broader role in advocating for safe transport infrastructure and communicating identified community concerns to the responsible organisations.

## Other Corporate Documents

The following documents are relevant:

- tripartite arrangements relating to the relocation of the Calingiri–New Norcia Road rail crossing;
- 20250514\_ Shire of Victoria Plains - Licence to Use and Occupy Corridor Land\_Calingiri (V1);
- Native Vegetation Clearing Permit CPS 8357/1 and associated appeal documentation;
- project plans and approvals for the Calingiri–New Norcia Road and Toodyay–Bindi Bindi Road intersection realignment;
- correspondence between the Shire, Main Roads Western Australia, Arc Infrastructure, ONRSR and Martindale Pty Ltd;
- Martindale\_Pty\_Ltd\_Final\_Briefing\_Note\_22\_September\_2026 (Shire President).

## Risk Analysis

| Risk area                                                                                                                                                                                  | Consequence                                                                                                                            | Likelihood                                                                                                                             | Risk Rating         | Risk Acceptance/ Controls                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Mitigation and Outcome                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Reputation:</b><br>Community confidence in the Shire may be affected if concerns regarding the rail crossing are perceived as not having been appropriately progressed or communicated. | <b>Minor (2):</b><br>Substantiated concern with a low impact and low news profile consistent with the Reputation consequence criteria. | <b>Possible (3):</b><br>Concerns have already been raised with the Shire, the Shire President, the local Member and external agencies. | <b>Moderate (6)</b> | <b>Adequate</b><br>Detailed responses to correspondents; briefing of the Shire President; engagement with Main Roads Western Australia, Arc Infrastructure, Infrastructure Australia and ONRSR; preparation of the detailed briefing paper; and this Council report. Controls assessed as Adequate. | <b>Remains Moderate</b><br>Continue transparent communication regarding responsibilities, actions undertaken and information received from responsible agencies. Provide updates to Council as further advice becomes available. |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Compliance:</b><br><br>The Shire may become involved in actions or commitments relating to vegetation management within the rail corridor without the necessary statutory approvals, permissions or authorisations. | <b>Minor (2):</b><br><br>Some temporary non-compliance or concern requiring formal engagement with relevant parties, consistent with the Compliance consequence criteria. | <b>Unlikely (2):</b><br><br>The Shire has consistently recognised that Arc Infrastructure and the Public Transport Authority are responsible for the corridor and that approvals are required prior to any works. | <b>Low (4)</b> | <b>Adequate</b><br><br>Review of corridor agreements; review of clearing permit conditions; consultation with Arc Infrastructure and the Public Transport Authority; and documented correspondence explaining the statutory position. Controls assessed as Adequate. | <b>Remains Low</b><br><br>Continue to require written approvals and authority from the responsible agencies before any Shire involvement in physical works.                       |
| <b>Environmental:</b><br><br>Future vegetation management works may affect vegetation within the rail corridor if not undertaken in accordance with applicable environmental approvals and permit conditions.          | <b>Minor (2):</b><br><br>Contained and reversible impacts managed through internal or external response, consistent with the Environmental consequence criteria.          | <b>Unlikely (2):</b><br><br>Arc Infrastructure's environmental team is assessing approval requirements and the Shire has acknowledged that further works cannot proceed without approval.                         | <b>Low (4)</b> | <b>Adequate</b><br><br>Native Vegetation Clearing Permit CPS 8357/1 review; Arc Infrastructure environmental review; corridor approval requirements; and existing environmental assessment processes. Controls assessed as Adequate.                                 | <b>Remains Low</b><br><br>Ensure any future vegetation management works are supported by the necessary environmental, rail-safety and corridor approvals prior to implementation. |

## Risk acceptance

Under the Shire's Risk Acceptance Criteria:

- **Low risks** are acceptable with adequate controls, managed through routine procedures and subject to annual monitoring.
- **Moderate risks** are to be monitored, managed through specific procedures and subject to semi-annual monitoring, with responsibility resting with the relevant operational manager.
- **High risks** require urgent attention, senior management oversight and monthly monitoring.
- **Extreme risks** are generally unacceptable and rest with the CEO and Council.

## Financial Implications

There are no known material financial implications arising directly from the Notice of Motion.

The actions contemplated by the Notice of Motion are limited to advocacy, stakeholder engagement, obtaining information from relevant agencies and reporting to Council. Any costs associated with these activities can be accommodated within existing operational budgets and officer resources.

At the time of preparing this report, no request has been made for the Shire to contribute financially to any proposed vegetation management, sight-line improvement works or other rail crossing treatments.

## Voting Requirements

Absolute majority required: No

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## Officer Recommendation / Council Resolution [OCM2609-10]

Moved: Cr R Johnson

Seconded: Cr S Woods

1. **ACKNOWLEDGES** the work undertaken by the Chief Executive Officer and Shire officers in progressing concerns regarding visibility and sight lines at the Calingiri-New Norcia Road rail crossing, including engagement with Arc Infrastructure, Main Roads Western Australia, Infrastructure Australia and the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator (ONRSR).
2. **ENDORSES** and **SUPPORTS** the continued advocacy being undertaken by the Chief Executive Officer with the organisations responsible for rail infrastructure, rail safety and associated transport infrastructure in relation to the Calingiri-New Norcia Road rail crossing.
3. **REQUESTS** the Chief Executive Officer to obtain and report to Council on:
  - a. the scope, timing, approvals and implementation requirements associated with any rectification works being considered or progressed by Arc Infrastructure.;
  - b. any interim safety measures that may be implemented pending completion of those works; and
  - c. the outcome of any review undertaken by the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator (ONRSR).
4. **REQUESTS** the Chief Executive Officer to provide updates to Council as substantive information becomes available from Arc Infrastructure, the Public Transport Authority, Main Roads Western Australia and the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator.
5. **REQUESTS** the Chief Executive Officer to advise Lachlan Hunter MLA of Council's resolution and ongoing concerns regarding visibility and sight lines at the Calingiri-New Norcia Road rail crossing.

**CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS DECISION OF COUNCIL**

Voted For:

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

Voted Against:

Nil

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

NIL

**12. MEETING CLOSED TO PUBLIC**

N/A

CONFIRMED PUBLIC OCM MINUTES

### 13. CLOSURE OF MEETING

There being no further business, the Presiding Member declared the meeting closed at 2.25 PM.

These minutes were confirmed at the Ordinary Council Meeting held on

Date 28 October 2026.

Signed   
(Presiding member at the meeting which confirmed the minutes)

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

CONFIRMED PUBLIC COUNCIL MINUTES