



WEROC Inc. Board Meeting MINUTES

Monday 17 March 2025

Shire of Merredin Council Chambers

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WEROC Inc.

Wheatbelt East Regional Organisation of Councils Inc.

Shires of Bruce Rock, Kellerberrin, Merredin, Tammin, Westonia, Yilgarn

MINUTES

Minutes of the Board Meeting held in Merredin on Monday 17 March 2025.

1. OPENING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Lisa O'Neill as Chair of WEROC Inc. welcomed Members of the Board and opened the meeting at 9.34am.

2. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

2.1 Attendance

Mr. Wayne Della Bosca

Mr. Mark Furr

Mr. Raymond Griffiths

Mr. Andrew Malone

Ms. Lisa O'Neill (Chair)

Mr. Ramesh Rajagopalan

Ms. Emily Ryan

Ms. Charmaine Thomson (Deputy Chair)

Mr. Nic Warren

Mr. Craig Watts

Ms. Rebekah Burges, Executive Officer

2.2 Apologies

Mr. Bill Price

Mr. Mark Crees

2.3 Guests

Nil

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

NIL

4. PRESENTATIONS

NIL

5. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

5.1 Minutes of the WEROC Inc. Board Meeting held on Thursday 28 November 2024

Minutes of the WEROC Inc. Board Meeting held in Merredin on Thursday 28 November 2024 have previously been circulated.

Recommendation:

That the Minutes of the WEROC Inc. Meeting held in Merredin on Thursday 28 November 2024 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Mr. Wayne Della Bosca

Seconded: Mr. Ram Rajagopalan

That the Minutes of the WEROC Inc. Meeting held in Merredin on Thursday 28 November 2024 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

CARRIED

5.2 Minutes of the WEROC Inc. CEO Committee Meeting held on Monday 10 February 2025

Attachment 1: WEROC Inc. CEO Committee Meeting Minutes 10 February 2025

Minutes of the WEROC Inc. CEO Committee Meeting held in Merredin on Monday 10 February 2025 are provided as Attachment 1.

Recommendation:

That the Minutes of the WEROC Inc. Meeting held in Merredin on Monday 10 February 2025 be noted.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Mr. Raymond Griffiths

Seconded: Mr. Mark Furr

That the Minutes of the WEROC Inc. Meeting held in Merredin on Monday 10 February 2025 be noted.

CARRIED

5.3 Business Arising – Status Reports

5.3.1 Actions Arising from the WEROC Inc. Board Meeting held on 28 November 2024

Attachment 2: WEROC Inc. Letter to Minister Papalia RE: Possible CCTV Funding

Agenda Item	Action(s)	Status
7.2 Housing	Accept the Wheatbelt Development Commission proposal to undertake a WEROC workforce housing investigation.	Project agreements were signed in December 2024 with JE Planning and Econosis. An inception meeting with the WEROC CEOs was held on 10 February 2025. Please refer to the WEROC CEO Committee Meeting Minutes and agenda item 8.3 for further detail.
7.3 Community Benefit Sharing Framework	1) Contact the Shire of Narrogin to get an update on the work they are doing on community benefit sharing. 2) Through the WEROC CEO Committee, progress the development of a framework.	An email was sent to the Shire of Narrogin CEO in December 2024. No response was received. The development of a framework was discussed at the WEROC CEO Committee meeting on 10 February 2025. With the knowledge that WALGA are engaging a consultant to develop a community engagement and benefit guide, it was determined that there is not much to be gained from WEROC undertaking work independently of this so a watch and see approach will be taken and if

		further action is required down the track this item will be revisited.
8.2 Marketing & Promotion	Advise Ms. Carol Taylor that her proposal to establish and manage social media accounts for the Eastern Wheatbelt self-drive trail was discussed and not accepted.	Ms. Taylor has been advised that WEROC do not wish to proceed with her proposal to manage social media accounts for the eastern wheatbelt self-drive trail.
10.1 Possible CCTV Funding	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Prepare and send a letter to Minister Papalia advocating for security funding for Local Governments 2) Each Shire to request a letter of support from their local police. 	A letter was prepared and sent to Minister Papalia in February 2025. A copy of the letter is provided as Attachment 2.

