Unconfirmed copy of Minutes from Ordinary Council Meeting held on 26 August 2025 subject to confirmation at the Ordinary Council Meeting to be held 16 September 2025

MINUTES

Ordinary Council Meeting

To be held in Council Chambers
Corner King & Barrack Street's, Merredin
Tuesday, 26 August 2025
Commencing 4:00pm

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
EO	Executive Officer
EMCS	Executive Manager Corporate Services
EMDS	Executive Manager Development Services
EMIS	Executive Manager Infrastructure Services
EMS&C	Executive Manager Strategy & Community
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
MRCLC	Merredin Regional Community and Leisure Centre
SRP	Strategic Resource Plan
TO	Tourism Officer
WALGA	Western Australian Local Government Association
WEROC	Wheatbelt East Regional Organisation of Councils

August Ordinary Council Meeting

Shire of Merredin
Ordinary Council Meeting
4:00pm Tuesday, 26 August 2025

1. Official Opening

Due to the Shire President attending the Ordinary Council Meeting electronically, she requested the chairing of the meeting be handed to the Deputy Shire President who was in attendance.

The Deputy Shire President acknowledged the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet today, and paid her respects to Elders past, present and emerging. The President then welcomed those in attendance and declared the meeting open at 4.04pm.

This meeting is being recorded on a digital audio device to assist with minute taking purposes. The public is reminded that copying or distribution of any part of the recording is not permitted. The Shire reserves all rights in relation to its copyright. Audio contained in a recording must not be altered, reproduced or republished without the written permission of the Shire and in accordance with Section 8.5 of the Shire of Merredin Standing Orders Local Law 2017, no person is to use any electronic, visual or audio recording device or instrument to record the proceedings of the Council or a Committee without the written permission of the Council.

2. Record of Attendance / Apologies and Leave of Absence

Councillors:

Cr D Crook	President (Electronic attendance)
Cr R Manning	Deputy President (Chairperson)
Cr H Billing	
Cr M McKenzie	
Cr L O'Neill	
Cr P Van Der Merwe	

Staff:

C Watts	CEO
L Boehme	EMCS
B Wall	EMIS
C Brindley-Mullen	EMS&C
R Cahill	TO

Members of the Public:

Apologies:

Approved Leave of Absence: Cr B Anderson (Resolution 83640)

Cr Crook's and Cr Anderson's attendance via Zoom was approved by the Deputy Shire President in advance in accordance with Regulation 14C.2(b) of the Local Government (Administration) Amendment Regulations 2022.

3. Public Question Time

Nil

4. Disclosure of Interest

Mr C Watts declared a financial interest in item 19.1

5. Applications of Leave of Absence

Nil

6. Petitions and Presentations

Nil

7. Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meetings

7.1 Ordinary Council Meeting held on 29 July 2025

Attachment 7.1A

Voting Requirements

■ Simple Majority ☐ Absolute Majority

Resolution

Moved: **Cr Billing** **Seconded:** **Cr O'Neill**

83653 **That the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held 29 July 2025 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.**

CARRIED 7/0

For: Cr Crook, Cr Manning, Cr Anderson, Cr Billing, Cr McKenzie, Cr O'Neill, Cr Van Der Merwe
Against: Nil

8. Announcements by the Person Presiding without Discussion

Cr Manning acknowledged that this is Cr McKenzie's final meeting. Cr Manning thanked Cr McKenzie for his contribution as a Shire Councillor and Shire President for the past 6 years, stepping into the Shire President role during a turbulent time within Council. He has provided support and collaborated with several Chief Executive Officers during this period, and lead with both humour and discipline. He took his role as a conduit between the local community and the Shire very seriously, being a strong voice and advocate for significant capital projects including the Apex Park and Town Centre Development. At all times he kept his "eye on the prize". The Shire Council and Administration thank Cr McKenzie for his service. We wish both Cr McKenzie and his wife Toni all the best for the future.

9. Matters for which the Meeting may be Closed to the Public

19.1 CEO Annual Review and Key Performance Indicators

19.2 Award of Contract – RFT 01 2025/26 Landfill Earthworks Services

10. Receipt of Minutes of Meetings

10.1 Minutes of the Wheatbelt East Regional Organisation of Councils Inc Board Meeting held 13 August 2025 as shown in Attachment 10.1A (Note - Presentation available upon request).

