

SHIRE OF  
**MERREDIN**  
INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT

# MINUTES

## Ordinary Council Meeting

Held in Council Chambers  
Corner King & Barrack Street's, Merredin  
Tuesday, 22 February 2022  
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
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
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
SRP	Strategic Resource Plan
WALGA	Western Australian Local Government Association
WEROC	Wheatbelt East Regional Organisation of Councils



## Shire of Merredin February Ordinary Council Meeting

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Shire of Merredin  
Ordinary Council Meeting  
4:00pm Tuesday, 22 February 2022



## 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 4:03pm.

### *Presidents Address*

Last month I had the absolute privilege to present the 2022 Auspire Community Citizen of the Year awards at the Merredin Australia Day breakfast on 26 January. It was fantastic to see so many people attend on the morning to allow Australians to come together as a nation to reflect, respect and celebrate.

As part of the celebrations, certificates were handed out to all of the Community Citizen of the Year nominees to recognise their brilliant achievements, their drive to be successful and their determination to help their fellow Australians.

On the day, one of our Citizen of the Year nominees was unable to attend, and so, I would like to take a moment to recognise that person here today and present her with a certificate.

If I could ask Kristy Sharp to please come forward and accept her nomination for the Citizen of the Year award.

*Kristy Sharp received her award and was congratulated by the Shire President.*

*One member of the public left the Chambers at 4:05pm and did not return.*

## 2. Record of Attendance / Apologies and Leave of Absence

### **Councillors:**

Cr M McKenzie	President
Cr L Boehme	Deputy President
Cr R Billing	
Cr C Crook	
Cr J Flockart	
Cr R Manning	
Cr P Patroni	
Cr M Simmonds	
Cr P Van Der Merwe	

### **Staff:**

L Clack	CEO
A Prnich	DCEO
L Mellor	EMES
D Hay-Hendry	MP

M Wyatt ES  
**Members of the Public:** 1 4:00pm – 4:05pm  
**Apologies:** G Garside – EMCS  
P Zenni - EMDS  
**Approved Leave of Absence:**

### 3. Public Question Time

Nil

### 4. Disclosure of Interest

Cr Manning and Cr Flockart declared an Impartiality Interest in Item 13.1.

Cr Flockart declared an Impartiality Interest in Item 12.1.

Cr Flockart declared an Impartiality 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 25 January 2022  
Attachment 7.1A

#### Voting Requirements

Simple Majority  Absolute Majority

#### Resolution

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

**82862**

**That the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 25 January 2022 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.**

**CARRIED 9/0**

### 8. Announcements by the Person Presiding without Discussion

Meetings and events attended by the President since the last Ordinary Meeting on 25 January 2022:

- Weekly meetings with CEO;
- 3 February 2022 - Meeting with Rick Wilson MP and discussed Grants relating to Crooks Road redevelopment, CBD and Pioneer Park revitalisation as well as the APEX park redevelopment;

- 8 February 2022 - Facilitated a bus tour with the Wheatbelt Development Commission, looking at our water infrastructure, Current (mentioned above) projects currently underway in Merredin;
- 10 February 2022 – Meeting with the Minister for Water, Dave Kelly MLA and Sandra Carr MLC together with CEO, Executive Manager Engineering Services, Executive Manager Development Services and Manager of Projects. Our intent was and many discussions were had about championing our water reserves, infrastructure and also reiterate our view that Merredin is the Hub of the Wheatbelt. Our main discussion points were:
  - Suitability Hub - power, water, waste
  - Watersmart farms EOI opportunity - through DPIRD
  - Evaporation basins & bores
  - Reduce reliance on Water Corp water line
  - Cemetery project
  - Reuse water network upgrades - ability to expand network further and provide opportunities to farmers and other organisations (golf course & school)
  - Future government support, partnerships and grant opportunities
- 16 February 2022 - Tour of new Water Corporation Water tank with CEO, Executive Manager Engineering Services and Manager of Projects.