5.3.2 Actions Arising from the WEROC Inc. CEO Committee Meeting held on 10 February 2025

Agenda Item	Action(s)	Status
5.3 Consultation on Regulations for CEO KPI's and Public Registers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Local Governments to prepare individual submissions, which are to be sent through to the Executive Officer by Friday 7 March to be collated into a WEROC response. 2) Include WEROC response in the agenda for endorsement at the WEROC Inc. Board meeting being held on 17 March. 	WEROC CEO's provided individual responses to the Executive Officer, and these were collated into a WEROC response. Please refer to Agenda item 7.1.
6.2 Heritage Partnership Agreements for Local Governments	Arrange an online meeting between the WEROC CEOs and the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage	An online meeting has been arranged and will take place on 11 March 2025. It may be appropriate for one of the CEOs to provide an overview of this meeting and advise if any action is required from WEROC.
6.3 Telstra	Telstra is presenting at the February Zone meeting. The WEROC CEO's will discuss after this meeting, if there is any action required from WEROC.	It may be appropriate for one of the CEOs to provide an overview of what was discussed at the Zone meeting and advise if any action is required from WEROC.

Recommendation:

That the status reports be received.

Comments from the meeting:

- A brief overview of the meeting between the WEROC CEO's and the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) was provided. The Department advised that they can only provide guidance on land and heritage matters and cultural matters need to be referred back to the Ballardong Aboriginal Corporation.
- Craig Yarran from DPLH committed to sending the CEO's a list of registered and unregistered claims on land in the respective Local Government areas and clarify who the Shire of Yilgarn need to

communicate with on cultural matters. The Executive officer will follow up with Mr. Yarran as this information has not yet been received.

- It was suggested that a meeting with the new Member for the Central Wheatbelt, Lachlan Hunter, be arranged to discuss cultural intricacies within the WEROC area and request assistance in clarifying requirements and points of contact.
- Concerns over mobile phone reception and the lack of any clear, short-term solution from Telstra, was discussed. The idea of a transportable booster that can be used across WEROC Shires in the case of emergency or for events was discussed and it was agreed that this would be a suitable proposition for a Disaster Readiness Fund grant application.
- Discussion was held over the prospect of the Shire of Cunderdin joining WEROC. It was agreed that if the Shire do resolve to join WEROC before the end of the current financial year we would forgo the annual contribution pro-rata amount and only request the joining fee. If an application form is received before the May meeting, a Special General Meeting will be called and conducted via Teams.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Mr. Ram Rajagopalan

Seconded: Ms. Emily Ryan

That the status reports be received.

CARRIED

6. WEROC INC. FINANCE

6.1 WEROC Inc. Financial Report as of 28 February 2025

Author: Rebekah Burges, Executive Officer

Disclosure of Interest: No interest to disclose.

Date: 1 March 2025

Attachments: Nil

Voting Requirement: Simple Majority

At the WEROC Inc. Board Meeting held on 9 May 2024 the budget for the financial year commencing 1 July 2024 and ending 30 June 2025 was adopted. The approved Budget 2024-25 is used as the basis for the financial report.

An explanation for each of the notations on the financial report is provided below.

