



SHIRE OF
MERREDIN
INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT

Minutes

Annual Electors Meeting

Held in Council Chambers
Corner King & Barrack Street's, Merredin
Tuesday, 24 January 2023
Commencing 6.00pm



Common Acronyms Used in this Document	
CBP	Corporate Business Plan
CEACA	Central East Accommodation & Care Alliance Inc
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CSP	Community Strategic Plan
CWVC	Central Wheatbelt Visitors Centre
DCEO	Deputy Chief Executive Officer
EA	Executive Assistant to CEO
EMCS	Executive Manager of Corporate Services
EMDS	Executive Manager of Development Services
EMES	Executive Manager of Engineering Services
ES	Executive Support Officer
GECZ	Great Eastern Country Zone
GO	Governance Officer
LGIS	Local Government Insurance Services
LPS	Local Planning Scheme
MCO	Media and Communications Officer
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MP	Manager of Projects
MRCLC	Merredin Regional Community and Leisure Centre



Shire of Merredin Annual Electors Meeting

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ELECTORS' GENERAL MEETING PROCEDURES

The following provides an overview of the legislative provisions governing the format and procedure for the Annual Meeting of Electors.

Prepare Annual Report

The *Local Government Act 1995* ("the Act") requires that the Local Government is to prepare an Annual Report (Section 5.53), accept the Annual Report (Section 5.54), advertise its availability to the public (Section 5.55) and hold an Annual Meeting of Electors within 56 days of accepting the Annual Report (Section 5.27).

Matters for discussion at the Annual Meeting of Electors

In accordance with section 5.27(3) of the Act and regulation 15 of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996* ("the Regulations") the matters to be discussed at the Annual Meeting of Electors are firstly the contents of the Annual Report for the previous financial year and then any other general business.

President to preside at the Annual Meeting of Electors

Section 5.30 of the Act stipulates that the President (or if not available, the Deputy President) is to preside at an Electors Meeting.

Voting at the Annual Meeting of Electors

Regulation 17 of the Regulations outlines the voting provisions at an Electors Meeting as follows:

1. Each elector at the meeting is entitled to one vote on each matter to be decided, but does not have to vote;
2. All decisions are to be made by a simple majority vote; and
3. Voting is to be conducted so that no voter's vote is secret.

Procedure at the Annual Meeting of Electors

Regulation 18 of the Regulations states that the procedure at an Annual Meeting of Electors is to be determined by the person presiding (President or Deputy President) at the meeting.

Decisions made at an Annual Meeting of Electors

In accordance with Section 5.33 of the Act, all decisions made at an Annual Meeting of Electors are to be considered at the next Ordinary Meeting of Council or, if that is not practicable:

1. At the first Ordinary Meeting of Council after that meeting; or
2. At a Special Meeting called for that purpose.

If, at a Meeting of the Council, a Local Government makes a decision in response to a decision made at an Annual Meeting of Electors, the reasons for the decision are to be recorded in the Minutes of the Council Meeting.

Definition of Elector

An Elector is defined under the Act as a person who is eligible to vote in an election of the Shire of Merredin.

Speaking at Electors Meetings

When addressing the Meeting, electors are asked to step up to the lectern and state their name and address for minute taking purposes. Electors will also be asked to complete the Question Submission form and return it to the Shire's governance staff.

Shire of Merredin
Annual Electors Meeting
6:00pm Tuesday, 24 January 2023



1. Official Opening

The President acknowledged the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet today, the Njaki Njaki people of the Nyoongar Nation and paid his respects to Elders past, present and emerging. The President then welcomed those in attendance and declared the meeting open at 6:06pm.

2. Record of Attendance / Apologies and Leave of Absence

Councillors:

Cr M McKenzie	President
Cr R Billing	
Cr D Crook	Deputy President
Cr J Flockart	
Cr R Manning	Via Zoom
Cr P Patroni	
Cr M Simmonds	
Cr P Van Der Merwe	

Staff:

L Clack	CEO
L Boehme	EMCS
L Mellor	EMES
M Wyatt	EA/ES
O Mellor	GO

Members of the Public:

P McCrae, A McCrae, Y Gray, R Endersbee,
A DiCarlantonio

Apologies:

P Zenni EMDS, Chloe Townsend A/DECO

Approved Leave of Absence:

Nil

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Absolute Majority

Resolution

Moved: Cr McKenzie

Seconded: Cr Patroni

That Council:

83092

1. APPROVES Councillor Manning's attendance at the January 2023 Annual Electors Meeting via video conference in accordance with Regulation 14A(1) of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*; and
2. APPROVES 1 Campbell Road, Denmark WA 6333 as a suitable place for Councillor Manning's attendance in accordance with Regulation 14A(4) of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*.