10.2 Minutes of the Shire of Merredin Audit Risk and Improvement Committee held on 26 August 2025 as shown in Attachment 10.1B

Voting Requirements

■ Simple Majority ☐ Absolute Majority

Resolution

Moved: **Cr O'Neill** **Seconded:** **Cr McKenzie**

That Council

83654

1. **RECEIVE the minutes of the Wheatbelt East Regional Organisation of Councils Inc Board Meeting held 13 August 2025; and**
2. **RECEIVE the minutes of the Shire of Merredin Audit Risk and Improvement Committee meeting held on 26 August 2025.**

CARRIED 7/0

For: Cr Crook, Cr Manning, Cr Anderson, Cr Billing, Cr McKenzie, Cr O'Neill, Cr Van Der Merwe
Against: Nil

11. Recommendations from Committee Meetings for Council Consideration

11.1 From the Shire of Merredin Audit Risk and Improvement Committee held on 26 August 2025, note the Risk and Regulation Action Plan as tabled.

Voting Requirements

■ Simple Majority ☐ Absolute Majority

Resolution

Moved: **Cr McKenzie** **Seconded:** **Cr Billing**

83655 **That Council NOTES the Risk and Regulation Action Plan, as tabled to the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee.**

CARRIED 7/0

For: Cr Crook, Cr Manning, Cr Anderson, Cr Billing, Cr McKenzie, Cr O'Neill, Cr Van Der Merwe
Against: Nil

12. Officer's Reports – Development Services

12.1 Proposed Deed of Extension and Variation to Existing Agreement – Lot 1449 Mitchell Street Merredin (Old Town Hall)

Development Services

Responsible Officer:	Peter Zenni, EMDS
Author:	As above
Legislation:	*Local Government Act 1995*
File Reference:	L/4
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Attachment 12.1A – Deed of Extension and Variation Attachment 12.1B – Letter of Consent

Purpose of Report

☐ Executive Decision ■ Legislative Requirement

For Council to consider approving a proposed Deed of Extension and Variation to the existing lease agreement for the property located at Lot 1449 on Deposited Plan 193636, Mitchell Street Merredin, known as the Old Town Hall.

Background

The Shire of Merredin has been approached by Acumen Corporate Property acting on behalf of the Department of Finance seeking Councils agreement to a Deed of Extension and Variation to the existing lease agreement in place between the Shire of Merredin and the Minister for Works for the property located at Lot 1449 on Deposited Plan 193636, Mitchell Street Merredin, known as the Old Town Hall and currently housing the electoral office of the Hon Lachlan Hunter MLA.

Comment

The Old Town Hall has been leased from the Shire for many years with the current lease to the Minister for Works expiring on the 30 September 2025. The existing lease incorporates several options to extend the lease for further 4-year periods (ultimately expiring 30 September 2033) and includes a market review date on 1 October 2025 and 1 October 2029 as well as annual CPI review dates from 1 October 2025 to 1 October 202 and 1 October 2032.

Acumen Corporate Property advises that as part of a standardisation process being implemented by the Department of Finance on a state wide basis forming part of State

Government policy the Lessee will not be exercising the option to renew the existing lease, rather the Department of Finance is seeking confirmation from the Shire of Merredin that it would be prepared to agree to a Deed of Extension and Variation to the existing lease agreement.

The terms of the proposal forming part of the Deed of Extension and Variation provided for an initial term of 4 years and 2 months commencing 1 October 2025 and expiring 30 November 2029, with two further options to extend the lease (each of a further 4-year period) with Market reviews on 1 December 2029 and 1 December 2033. They also remove the annual CPI rental review with an annual fixed 3% rental increase.

The current rental forming part of the existing lease is $84.6560 per square meter of lettable area. The Shire Administration has indicated it would expect the starting rental to be set at $87.00 per square metre. Acumen Corporate Property has provided advice that the proposed starting rental of $85.00 per square meter of lettable area was based on a Landgate valuation but that this could be raised to $87.00 as indicated by the Shire.

The Shire of Merredin Policy 8.20 – Rental charges for agreements to occupy Council non – residential property, stipulates the minimum rental charge for a government agency to be $100 per week ($5,200 annually), the proposed rental charges will exceed this minimum amount as well as build upon the previously agreed to rental charges forming part of the existing lease agreement.

The proposed Deed of Extension and Variation will extend the term of the amended lease past the expiry term of the existing lease, normally this would require compliance with requirements of Section 3.58 of the Local Government Act 1995 relating to the disposal of property. As the property in question will be leased to a Government Agency, public advertising provisions do not apply in this case.

In accordance with the vesting order requirements pertaining the old Town Hall, the consent of the Minister for Lands must be obtained before the proposed Deed of Variation and Extension can be executed by the Shire of Merredin. The Ministers Office has provided this consent.

The Deed of Extension and Variation documentation incorporates the provision of a municipal seal which needs to be affixed to the document and requires the signature of the Shire President and CEO. The Shire of Merredin Policy 3.13 – Use of Common Seal requires the formal resolution of Council for the Municipal Seal to be affixed to the documentation.