Cr McKenzie read the following into the public record:

*I would like to take time to speak about acknowledge and honour a stalwart of the Merredin landscape "Clifford Frederick Haines" also lovingly known as "Cliffy" or "Cliff". Owner for nearly 40 years of Cliff Haines Tyres in Merredin.*

*I knew him for over 30 years and as a young fellow shifting to town, needing tyres I found him an intimidating person who knew everything about tyres. I grew to know and admire his knowledge, fairness and obvious love for hard work. After shifting back to town four years ago, not much had changed with Cliff however I can say he always remained true to his word, ran a crucial business in Merredin and was a much loved identity in Merredin.*

*I would like to also acknowledge his lovely wife Annie and extend our condolences to her as she was Cliff's loving advocate, vigilant guardian and devoted carer during his recent health issues, leading up to his death. They were married for many years but I know Annie's family and Cliff's family were connected by their unity and the love was evident at the beautiful Cummins Theatre and later at the Merredin Bowling Club on Friday, 11 February 2022, the day of his funeral.*

*I was made aware recently that Cliff at one time was the owner of 1 of the 4 Tyre shops in Merredin. His friends spoke to him and business owners advised him to get out of the business as there wasn't room for that many Tyre shops in a small town like Merredin. Fair to say, he stuck to his guns, they all left and he was the last Tyre Dealer standing in Merredin, up until he sold it, recently before his death.*

*Cliff is survived by his wife Annie and 3 children.*

## **9. Matters for Which the Meeting may be Closed to the Public**

### **19.1 – Gateway Merredin Festival – Closeout Report and Review**

## 10. Receipt of Minutes of Committee Meetings

- 10.1 Local Emergency Management Committee Meeting held on 3 February 2022  
Attachment 10.1A

### Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

### Resolution

**Moved:** Cr Boehme **Seconded:** Cr Patroni

**82863** That the Minutes of the Local Emergency Management Committee Meeting held on 3 February 2022 be received.

**CARRIED 9/0**

## 11. Recommendations from Committee Meetings for Council Consideration

Nil

## 12. Officer’s Reports - Development Services

### 12.1 Report of Review - Shire of Merredin Review of the Local Planning Framework

*Cr Flockart declared an Impartiality Interest in this item 12.1.*

<h2 style="margin: 0;">Development Services</h2> 	
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Peter Zenni, EMDS
<b>Author:</b>	Paul Bashall, Planwest (WA) Pty Ltd
<b>Legislation:</b>	Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No 6 <i>Planning and Development Act 2005</i> <i>Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015</i>
<b>File Reference:</b>	LUP/5/19
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Attachments:</b>	Attachment 12.1A – Report of Review

#### Purpose of Report

Executive Decision

Legislative Requirement

#### Background

The Western Australian Planning system is centralised in nature, with the Minister for Planning, Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) and local governments having a range of responsibilities. These roles and responsibilities are also set out in legislation and regulation, principally the *Planning and Development Act 2005* and the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015*.

The local planning framework consists of three key components;

- a local planning strategy
- a local planning scheme, and
- a suite of local planning policies

These documents guide local government discretion in decision-making.

The Shire of Merredin Local Planning Strategy (the Strategy) was endorsed by the WAPC in October 2007, and the Local Planning Scheme No.6 (the Scheme) was gazetted on 24 June 2011.

The deemed provisions of the Scheme require that a Scheme be reviewed every fifth year. A Report of Review (see Attachment 12.1A) is a health-check for the local planning framework,



which is required to be prepared every 5 years to assess how the framework is operating, and if adjustments need to be made. A Report of Review is required to consider whether a local government's local planning strategy and scheme, and any structure plans adopted under the scheme are:

1. satisfactory in their existing form; or
2. should be amended; or
3. should be revoked and/or have a new one prepared.

It is also recommended that local planning policies be considered as part of this review, but this is at the local government's discretion.

Following the recommendation from the local government, the Commission will decide whether the Commission agrees or disagrees with the Report of Review and will notify the local government of its decision. The local government is then required to publish the Report of Review and notice of the Commission's decision. The reason for this is to increase transparency in the planning system and provide stakeholders and community members with a 'road map' of future changes (or not) to the local framework.

This Report of Review will examine the Shire of Merredin's local planning framework and make recommendations to the Commission.

## Comment

### General Comment

The existing planning documents are operating satisfactorily and are relatively up to date in terms of legislative requirements. The preparation of a new Strategy and Scheme is a long and laborious process and is considered unnecessary, time-consuming, and financially wasteful.

### Strategy Specific Comments

Although it is considered that the strategy is currently operating satisfactorily, the local planning framework will be the subject of a review to update certain parts.