CARRIED 7/0

3. Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meetings

- 3.1 Annual Electors Meeting held on 27 September 2022.
Attachment 3.1A

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Absolute Majority

Resolution

Moved: Cr Flockart

Seconded: Cr Van Der Merwe

83093

That the Minutes of the Annual Electors Meeting held on 27 September 2022 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

CARRIED 8/0

4. 2021/22 Annual Report

- 4.1 Receipt of the 2021/22 Annual Report
Attachment 4.1A

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Absolute Majority

Resolution

Moved: Cr Van Der Merwe Seconded: Cr Crook

83094 That the Annual Report, as presented in Attachment 4.1A, for the financial year ended 30 June 2022 be received.

CARRIED 8/0

5. General Business

In accordance with Section 5.27 of the *Local Government Act 1995*, and Regulation 15 of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*, electors present at the Annual General Meeting of Electors are invited to raise any items of general business for discussion, this includes any questions from the general public.

The following questions were submitted prior to and at the Annual Electors Meeting.

Ms Michelle Gethin of Hines Hill

Can the Shire sponsor a sporting scholarship like the Eric Hind Music Scholarship? Lots of talented sporting kids in Merredin Shire doing lots of kilometres for training etc in Perth. The Shire will happily claim them as 'from Merredin' when they have achieved their dream and done well, but would do better to assist them in achieving this.

A: The CEO advised that it would be possible for the Shire to develop a new sporting scholarship or grant, however, this would take some time for options to be prepared for Council to consider, and an appropriate allocation of funds would need to be made in the annual budget. The Shire Administration has already committed to review the Eric Hind Scholarship during 2023, prior to the 2023 advertising, as part of a request from Council that options which would broaden the scope should be considered. The Administration will also be reviewing its community grants process prior to advertising in 2023. This request will be considered as part of these reviews, and if supported can be included in the 2023/24 budget.

Mr Peter McCrae and Ms Audiene McCrae of Merredin

In view of the situation that occurred last year on the weekend of the Country Music concert that we coordinated when there was no allocated place where caravans could stay for two nights in town once the caravan park had been fully booked out and they were turned away unbeknown to us. We are inquiring that if the same situation arises at this years concert which is booked to be held September 8th,9th &10th 2023 would the Merredin Shire council consider allowing the "over flow" to park in a designated place or area in town. The ones looking for a park are self-contained and we are more than happy to vouch for their characters.

A: The Shire President advised that it is possible for the Shire to offer overflow camping, however, a number of conditions must be met prior to this occurring under the relevant pieces of legislation such as the Caravan Park and Camping Grounds Act (1995) and the Shire's Local Government Property Law (2017). There are also two possible options to progress – either allowing overflow for existing service providers, or the Shire directly providing these. The Shire President thanked Mr and Ms McCrae for bringing this matter to the Shire's attention, and stated that the Shire will work with local providers to progress these options and provide Mr and Ms McCrae with a formal response once the preferred solution has been identified.

Mr Peter McCrae and Ms Audiene McCrae of Merredin

What are the future plans for more aged care facilities to be constructed in Merredin considering some residents are forced to leave town to find suitable housing?

A: The CEO advised that at present the Shire does not have plans for the construction of any aged care facilities in town, however, the Shire provides annual financial support to CEACA and holds one seat on the CEACA management committee. CEACA have informed Council that they are in discussion with State Government in relation to possible funding for the provision of further accommodation in the region. The Shire will make CEACA aware this question was raised at its AEM to ensure they are aware of the additional interest from the community.

Mr Rob Endersbee of Merredin

What is the current status for repairing the water tank? I understand funding can be a problem, but it would be a shame for it to fall apart. I am sure the cracks are getting bigger.

A: The CEO advised that the Shire are currently working with the Public Transport Authority (PTA) for repair and refurbishment of the water tower. The water tower is a State Government asset and the Shire plan to project manage the repairs to secure heritage access and bring it up to specification. The current situation is the estimated costs are higher than the budget PTA have allocated. The PTA have allocated \$286,000 for the work which the Shire believes is short around \$50,000. The Shire's preferred approach is to go to design and get the PTA to agree on base costs, and find out what will happen with short fall and any contingency. The Shire is aware that the water tower is a community priority. From a State Government perspective, the tender needs to be awarded before the end of the financial year. The community should see significant progress, timeframes and scope between now and June 2023.

Is there a possibility for crown funding to help out?

A: The CEO advised that the Shire would consider any available funding to complete this project, but noted that the water tower is a State Government project, and they should be able to fund its repairs. The State Government have committed to saving the tower, however, the Shire needs to be clear with the costs before proceeding.

Regarding Pioneer Park, we have a lot of concerns about what has been done there. We have seen one caravan pull in and get stuck, the driver said the signage wasn't visible enough. I understand that may be changing, will that be a priority and is that far away?

A: The CEO advised that alternative signs are coming and are due to be installed within the next few weeks.

Are there any plans for the Shire to clean out the drain, there is a lot off rubbish in the undercover area, has anyone looked to see what's under that long, covered section?

A: The CEO advised that the Shire are currently undertaking drain maintenance.

The design of that drain with the gabion walls is going to restrict the flow. We get summer rains that overflow the drains, it's not going to cope. Will the Military Museum get compensated for any flood damage the drain causes?