Policy Implications

Policy 8.20 – Rental charges for agreements to occupy Council non – residential property

Policy 3.13 – Use of Common Seal

Statutory Implications

Compliance with the *Local Government Act 1995*

Strategic Implications

Ø Strategic Community Plan

Theme:	4. Communication and Leadership
Service Area Objective:	4.2 Decision Making 4.2.3 The Council is well informed in their decision making supported by skilled administration team who are committed to providing timely, strategic information and advice
Priorities and Strategies for Change:	Nil

Ø Corporate Business Plan

Theme:	4. Communication and Leadership
Priorities:	4.1 Effective Mechanisms for community representation in key decision making
Objectives:	4.2.2 The Council works closely with the community to successfully achieve projects or outcomes that deliver the community's vision for Merredin.

Sustainability Implications

Ø Strategic Resource Plan

Nil

Risk Implications

The proposed Deed of Extension and Variation builds upon the existing lease agreement which has previously been agreed to by the Shire Council. The provision of the land in question via a lease for an office to a local member of parliament is beneficial to the Shire and the local community. Accordingly, the risks associated with this proposal are considered Low (3) based on the likelihood of Rare (1) and consequence of Moderate (3) of adverse events associated with the proposed Deed of Extension and Variation being agreed to by the Shire Council.

Financial Implications

By agreeing to the proposed Deed of Extension and Variation the Shire of Merredin will receive an income from the lease payments and ensure that the premises are tenanted and looked after on an ongoing basis.

Voting Requirements

■ Simple Majority ☐ Absolute Majority

Resolution

Moved: **Cr O'Neill** **Seconded:** **Cr Van Der Merwe**

That Council;

1. **Advises Acumen Corporate Property that the Shire of Merredin is prepared to enter into a Deed of Extension and Variation to the existing lease agreement for the property located at Lot 1449 on Deposited Plan 193636, Mitchell Street Merredin, known as the Old Town Hall as outlined in Attachment 12.1A, incorporating the following provisions;**

83656

   a) **Initial annual rental charge upon commencement of revised lease (from 1 October 2021) of $87.00 per m^2 plus GST;**
   b) **Annual rental increases of 3% (from 1 October 2026); and**
   c) **A copy of the Minister for Lands Consent letter.**

2. **Authorises the Shire President and Chief Executive Officer to execute the Deed of Extension and Variation to the existing lease agreement for the property located at Lot 1449 on Deposited Plan 193636, Mitchell Street Merredin, known as the Old Town Hall on behalf of Council and attach the Shire of Merredin Common Seal to the Deed of Extension and Variation.**

CARRIED 7/0

For: Cr Crook, Cr Manning, Cr Anderson, Cr Billing, Cr McKenzie, Cr O'Neill, Cr Van Der Merwe
Against: Nil

13. Officer's Reports – Engineering Services

Nil

14. Officer's Reports – Corporate and Community Services

14.1 Statement of Financial Activity – July 2025

Corporate Services	
Responsible Officer:	Leah Boehme, EMCS
Author:	As above
Legislation:	*Local Government Act 1995* *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*
File Reference:	Nil
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Attachment 14.1A – Statement of Financial Activity Attachment 14.1B – Detailed Statements Attachment 14.1C – Capital Works Progress Attachment 14.1D – Investment Report

Purpose of Report

☐ Executive Decision ■ Legislative Requirement

For Council to receive the Statements of Financial Activity and Investment Report for the month of July 2025 and be advised of associated financial matters.

Background

The Statement of Financial Activity, Detailed Statements, Capital Works Progress and Investment Report are attached for Council's information.

Comment

Statement of Financial Activity

Regulation 34 of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* requires the Shire to prepare a monthly statement of financial activity for consideration by Council within 2 months after the end of the month of the report. These reports are included at Attachments 14.1A to D inclusive.

It should be noted that fixed asset reconciliations are delayed annually until the sign off of the Annual Financial Statement by the Office of the Auditor General.

Policy Implications

Nil

Statutory Implications

As outlined in the *Local Government Act 1995* and the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*.

Strategic Implications

Ø Strategic Community Plan

Theme:	4. Communication and Leadership
Service Area Objective:	4.2.2 The Shire is progressive while exercising responsible stewardship of its built, natural and financial resources
Priorities and Strategies for Change:	Nil

Ø Corporate Business Plan

Theme:	4. Communication and Leadership
Priorities:	Nil
Objectives:	4.2 Decision Making

Sustainability Implications

Ø Strategic Resource Plan

Compliance with the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996* and to also give Council some direction regarding its management of finance over an extended period of time.

Risk Implications

The Statement of Financial Activity is presented monthly and provides a retrospective picture of the activities at the Shire. Contained within the report is information pertaining to the financial cost and delivery of strategic initiatives and key projects.