For example, the following issues will be addressed:

- Dovetailing of the Strategy with the Council's Strategic Community Plan;
- The identification of future industrial and rural-residential growth areas;
- The promotion of renewable power generation;
- Strategies aimed at addressing shifts in technology that have brought disruption to many traditional industries;
- The Council's acknowledgement of the impact of climate change and the need to address the confronting challenges of reducing rainfall, salinity, the increase of marginal land and water security issues;
- The promotion of better consultation with local Aboriginal groups;
- Identification and protection of the Shire's local Aboriginal and historic heritage;
- Managing growth of settlements across the Shire focussing on Merredin;
- Facilitating opportunities in key economic sectors, such as: agriculture, industry tourism, and extraction of basic raw materials;
- Ensuring the capacity of movement, community and utility infrastructure is sufficient to accommodate future demand and capitalise on Merredin as a Regional Centre and second largest inland grain handling facility in Australia;

- Addressing key land use planning issues such as:
  - management of bushfire risk;
  - use of rural land; protection of water sources;
  - biodiversity assets and landscapes; and
  - extraction of basic raw materials.
- Investigating the provision of additional aged care and retirement village developments;
- Providing opportunities for Rural Living where these can be managed so as not to impact on natural resources or environmental values;
- Protecting rural land from fragmentation and land use conflict;
- Encouraging flexibility and diversity in the Commercial and Rural zones as a way of promoting tourism and development;
- Identifying opportunities for future, larger-scale development (Industrial Development);
- Protecting land uses, such as the Collgar Windfarm, by applying Special Use zones,
- Facilitating opportunities to generate employment opportunities by providing for additional light industrial blocks incorporating suitable land parcel size and access to services.
- Representing strategic geological resources in the Strategy and providing guidance on extraction of basic raw materials and managing the impacts of these activities have on sensitive land uses.

### **Scheme Specific Comments**

The Scheme has been amended several times (refer to Appendix 1 - Summary of amendments to the Scheme).

Of these, Amendment 3 (gazetted in 2016) aligned the Scheme with deemed provisions in the Planning and Development (Local Planning Scheme) Regulations 2015 (Regulations) while others have inserted additional model land use terms. Scheme 6 is, however, not consistent with the Regulations as the text:

- does not reflect changes to the deemed provisions published in 2021;
- contains non-model zones (i.e. 'Highway Service', 'General Farming', 'Townsite'), reserves and land use terms/definitions;
- does not align with zone and reserve objectives published in the model provisions for local planning schemes;
- sets out development provisions that do not reflect current policy/guidance;
- does not reflect the model provisions for local planning schemes and maps are not consistent with the WAPC's standards.

Although these departures are not serious, many of these will be addressed through an Omnibus amendment.

There are several other minor adjustments that will be included in the Omnibus Amendment that are listed in the Report of Review attached.

### **Structure Plans (SP) Comments**

A Structure Plan (SP) is prepared under the provisions of the Scheme. There is only one SP identified in the Scheme - previously termed an ODP (L1335 Whitfield Way Merredin Outline Development Plan).

Although this SP is considered satisfactory in its existing form and this area has now been subdivided, there is no need to retain the SP. A proposal will be presented to the Council to revoke the Structure Plan and rezone the site to Residential R2 in the Omnibus amendment.

### **Local Planning Policies (LPP) Comments**

LPPs are prepared and adopted through the provisions of the Scheme. The Council has several LPPs and has maintained these as situations change. A review will be conducted on each LPP to assess whether these can better be incorporated in the Scheme, are superseded by State policy or should be revoked where the LPP is now redundant.

### **Review Process**

The preparation and submission of the Report of Review is the first step in the commencement of the review of the local planning framework. The review process will incorporate engagement and ongoing discussions with Council, community, and special interest groups. The review process will clarify the purpose and operation of the Strategy and the Scheme, identifying areas that require any amendment to ensure that the revised Strategy reinforces Councils strategic vision of Merredin as a strong regional centre and that the Scheme allows for good planning principles that both provide for adequate planning control but also encourage development within Merredin. In addition, should any other priorities be identified during the consultation, these will be addressed during subsequent stages.

Once the reviewed Strategy and Scheme have been adopted by Council, they will undergo statutory (public) advertising for public submissions.

It is recommended that the Strategy and Scheme documents be processed together. This will assist in advertising and processing through the 'system'. If these are processed separately the procedures are slightly different. The reason for the difference is that the Strategy is not a statutory document and is therefore not subject to the same process as the Scheme.

For example, the Scheme requires the WA Planning Commission's recommendation for the Minister's final approval, and then needs to be gazetted, whereas the Strategy is adopted by the WA Planning Commission and is not the subject of the Minister's approval and it is not gazetted.