Note 1	Annual Financial contributions paid by Member Local Governments.
Note 2	Interest paid on term deposit
Note 3	GST received
Note 4	GST refund for Q4 BAS 2023-24
Note 5	Executive Officer services
Note 6	Executive Officer travel to Board and CEO meetings. This is higher than budgeted due to additional CEO meetings.
Note 7	Monthly subscription fee for Xero accounting software
Note 8	Payment to Audit Partners Australia for the 2023-24 financial year audit
Note 9	Payments to Vanessa King for Town Team Builder services, HR Cornerstone for IR/HR consultancy services, Carol Taylor for social media marketing campaign, Lauren Clarke for the branding guide and logo refresh, JE Planning and Econosis for the WEROC housing investigation, Australia's Golden Outback for cooperative marketing activities, Shire of

	Merredin for an advertisement in the Eastern Wheatbelt Visitors Guide and the two WEROC interns' meal allowance.
Note 10	Payments to PWD for website domain name renewal, website security upgrade and audit, and 12-months website hosting. This is higher than budgeted because only the website hosting was accounted for. The domain name renewal and website upgrade were unknown expenses.
Note 11	Catering expenses for WEROC CEO farewell in Kellerberrin on 9 May and ERP demonstrations in Kellerberrin on 6 August
Note 12	Personal accident, workers compensation, associations liability, public & products liability and cyber insurance renewals
Note 13	GST paid

WEROC Inc.
ABN 28 416 957 824
1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025

		Budget 2024/2025	Actual to 28/02/2025	Notes
	INCOME			
0501	General Subscriptions	\$72,000.00	\$72,000.00	1
504.01	Consultancy & Project Reserve	\$0.00		
0575	Interest received	\$4,863.29	\$4,863.29	2
584	Other Income	\$0.00		
	GST Output Tax	\$7,200.00	\$7,200.00	3
	GST Refunds	\$6,184.00	\$5,143.00	4
	Total Receipts	\$90,247.29	\$89,206.29	
	EXPENSES			
1545	Bank Fees & Charges	\$0.00	\$0.00	
1661.01	WEROC Inc. Executive Services	\$35,383.84	\$21,922.71	5
1661.02	Executive Officer Travel and Accommodation	\$1,400.00	\$1,810.50	6
1661.03	WEROC Executive Officer Recruitment	\$0.00	\$0.00	
1687	WEROC Financial Services Accounting	\$1,000.00	\$545.44	7
1687.03	WEROC Financial Services Audit	\$1,050.00	\$984.00	8
1585	WEROC Consultant Expenses	\$60,000.00	\$48,774.88	9
1850	WEROC Management of WEROC App & Website	\$420.00	\$844.50	10
1801	WEROC Meeting Expenses	\$500.00	\$829.09	11
1851	WEROC Insurance	\$6,300.00	\$6,020.79	12
1852	WEROC Legal Expenses	\$2,000.00		
1853	WEROC Incorporation Expenses	\$0.00		
1854	Transfer to Term Deposit	\$4,863.29	\$0.00	
1930	WEROC Sundry	\$300.00		

3384	GST Input Tax	\$10,835.39	\$7,282.14	13
	ATO Payments	\$3,464.57	\$4,960.00	
	Total Payments	\$127,517.09	\$93,974.05	
	Net Position	-\$37,269.79	-\$4,767.76	
	OPENING CASH 1 July	\$64,270.72	\$69,784.64	
	CASH BALANCE	\$27,000.93	\$65,016.88	

Recommendation:

That the WEROC Inc. financial report for the period 1 July 2024 to 28 February 2025, be received.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Mr. Ram Rajagopalan

Seconded: Ms. Emily Ryan

That the WEROC Inc. financial report for the period 1 July 2024 to 28 February 2025, be received.

CARRIED

6.2 Income, Expenditure & Balance Sheet

Author: Rebekah Burges, Executive Officer

Disclosure of Interest: No interest to disclose.

Date: 1 March 2025

Attachments: Nil

Voting Requirement: Simple Majority

A summary of income and expenditure for the period 1 November 2024 to 28 February 2025 is provided below.