To mitigate the risk of budget over-runs or non-delivery of projects, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) has implemented internal control measures such as regular Council and management reporting and a quarterly process to monitor financial performance against budget estimates.

Materiality reporting thresholds have been established at 10% or $10,000 whichever is greater, for operating and capital, to alert management prior to there being irreversible impacts.

It should also be noted that there is an inherent level of risk of misrepresentation of the financials through either human error or potential fraud.

The establishment of control measures through a series of efficient systems, policies and procedures, which fall under the responsibility of the CEO as laid out in the *Local*

Government (Financial Management Regulations) 1996 regulation 5, seek to mitigate the possibility of this occurring.

These controls are set in place to provide daily, weekly, and monthly checks to ensure that the integrity of the data provided is reasonably assured.

There is a compliance risk associated with this Item as the Shire would be contravening the *Local Government Act 1995* and *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* if this Item was not presented to Council. The risk rating is considered to be Low (4), which is determined by a likelihood of Unlikely (2) and a consequence of Minor (2). This risk will be eliminated by the adoption of the Officer's Recommendation.

Financial Implications

The adoption of the Statements of Financial Activity is retrospective. Accordingly, the financial implications associated with adopting this are nil.

Voting Requirements

☐ Simple Majority ■ Absolute Majority

Resolution

Moved: **Cr Billing** **Seconded:** **Cr Van Der Merwe**

83657 **That Council RECEIVE the Statements of Financial Activity and Investment Report for the period ending 31 July 2025 in accordance with Regulation 34 of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996.**

CARRIED 7/0

For: Cr Crook, Cr Manning, Cr Anderson, Cr Billing, Cr McKenzie, Cr O'Neill, Cr Van Der Merwe
Against: Nil

14.2 List of Accounts Paid – July 2025

Corporate Services	
Responsible Officer:	Leah Boehme, EMCS
Author:	As above
Legislation:	*Local Government Act 1995* *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*
File Reference:	Nil
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Attachment 14.2A – Payments Listing July 2025

Purpose of Report

☐ Executive Decision ■ Legislative Requirement

For Council to receive the schedule of accounts paid for the month of July 2025.

Background

The attached list of accounts paid during the month of July 2025, under Delegated Authority, is provided for Council's information and endorsement.

Comment

Nil

Policy Implications

Nil

Statutory Implications

As outlined in the *Local Government Act 1995* and the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*.

Strategic Implications

Ø Strategic Community Plan

Theme: 4. Communication and Leadership

Service Area Objective:	4.2.2 The Shire is progressive while exercising responsible stewardship of its built, natural and financial resources
Priorities and Strategies for Change:	Nil

Ø Corporate Business Plan

Theme:	4. Communication and Leadership
Priorities:	Nil
Objectives:	4.2 Decision Making

Sustainability Implications

Ø Strategic Resource Plan

Compliance with the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996* and to also give Council some direction regarding its management of finance over an extended period of time.

Risk Implications

There is a compliance risk associated with this Item as the Shire would be contravening the *Local Government Act 1995* and *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* if this item was not presented to Council. The risk rating is considered to be Low (4), which is determined by a likelihood of Unlikely (2) and a consequence of Minor (2). This risk will be eliminated by the adoption of the Officer's Recommendation.

Financial Implications

All liabilities settled have been in accordance with the Annual Budget provisions.

Voting Requirements

■ Simple Majority ☐ Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation

Moved: Cr McKenzie **Seconded: Cr Van Der Merwe**

83658 **That Council RECEIVE the schedule of accounts paid during July 2025 as listed, covering cheques, EFT's, directly debited payments and wages, as numbered and totaling $1,039,276.98 from the Merredin Shire Council Municipal bank account and $0 from the Merredin Shire Council Trust bank account.**

CARRIED 7/0

For: Cr Crook, Cr Manning, Cr Anderson, Cr Billing, Cr McKenzie, Cr O'Neill, Cr Van Der Merwe
Against: Nil

14.3 IT Framework

Corporate Services	
Responsible Officer:	Leah Boehme, EMCS
Author:	As above
Legislation:	Nil
File Reference:	Nil
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Attachment 14.3A – Shire of Merredin IT Framework (CONFIDENTIAL)

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider adopting the Shire of Merredin IT Framework that has been developed in conjunction with the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Office of Digital Government (DGov) as part of the Cyber Security Pilot Project.

Background

During the 2022/23 Financial Audit, the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) commenced a focus on reviewing the Information Technology (IT) controls of local governments (LGs) as part of their audit process. During the Shire of Merredin (the Shire) audit, it was identified that there were no strategic IT documents in place.

The Management Letter highlighted that 'The Shire does not have a structured IT strategic plan to align IT initiatives with the overall business objectives' and further commented that 'Without an appropriately approved IT Strategic Plan, there is a risk that IT resources will not be aligned to the business strategy and priorities.'