A: The CEO advised the information received from the Shire engineers and external consultants is that the water flow through that system should cope with anything coming through the stream. In terms of liability, the consultants assure the Shire the engineering is appropriate. The CEO advised she will take the insurance question on notice.

The below answer was provided in writing to Mr Endersbee:

The information received from the Shire engineers and external consultants is that the water flow through that system should cope with anything coming through the stream.

Independent checking by Shire engineers confirmed the above; furthermore, the drain at its narrowest point, vehicle crossing to access the parking area between the railway and the channel, has sufficient capacity to cope with 1:100 year flood event.

The consultants assure the Shire the engineering design has sufficient capacity, and it is appropriate.

The Shire has been in contact with its insurance provider who have provided the following advice:

Assuming any possible incident is classed as flood damage, the Shire's specified building and specified contents will be covered for damage and any tenant should be able to claim from their own contents policy. Assuming the incident is caused as a result faulty workmanship/inadequate design, the contractors Professional Indemnity policy will respond to claim. All claims will be look at on an individual basis and looked at on their own merits.

The public toilets outside the Visitor Centre- what size are the new toilets that will be put in there?

A: The CEO advised there will be five toilets available.

It currently has eight toilets, is there any head count been done that use that toilet? Five toilets compared to eight won't cover the foot traffic, the Shire will be selling themselves short. I think a count should have been done.

A: The CEO advised that the Shire can confirm the design of the five toilets meet the public health requirements. Each toilet will be multi-gender and accessible.

If the toilets don't handle the traffic, what happens then? The redevelopment is to encourage visitors to town but a lot of what we are seeing is not encouraging that. We

hear complaints firsthand and there are comments about not having hand drying facilities in the majority of the toilets. If you want to encourage tourists, your toilets need to be up there, so it needs to be looked at.

A: The CEO advised that in terms of hand drying facilities, the Shire has not reached that stage of development yet, but will take the comment into consideration, while also taking on notice the suitability of the existing facilities. The size, volume and placement of the toilets should be a more appropriate facility. The current plumbing is not suitable for the volume of use, and the Shire hopes to be addressing this going forward. In regards to the volume at specific times, the CEO advised she will provide this information to Mr Endersbee.

The below answer was provided in writing to Mr Endersbee:

The specifications of the new toilet facility has now been confirmed as part of the design of the Merredin Town Centre.

The new facility will include four separate unisex toilet bays and one disabled bay with parent facilities. Each bay will include a stainless-steel hand basin, hand dryer, and soap dispenser.

The toilet facility will be placed closer to Barrack Street to improve access and increase passive security with the intent of deterring anti-social behaviour and vandalism.

Will the new toilets be sewerage or septic?

A: The CEO advised they will be sewerage and there will be a change in location to facilitate that.

In the 2016 Census, one of the comments they made was that Merredin has a demographic of a lot of older people in the town. Why is Shire pushing digitising? For example, the Shire newsletter is not printed anymore. If you don't have access to a computer or aren't able to use one, you don't receive it. As the 'G' improves with Telstra, the coverage is getting worse. A lot of people can't get it and can't read things online. The Shire need to not discriminate against older people.

A: The CEO advised that the Shire uses a multi-channel approach and can provide that to Mr Endersbee in writing and if there are further gaps, Mr Endersbee can provide this to the Shire. Shire correspondence is provided in printed formats and in other ways such as Facebook. In terms of telephone dead spots, there are mechanisms the Shire can use to provide information to the Federal Government, and the Shire will advocate for improved outcomes.

Regarding the relocation of Visitor Centre, I find it incredible that when wanting to encourage tourism, the Shire would move a building that is in a perfect location. People don't like walking, especially the older generation. Have Council travelled out of town to see what other Visitor Centres do? When I travel I do a huge amount of research, but we still go to Visitors Centres, and moving it from where it is, you will wonder why the visitor number will drop.

A: The CEO advised that the Shire would welcome a meeting with Mr Endersbee regarding the matter should he wish to meet. The Shire has strong tourist data that shows a drop in tourist numbers is not going to be the case. Council built this data into the assumptions and

reasons for why moving the Visitors Centre would be better for the town centre. The CEO advised she can provide to Mr Endersbee, either by meeting or in writing, why that decision has been made.

Of note, at the time the question was raised, options for locations were still being considered. The Shire is in negotiations for two possible locations, both are in close proximity to the original centre. Once a preferred location is confirmed this will be communicated to the community.

Mr Endersbee responded that he would like to have a meeting.

Mr Peter McCrae of Merredin

It is disappointing to see the trees on Bruce Rock/South Avenue a bit droopy. My personal view was Council would have been better putting shrubs there. They will need to be looked after a lot better than they are at the moment. Are there any plans to make them look a bit better?

A: The Executive Manager Engineering Services advised that the management of the trees is ongoing, as there is no reticulation in this area, however, the Shire are trying to find alternative methods. The Shire re-staked the trees with steel stakes, however, they were taken. Going forward the Shire are looking to see what other vegetation could go in that space.

6. Closure

There being no further business, the President thanked those in attendance and declared the meeting closed at 6:32pm.

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