Date	Description	Credit	Debit	Running Balance
Opening Balance		109,933.70		
01 Nov 2024	PWD Australia	0.00	462.00	109,471.70
01 Nov 2024	PWD Australia	0.00	71.50	109,400.20
01 Nov 2024	HR Cornerstone	0.00	5,060.00	104,340.20
07 Nov 2024	150 Square Pty Ltd	0.00	3,358.00	100,982.20
20 Nov 2024	Shire of Merredin	0.00	269.75	100,712.45
20 Nov 2024	Code Research Australia	0.00	275.00	100,437.45
06 Dec 2024	Toni De Vreede	0.00	700.00	99,737.45
06 Dec 2024	Nandita Choudhary	0.00	700.00	99,037.45
09 Dec 2024	150 Square Pty Ltd	0.00	3,486.50	95,550.95
16 Dec 2024	HR Cornerstone	0.00	5,060.00	90,490.95
17 Dec 2024	HR Cornerstone	0.00	5,060.00	85,430.95
18 Dec 2024	Vanguard Publishing	0.00	841.50	84,589.45
02 Jan 2025	Local Community Insurance Services	0.00	450.07	84,139.38
08 Jan 2025	150 Square Pty Ltd	0.00	2,735.00	81,404.38
31 Jan 2025	Australia's Golden Outback	0.00	357.50	81,046.88
04 Feb 2025	ATO	2,990.00	0.00	84,036.88
06 Feb 2025	Econosis	0.00	3,960.00	80,076.88

06 Feb 2025	JE Planning	0.00	6,000.00	74,076.88
07 Feb 2025	JE Planning	0.00	5,000.00	69,076.88
17 Feb 2025	150 Square Pty Ltd	0.00	2,735.00	66,341.88
21 Feb 2025	Shire of Merredin	0.00	1,325.00	65,016.88
Total		2,990.00	47,906.82	
Closing Balance		65,016.88		

Balance Sheet

Wheatbelt East Regional Organisation of Councils Inc
As at 28 February 2025

28 Feb 2025

Assets

Bank

Term Deposit	100,000.00
Westpac Community Solution One	65,016.88
Total Bank	165,016.88
Total Assets	165,016.88

Liabilities

Current Liabilities

GST	(2,307.22)
Total Current Liabilities	(2,307.22)

Non-current Liabilities

GST Clearing	244.00
Total Non-current Liabilities	244.00
Total Liabilities	(2,063.22)

Net Assets

167,080.10

Equity

Current Year Earnings	(4,868.62)
Retained Earnings	171,948.72
Total Equity	167,080.10

Recommendation:

That the WEROC Inc. summary of income and expenditure for the period 1 November 2024 to 28 February 2025 be received.

That the Accounts Paid by WEROC Inc. for the period 1 November 2024 to 28 February 2025 totalling \$47,906.82 be approved.

That the Balance Sheet as of 28 February 2025 be noted.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Ms. Emily Ryan

Seconded: Mr. Wayne Della Bosca

That the WEROC Inc. summary of income and expenditure for the period 1 November 2024 to 28 February 2025 be received.

That the Accounts Paid by WEROC Inc. for the period 1 November 2024 to 28 February 2025 totalling \$47,906.82 be approved.

That the Balance Sheet as of 28 February 2025 be noted.

CARRIED

7. MATTERS FOR DECISION

7.1 Endorsement of submission to DLGSC consultation on CEO KPI's and Online Register Reforms

Author: Rebekah Burges, Executive Officer

Disclosure of Interest: No interest to disclose.

Attachments: **Attachment 3:** Draft WEROC Submission to DLGSC consultation on CEO KPI's and Online Registers

Consultation: WEROC CEO's

Financial Implications: Nil

Voting Requirement: Simple Majority

Background:

The Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries has invited Local Governments to provide feedback on draft regulations to implement two key reforms included in the Local Government Amendment Act 2023 that require:

- 1) Results of local government CEO performance reviews to be published; and
- 2) A series of public registers of important information to be published and maintained.

Submissions to DLGSC must be made by 21 March 2025.

At the WEROC CEO Committee meeting held on 10 February 2025 this matter was discussed, and it was recommended that WEROC prepare a submission reinforcing key messages from individual submissions being prepared by member Councils.