In August 2024, the Shire were approached by the Department of Local Government Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC) about a Cyber Security Pilot Project that they would be undertaking alongside DGov that they had received funding for. They approached five LGs to be part of the pilot project, which aimed to uplift the cyber security of each of those LGs. The Shire nominated to be part of the project and were notified of our inclusion in October 2024.

Since then, the DGov team have undertaken assessments of the Shire's current IT environment and planning ways to improve security. This also included supporting the Shire to develop the documentation outlined as being required during the 2022/23 and 2023/24 Financial Audits.

Comment

In partnership with DGov, an IT Framework has been developed to act as the overarching document for all IT practices and processes within the Shire. Once this document has been adopted by Council, we will begin to develop the policy and procedure documents to support the achievement of the framework. The draft Framework can be found at Attachment 14.3A.

This Framework considers and includes:

1. Governance Foundation, including roles and responsibilities;
2. Asset Management, including lifecycle management of software and hardware;
3. Identity and Access Management, including account creation and deletion, access control, password standards, and authorisations both internally and externally;
4. Information and Device Security, including data classification and storage, fixed and removeable hardware, malware protection, device disposal, network security and physical security, acceptable use and Remote Network Access;
5. Interconnection with the Shire's Business Continuity and Incident Management Plan, including backup and recovery, resilience and incident response management; and
6. Managed Service Providers and suppliers.

Adoption of the framework will assist the Shire to address the comments from the Office of the Auditor General in relation to strategic IT documentation.

Policy Implications

Nil

Statutory Implications

Nil

Strategic Implications

➢ Strategic Community Plan

Theme:	4. Communications and Leadership
Service Area Objective:	4.2 - Decision Making 4.2.3 – The Council is well informed in their decision-making, supported by a skilled administration team who are committed to providing timely, strategic information and advice
Priorities and Strategies for Change:	Nil

➢ Corporate Business Plan

Theme:	Communication and Leadership
Priorities:	Nil

Risk Implications

There is a service interruption risk associated with this Item as the Shire could be vulnerable to Cyber attack if proper IT processes are not in place, together with continued non-compliance with the recommendations of the Office of the Auditor General. The risk rating is considered to be Moderate (9), which is determined by a likelihood of Possible (3) and a consequence of Moderate (3). This risk should be decreased by the adoption of the Officer's Recommendation and subsequent implementation of the Framework.

Financial Implications

Nil

Voting Requirements

■ Simple Majority ☐ Absolute Majority

Resolution

Moved: **Cr Van Der Merwe** **Seconded:** **Cr McKenzie**

83659 **That Council ADOPTS the Shire of Merredin IT Framework, as presented in Attachment 14.3A.**

CARRIED 7/0

For: Cr Crook, Cr Manning, Cr Anderson, Cr Billing, Cr McKenzie, Cr O'Neill, Cr Van Der Merwe
Against: Nil

15. Officer's Reports – Administration

15.1 Shire Values

Administration	SHIRE OF MERREDIN INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT
Responsible Officer:	Craig Watts, CEO
Author:	As above
Legislation:	Local Government Act 1995
File Reference:	Nil
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Attachment 15.1A – Shire Organisational Values

Purpose of Report

■ Executive Decision ☐ Legislative Requirement

For Council to consider endorsing the new Shire Organisational Values which have been developed in consultation with staff members.

Background

The Shire has a number of values which have been applied to previous versions of the Strategic Community Plan. These values included integrity, participation, service, learning, valuing people, commitment and sustainability. With the review of the Shire's Strategic Community Plan and Corporate Business Plan, this provided an opportunity to undertake a review and refresh of the Shire's Organisational Values.

Comment

The review and refresh of the Shire's Organisational Values commenced in May 2025 as part of the development of the Council Plan. Although these were included within the Staff Code of Conduct, they did not resonate with staff members. Most staff members unconsciously applied these in their daily roles, however this current staff cohort did not have opportunity to provide their input into the values.

To provide clarity of the Shire Administration's expectations, and staff members expectations of each other, four (4) consultation sessions were held with all staff members to provide them opportunity to identify which values were important to both them and the organisation. Staff were then asked to clarify what the value meant to them in their own words, and provide examples of what should be an acceptable behaviour and an unacceptable behaviour.

Based on these consultation sessions, the following values are intended to be adopted by the Shire Administration:

Respect - We respect ourselves, our colleagues, our community, and our resources. We treat people the way that we want to be treated. We thrive because of our diversity and commitment to inclusivity.

Integrity - We will do what we say we will do with the best intentions, acting in an ethical manner to meet community expectations. We have the courage to call out behaviours and actions which do not align with our organisational values. We embrace change and are resilient.