Executive Officer Comment:

The Shires of Bruce Rock, Merredin, Tammin, Kellerberrin and Yilgarn prepared written submissions which were forwarded to the Executive Officer. Based on these, a WEROC submission has been drafted and is presented for endorsement.

The key points of the submission are summarised below:

- WEROC support the establishment of a panel of persons to serve as independent members on CEO selection panels but there needs to be clarity on the terms and conditions by which they can be elected to and serve on this panel.
- WEROC do not support the requirement for CEO performance criteria (other than standard criteria) and performance reports to be published. If the amended regulations are enforced WEROC:
 - a) Calls for the same standards be applied to all senior leadership roles in government, and
 - b) Recommends that any resolution of Council to exclude a performance criterion from publication be sufficient grounds for exclusion.
- WEROC supports the establishment of registers for viewing by the general public but do not support the retrospective reporting requirements being proposed.

Recommendation:

That the draft WEROC Inc. submission to the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industry consultation on CEO KPI's and online register reforms be endorsed.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Mr. Ram Rajagopalan

Seconded: Mr. Nic Warren

That the draft WEROC Inc. submission to the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industry consultation on CEO KPI's and online register reforms be endorsed.

CARRIED

7.2 WEROC Priorities 2025

Author: Rebekah Burges, Executive Officer

Disclosure of Interest: No interest to disclose.

Attachments: **Attachment 4.** WEROC Public Health Planning Intern Final Report

Attachment 5. WEROC Tourism Intern Final Report

Consultation: NA

Financial Implications: NA

Voting Requirement: Simple Majority

Background:

In early 2024, the WEROC Board participated in a series of discussions on future priorities for WEROC. The following is a summary of the priorities agreed to, the actions taken to date and some prompts to start a discussion around next steps or a future focus for each of the agreed priorities.

Constraints/ Challenges	Agreed focus for WEROC in 2024	Actions to date	Future Focus Discussion
Operational			
Escalating cost of ERP software.	Joint tender process for ERP software.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An EOI was prepared and sent to ERP software providers. The EOI process required a written response and a product demonstration. An ERP demonstration day was held in Kellerberrin in early August. NEWROC and RoeROC Shires were invited to attend. Four ERP providers presented. Detailed demonstrations were organised for the top two preferred suppliers. Subsequent to the above actions, WEROC Shires were presented with a concept for a Consolidated Services Project and most Shires signed on as associate members. 	At the WEROC CEO Committee meeting held on 10 February 2025, it was resolved that there is no further action required on this matter.
Escalating compliance requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage an IR/HR consultant to assist Shires in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HR Cornerstone were engaged to assist WEROC Shires with reviewing and 	How far progressed are each Shire in developing their own public health plan and is there

are placing increased pressure on already limited Shire resources	<p>reviewing/updating staff policies and contracts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once the IR/HR project is completed investigate the feasibility and scope of work for a regional compliance officer. • Progression of a pro-forma template for Public Health Plans. 	<p>updating staff contracts and policies. This project was completed in December 2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A McCusker Centre Intern was engaged to assist in the development of a WEROC Public Health Plan, which could be used as a pro-forma for the development of individual Council Plans. A copy of the work completed by the intern was emailed to Board members in December 2024 and is provided again as an attachment. 	<p>need for further support from WEROC?</p> <p>Is there an appetite now to pick up on the discussion around a shared compliance officer?</p>
Economic			
There is no flow on benefit from large scale developments (e.g., mining & renewable energy) in the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campaign/advocate for a mandate that any new, large scale developments must contribute to a community investment fund. • Engage a consultant to develop a regional planning policy to support differential land use rating. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions were held at both WEROC Board and CEO meetings throughout 2024 that culminated in a decision at the meeting held on 28 November 2024, to proceed with the development of a community benefit sharing framework for WEROC Shires. 	At the WEROC CEO meeting held on 10 February 2025, it was determined that no further action was required on this matter until the work being undertaken by WALGA is completed.
The lack of housing is a significant barrier to growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request that the WDC lobby State Government to fund housing analysis work. • Invite the Minister for Planning, Lands, Housing and Homelessness out to the region to discuss housing and planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A letter was sent to the Wheatbelt Development Commission requesting that they lobby State Government for funding to undertake housing analyses for Local Governments. This request was declined but the WDC offered to meet with each WEROC Local Government individually to discuss housing needs. • The WEROC workforce housing investigation commenced in February 2025. • A potential avenue for funding regional housing through the Department of 	<p>The initial phase of the WEROC housing investigation – the housing needs analysis - is due for completion in May. The cost benefit analysis and business case work will commence thereafter.</p> <p>Is there still interest in having the Minister for housing visit the region or is this best left until the housing investigation is completed?</p>

		Communities has been identified. A quote to assist in the preparation of this submission has been sourced.	
Social			
Sustainability of childcare services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite REED to present to the WEROC Board on future plans and current constraints. • Investigate childcare service delivery models that have been successful in other regions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chair of REED presented to the WEROC Board in July 2024. The presentation was just a general overview of the REED service and did not provide clarity on what is required to establish a childcare service in a town that doesn't already have one. • No further discussion or actions were held on this matter. 	Is this still a priority for WEROC Shires? If so, what can WEROC do to address the issue?
Tourism activation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of the Eastern Wheatbelt Self-Drive Trail. • Develop a marketing plan and branding guide. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WEROC continues to financially contribute to co-operative marketing activities coordinated by Australia's Golden Outback. • A marketing plan and branding guide was developed in 2024. 	<p>Is there anything we can take from the McCusker Centre Interns report (Attachment 5) to further activate the self-drive trail?</p> <p>Have all shires installed the self-drive trail signage?</p>

Executive Officer Comment:

The above outlines our progress towards the agreed priorities for WEROC in 2024. It is recommended that we now consider the next steps and identify new or emerging priorities to focus on for 2025.

Recommendation:

That the WEROC Board discuss and agree on priorities for 2025.

Comments from the meeting:

- Existing priorities were discussed and next steps for each were agreed:

Constraints/ Challenges	Agreed next steps
Escalating cost of ERP software.	No further action is required at this time.
Escalating compliance requirements are placing increased pressure on already limited Shire resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Merredin have engaged a consultant to prepare their Plan and Bruce Rock have already completed their Plan. Other Shires are yet to commence and are awaiting the release of the State Public Health Plan in June 2025, before taking further action. • A "compliance health check" would be beneficial to understand where each Council sits in terms of compliance with the new act/regulations. - Contact Mr. James McGovern to see if this is something he can facilitate.

	- Request that Mr. McGovern attend a meeting with the WEROC CEOs to discuss the health check/audit requirements.
There is no flow on benefit from large scale developments (e.g., mining & renewable energy) in the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This item will stay on the WEROC agenda. • WALGA have advised that June is the indicative timeframe for completion of the framework. WEROC will await the release of the framework before determining if further action is required.
The lack of housing is a significant barrier to growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WEROC will concentrate on the housing investigation already underway with the aim to have the work completed by August 2025 in order to meet the deadline for the Department of Communities call for submissions from Local Governments. • A meeting with the Department and WEROC CEOs will be arranged to discuss the WEROC housing work and its alignment with the funding opportunity.
Sustainability of childcare services	Childcare is still a priority but there is no clear way forward for WEROC to support this.
Tourism activation	Continue with current co-operative marketing initiatives.

- Emerging priorities for WEROC to consider in 2025 were discussed. It was agreed that water (capture, storage, reuse) is a priority for all WEROC Shires.
- The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) have funding available to assist with community water supply improvements in dryland agricultural areas. A round table discussion with DWER will be requested to allow WEROC Shires to discuss water supply issues and the funding available.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Mr. Andrew Malone

Seconded: Mr. Nic Warren

That:

- 1) The next steps for each priority area, as discussed in the meeting, be the focus for WEROC in 2025.
- 2) Water be added as a new priority for WEROC.