Collaboration - We are open, honest and transparent in our communication and relationships within the organisation and with our community, ensuring the contributions of our residents are listened to and acknowledged.

Excellence - We strive for service excellence through providing quality services, with our outputs based on proactive, responsive, professional and efficient actions, and a "can do" attitude.

These organisational values have an acronym "RICE", which provides a simple means for staff to remember them. In addition, the examples of acceptable and unacceptable behaviours have been structured into "above the line" and "below the line" behaviours which staff can refer to, and by which both the staff and organisation can respectfully call out poor behaviours before they develop to a stage requiring more formal disciplinary action.

These new Organisational Values have been included within the draft Council Plan.

Policy Implications

The Shire's Policy Manual refers to the Employee Code of Conduct which all staff members are expected to comply with.

Statutory Implications

The Code of Conduct is complementary to the principles adopted in the *Local Government Act 1995* (the Act). The new Organisational Values provide further guidance to support compliance with the Act.

Strategic Implications

Ø Strategic Community Plan

Theme:	4. Communication and Leadership
Service Area Objective:	4.2.3 The Council is well informed in their decision making, supported by a skilled administration team who are committed to providing timely, strategic information and advice.
Priorities and Strategies for Change:	Nil

Ø	Corporate Business Plan

Theme:	4. Communication and Leadership
Priorities:	Nil
Objectives:	Nil

Sustainability Implications

Ø	Strategic Resource Plan

Nil

Risk Implications

There is a reputational risk associated with this Item as the Shire could be viewed as not complying with the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1995* and providing poor service to the local community. The risk rating is considered to be Low (4), which is determined by a likelihood of Unlikely (2) and a consequence of Minor (2). This risk will be eliminated by the adoption of the Officer's Recommendation.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications in relation to this decision.

Voting Requirements

■ Simple Majority ☐ Absolute Majority

Resolution

Moved: **Cr McKenzie** **Seconded:** **Cr O'Neill**

83660 **That Council ENDORSES the Shire Organisational Values as provided in Attachment 15.1A.**

CARRIED 7/0

For: Cr Crook, Cr Manning, Cr Anderson, Cr Billing, Cr McKenzie, Cr O'Neill, Cr Van Der Merwe
Against: Nil

15.2 Adoption of Council Plan 2025-2035

Administration

Responsible Officer:	Craig Watts, CEO
Author:	As above
Legislation:	Local Government Act 1995
File Reference:	Nil
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Attachment 15.2A - Council Plan 2025-2035

Purpose of Report

■ Executive Decision ☐ Legislative Requirement

For Council to consider responses from the final opportunity for community consultation prior to adopting the Council Plan.

Background

The Shire has undertaken a major review of its Strategic Community Plan 2020-2030, incorporating advertising to the community, liaison with stakeholders and government departments, an online community survey, and a combination of town hall meetings and stalls at community events to seek feedback. The draft version of the combined "Council Plan 2025-2035" was advertised for a further 2-week period concluding 15 August 2025.

Comment

A major review of a Local Government's Strategic Community Plan is required every four years and a desktop review every two years. A major review of the Shire of Merredin Strategic Community Plan 2020-2030 and Corporate Business Plan 2022/23-2025/26 has been completed and will be replaced by one integrated Council Plan 2025-2035 (the Council Plan) whilst still meeting the requirements under the Local Government Act 1995. The development of the Council Plan has been community informed, Council led and sets a new direction for the Shire of Merredin for the next ten years.

The Local Government Act 1995 (the Act) requires all local governments to produce a "plan for the future" compliant with Section 5.56(1) of the Act. An extensive community engagement campaign was conducted by the Shire Administration between 20 February and 14 April 2025 promoted through social media, the Shire Website, the Shire Newsletter and the Phoenix newspaper and included opportunities for community participation and feedback. The Shire collected responses from over 560 people who provided valuable insights into the needs and aspirations of Merredin residents and the wider community.

Furthermore, based on the feedback received from the community consultation, the following advocacy priorities have been identified for inclusion within the Council Plan:

1) Provision of safer crossing at Great Eastern Highway, to link the northern and southern sides of the Merredin township.
2) Provision of affordable housing, both private and public, to meet the growing demands of the Community, which will support growth and economic development.
3) Provision of additional childcare services, including commercial day care, after school care and family day care options, to enable parents to return to work.
4) Upgrade and improvements to recreation facilities, including upgrades/improvements to playing surfaces at the MRCLC and development of a new aquatic facility.
5) Continue to improve community connectivity of the Shire's sealed and unsealed road network, expanding the sealed network and installing footpath infrastructure to support pedestrian movements.
6) Continued support for economic development, including opening access to industrial land, to attract new businesses to the Shire and to enable existing businesses to grow.

These together with other community propriety initiatives are listed within the Council Plan.