CARRIED

8. PROJECT UPDATES

8.1 HR/IR Project

HR Cornerstone have completed the development and roll out of employment contracts and staff policies/procedures for WEROC Local Governments.

8.2 Marketing/Promotion

WEROC as a partner organisation to the Wheatbelt Co-operative Marketing Group, committed \$3,000 + GST in the 2024-25 financial year to cooperative marketing initiatives in conjunction with Roe Tourism, NEW Travel, Pioneers Pathway and Australia's Golden Outback. Part of this funding is being used toward a Wheatbelt Weekends autumn campaign which will run from 22 March to 28 April 2025. The campaign will use a variety of media targeting the Perth metro audience. This includes the development of "road trip reels" that will feature 2 -3 towns or must visit locations along the road trip.

In addition to the co-operative marketing activity, WEROC have co-contributed to a stand at the Perth caravan and camping show which is taking place from 20 to 23 March 2025 and have placed a full-page advertisement for the eastern wheatbelt self-drive trail in the updated version of the Eastern Wheatbelt Visitors Guide.

8.3 Housing

Attachment 6: WEROC Inception Meeting

Attachment 7: Worker Housing Analysis Stakeholder Engagement Plan

The WEROC Worker Housing Investigation commenced on 10 February 2025. A community business survey was distributed on 17 February and as of Friday 7 March (the original closing date) there had been 53 responses. Given that we had fallen short of the target of 100 responses, the survey has been extended until 17 March.

9. EMERGING ISSUES

NIL

10. OTHER MATTERS (FOR NOTING OR DECISION)

10.1 Wheatbelt Medical Student Immersion Program 2025

The Wheatbelt Medical Student Immersion Program for 2025 is scheduled for 11 to 14 March 2025. Given that this meeting is taking place at the immediate conclusion of the program, it may be an opportune time for each Shire to provide feedback on how this year's program went and what if any, improvements need to be made going forward. A post immersion debrief is planned for 25 March.

Comments from the meeting:

- Feedback provided indicates that this year's immersion program ran well in all communities.
- For future years it was recommended that earlier contact be made with medical centres and schools to ensure they have adequate time to prepare for the visit.

10.2 Disaster Ready Fund

Round Three of the Disaster Ready Fund is open, with applications closing on Wednesday 2 April 2025. Changes have been introduced for this round including that the project delivery timeframe has been increased from three to five years (infrastructure projects only) and the minimum total project cost is now \$500,000.

The Executive Officer is aware that due to the minimum project cost, other Shires are applying as a collective to meet the \$500k threshold. Is there any need for or interest in a collective application from WEROC Shires? Have all Shire's had recent evacuation centre audits conducted, and if so, are there any common recommendations that could form the basis of a joint application?

The annual AWARE grant program will be open for applications in the coming months. In the 2024 round, several Local Governments applied for these funds to update their Local Emergency Management Plans and/or to conduct exercises. Is there any opportunity here for collaboration?

Comments from the meeting:

- The timeframe to prepare a submission for this round of funding is limited. WEROC will aim to make a submission for the next round.
- The submission will be based around generators (and associated connections, switch board upgrades, etc.) for evacuation centres and a transportable mobile phone booster.

10.3 Local Government Sustainability

Attachment 8. *Interim Report into Local Government Sustainability*

In May 2024, WEROC prepared and submitted a response to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport Inquiry into Local Government Sustainability. On 14 February 2025, the Executive Officer received correspondence from the Committee Secretariat advising that an interim report had been released. This interim report is provided as an attachment.

11. FUTURE MEETINGS

The schedule of meeting dates and locations for 2025 is as follows:

Date	Host Council
Wednesday 17 March 2025	Merredin
Wednesday 7 May 2025	Westonia
Wednesday 31 July 2025	Kellerberrin
Wednesday 24 September 2024	Southern Cross
Thursday 27 November 2024	Bruce Rock

The next meeting will take place in Westonia on 7 May 2025.

12. CLOSURE

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 11.47am.