Prior to adoption of the Council Plan, the Shire Administration provided the community with a draft of the plan to confirm the Objectives, Actions and Projects are aligned with community sentiment, and enable any final adjustments to be made prior to the Council Plan 2025-2035 being considered for adoption at the August 2025 Ordinary Council Meeting. No additional feedback or comments were received. Two residents attended the workshop on the evening od 12 August 2025 who recommended no significant changes, but provided comments in support of the proposed priority actions and priority projects.

A final internal review of the document included the following amendments:

- Remove all acronyms and replace with full title
- Priority Project 1.3.2.2 remove "(suggested between Endersbee and Caw)"
- Priority Project 1.3.2.3 remove "(hospital site etc)"
- Priority Project 1.3.3.2 replace hyphen with "including"
- Priority Project 1.5.1.1 remove "(Shows-West etc)"
- Priority Project 1.5.1.4 correct spelling of Cummins Theatre
- Priority Project 3.1.2.1 include "battery storage"
- Priority Project 4.1.1.4 re-word to be "Merredin Community Benefit/Future Fund"
- Priority Project 4.3.2.2 remove "- staffing, resources, costs etc"
- Priority Project 4.7.1.3 amended to read "Embrace digital services and engagement, including AI technology"
- Priority Project 4.8.1.3 replace FMR with "Effective and transparent of Financial Management Reporting"

- Priority Project 4.9.1.2 amended to read "implementation of new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system and other software, including consideration of AI implications"
- Priority Project 5.2.1.1 remove "- ie new kitchens, bathrooms, painting, etc"
- Priority Project 5.2.1.2 remove "- Cummins Theatre, Library, CRC, Old Town Hall"

Policy Implications

Nil

Statutory Implications

All local governments are currently required to produce a plan for the future under S5.56 (1) of the *Local Government Act 1995*. Regulations have been made under S5.56 (2) of the Act to briefly outline the minimum requirements to achieve this. Regulations 19C and 19DA of The *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996* provide a brief outline of the minimum requirements to comply with the Act and Regulations, which includes the development of a strategic community plan and a corporate business plan.

Strategic Implications

Ø Strategic Community Plan

Theme:	4. Communication and Leadership
Service Area Objective:	4.1.1 The Shire regularly engages with its community and, in return, communicated the information gathered in a clear and transparent manner. 4.1.7 The Shire is committed to ongoing consultation to ensure that the reporting associated with the State's Integrated Planning Framework is in line with the community's vision for the town and its surrounds.
Priorities and Strategies for Change:	Nil

Sustainability Implications

Ø Strategic Resource Plan

Nil

Risk Implications

There is a compliance risk associated with this item as by not undertaking a review of the Strategic Community Plan and Corporate Business Plan the Shire would be in breach of the *Local Government Act 1995*. Furthermore, there is a reputational risk as the broader community expects to have opportunity to be heard and have input into the Council Planning process. The risk rating is considered to be moderate (12), which is determined by a likelihood of likely (4) and a consequence of moderate (3). This risk will be eliminated by the adoption of the Officer's Recommendation.

Financial Implications

The development of the Council Plan 2025-2035 has been aligned with draft operational budget for 2025-2026. The financial implications of Council Plan objectives, actions and projects will be detailed further when annual budget processes are presented to Council on an annual basis, together with the review of the Long Term Financial Plan.

Voting Requirements

☐ Simple Majority ■ Absolute Majority

Resolution

Moved: Cr Manning **Seconded: Cr Billing**

That Council;

83661

1. **ENDORSES the Shire of Merredin Council Plan 2025-2035, as shown in Attachment 15.2A;**
2. **NOTES that the Shire of Merredin Council Plan 2025-2035 meets the requirements of regulations 19C and 19DA of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*;**
3. **NOTES that the formatting and styling of the Shire of Merredin Council Plan 2025-2035 may be amended to enable publishing on the Shire's website and social media; and**
4. **NOTES that the Shire of Merredin Council Plan 2025-2035 will be amended after the October 2025 Council Elections to include the newly elected members.**

CARRIED 7/0

For: Cr Crook, Cr Manning, Cr Anderson, Cr Billing, Cr McKenzie, Cr O'Neill, Cr Van Der Merwe
Against: Nil

16. Motions of which Previous Notice has been given

Nil

17. Questions by Members of which Due Notice has been given

Nil

18. Urgent Business Approved by the Person Presiding or by Decision

Nil

19. Matters Behind Closed Doors

In accordance with section 5.23 (2)(b)(c)(e)(ii)(iii), of the *Local Government Act 1995* Council will go Behind Closed Doors to discuss these matters.

Council Decision

Moved:	**Cr Van Der Merwe**	**Seconded:**	**Cr McKenzie**
83662	**That Council move Behind Closed Doors and that Standing Orders be suspended at 4.21pm.**		

CARRIED 7/0

For: Cr Crook, Cr Manning, Cr Anderson, Cr Billing, Cr McKenzie, Cr O'Neill, Cr Van Der Merwe
Against: Nil

Reason

That matters related to the personal affairs of any person, a contract entered into, or which may be entered into, by the local government and which relates to a matter to be discussed at the meeting, and a matter that if disclosed would reveal information that has commercial value to a person, or information about the business, professional, commercial or financial affairs of a person were to be discussed.

Mr C Watts, Mrs L Boehme, Mr B Wall, Mrs C Brindley-Mullen and Ms R Cahill left the chamber at 4.22pm.

19.1 CEO Annual Review and Key Performance Indicators

Administration

Responsible Officer:	Donna Crook, Shire President
Author:	Craig Watts, CEO
Legislation:	Local Government Act 1995
File Reference:	Nil
Disclosure of Interest:	Craig Watts, CEO – Financial Interest
Attachments:	Attachment 19.1A – Annual review including KPI's

This matter is being considered *behind closed doors* under s5.23(2)(a) & (e)(iii) of the *Local Government Act 1995* as it relates to:

- a matter affecting an employee or employees; and
- information that has a commercial value to a person.

Resolution

Moved: Cr McKenzie **Seconded: Cr O'Neill**

That Council:

1. **ENDORSES the outcomes of the Chief Executive Officer Performance Review and associated Report (as attached) undertaken in July 2025, with the Chief Executive Officer's overall performance being assessed as 'Meets Expectation' noting that one third of metrics were assessed as 'Above Expectation';**
2. **REQUESTS that the Shire President formally notify in writing the Chief Executive Officer of the results of the 2024-25 CEO Performance Review to comply as per Division 3 of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations Schedule 2 clause 19;**

83663

3. **ADOPTS the performance criteria metrics as per the Chief Executive Officer: Key Performance Indicators 2025-26 as shown in part 5 of the Chief Executive Officer Performance Review Report;**
4. **NOTES the State Administrative Tribunal's 4 April 2025 determination and approves a variation to the CEO's Total Benefits Package (TBP) as listed within this report; and**
5. **SCHEDULES the next review of the Chief Executive Officers performance review and total remuneration package (TRP) for consideration by Council in July/August 2026.**

CARRIED BY ABSOLUTE MAJORITY 7/0

For: Cr Crook, Cr Manning, Cr Anderson, Cr Billing, Cr McKenzie, Cr O'Neill, Cr Van Der Merwe
Against: Nil

Mr C Watts, Mrs L Boehme, Mr B Wall, Mrs C Brindley-Mullen and Ms R Cahill returned to the chamber at 4.26pm.

19.2 Award of Contract – RFT 01 2025/26 Landfill Earthworks Services

Engineering Services

Responsible Officer:	Brian Wall, EMIS
Author:	As above
Legislation:	*Local Government Act 1995*
File Reference:	Nil
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Attachment 19.2A – Recommendation Report Attachment 19.2B – Tender Submission

This matter is being considered *behind closed doors* under s5.23(2)(c) & (e)(ii) of the *Local Government Act 1995* as it relates to:

- A contract entered into, or which may be entered into, by the local government and which relates to a matter to be discussed at the meeting; and
- Information that has a commercial value to a person.

Resolution

Moved: Cr Billing **Seconded: Cr Van Der Merwe**

That Council:

1. **RECEIVES the Recommendation Report included as Attachment 19.2A – Recommendation Report for RFT 01 2025/26 Landfill Earthworks; and**

83664

2. **AUTHORISE the Shire President and Chief Executive Officer to sign and apply the Shire of Merredin Common Seal to the Contract between the Shire of Merredin and Central Wheatbelt Earthworks for RFT 01 2025/26 Landfill Earthworks Services, as per the rates provided in their submission (Attachment 19.2B) to the total value outlined in this report.**

CARRIED BY SIMPLE MAJORITY 7/0

For: Cr Crook, Cr Manning, Cr Anderson, Cr Billing, Cr McKenzie, Cr O'Neill, Cr Van Der Merwe
Against: Nil

Council Resolution

Moved: **Cr McKenzie** **Seconded:** **Cr Van Der Merwe**

83665 **That Council return from Behind Closed Doors at 4.28pm, resume Standing Orders and that the resolutions being passed in the confidential session be confirmed in open meeting.**

CARRIED 7/0

For: Cr Crook, Cr Manning, Cr Anderson, Cr Billing, Cr McKenzie, Cr O'Neill, Cr Van Der Merwe
Against: Nil

20. Closure

There being no further business, the Deputy President thanked those in attendance and declared the meeting closed at 4.31pm.

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