The procedure for processing these documents is long and complex, however the following provides a summary of the steps required to progress a Scheme through the system.

- Council adopts the revised Strategy and Scheme documents.
- The Council advises various authorities (including the WA Planning Commission) of its intention with these documents.
- The Council refers the Omnibus Scheme Amendment documents to the Environmental Protection Authority (s 81 PD Act).
- The Council requests the Minister's approval to advertise the Omnibus Scheme Amendment (via the WA Planning Commission) for at least 60 days. It is likely that the proposed changes to the Scheme will require the 'Complex amendment' process to be followed.
- The Council requests the WA Planning Commission's approval for the Strategy to be advertised.
- The Council receives and considers each submission lodged during the advertising period of the Strategy and Omnibus Amendment and makes a schedule of recommendations against each submission.

- The Council advises the WA Planning Commission of its resolution requesting that the Commission;
  - endorses the Strategy, and
  - recommends that the Minister grants final approval for the Omnibus Amendment.

### Policy Implications

Nil

### Statutory Implications

Compliance with the *Planning and Development Act 2005* and the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015*.

### Strategic Implications

#### ➤ Strategic Community Plan

Theme:	5 Places and Spaces
Service Area Objective:	5.4. Town Planning and Building Control 5.4.2 The Shire has a current local planning scheme and associated strategy which is flexible and able to suitably guide future residential and industrial growth
Priorities and Strategies for Change:	N/A

#### ➤ Corporate Business Plan

Key Action:	4.1.1 Continue to upgrade the Integrated Planning Framework, meet statutory requirements of the Local Government Act and regulations and regulatory obligations required under other regulations
Directorate:	Development Services
Timeline:	Ongoing

### Sustainability Implications

#### ➤ Strategic Resource Plan

Nil

#### ➤ Workforce Plan

Directorate:	Nil
Activity:	Nil
Current Staff:	Nil
Focus Area:	Nil
Strategy Code:	Nil
Strategy:	Nil
Implications:	Nil

### Risk Implications

The risk to the Shire is of low impact as the review of the planning documents is a procedural matter required by the Deemed Provisions.

### Financial Implications

The review of the planning documents has been budgeted.

### Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

### Resolution

**Moved:** Cr Manning

**Seconded:** Cr Boehme


#### That Council:

1. Adopts the Report of Review as attached; and
2. Pursuant to Regulation 66(3) of the Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015 recommend to the Western Australian Planning Commission that:
  - a. The local planning strategy is broadly satisfactory in its existing form but would benefit from an amendment pursuant to r.17 of the Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015; and
  - b. Scheme No. 6 is broadly satisfactory in its existing form but should be amended by an omnibus amendment pursuant to r.47 of the Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015.

82864

CARRIED 9/0

**12.2 WAPC Subdivision Application No 161931 – Proposed Amalgamation of Lot 350 (No 101) Todd Street and Lot 351 (No 103) Todd Street Merredin.**

<h2>Development Services</h2>		
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Peter Zenni, EMDS	
<b>Author:</b>	As above	
<b>Legislation:</b>	<i>Planning and Development Act 2005</i> <i>Residential Design Codes</i>	
<b>File Reference:</b>	A1723 / A1724	
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	Nil	
<b>Attachments:</b>	Attachment 12.2A – Proposed creation of new lot and associated plans and details	

**Purpose of Report**



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

**Background**

The Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) has received a subdivision application for the proposed amalgamation of Lot 350 (No 101) Todd Street and Lot 351 (No 103) Todd Street, Merredin. The application has been referred to the Shire of Merredin for comment.

**Comment**

The property in question comprises of two Lots - Lot 350 (No 101) Todd Street and Lot 351 (No 103) Todd Street, Merredin, both Lots are zoned 'Residential' under the Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No. 6 and front Todd Street.

Lot 350 (No 101) Todd Street has been developed and incorporates an existing dwelling and associated outbuildings.

Lot 351 (No 103) Todd Street is currently vacant. Both Lot 350 and 351 Todd Street are owned by the same party.

The owner of both the Lots in question has applied to the WAPC for the amalgamation of the two lots in to one single lot.

This will enable the owner to develop the currently vacant Lot by placing on it structures which are going to be deemed incidental to the existing dwelling following the amalgamation process.

There are no planning considerations which would require the Shire of Merredin to recommend the refusal of this application. Accordingly, it is suggested that the Shire of Merredin advises the WAPC that it supports the application.

### Policy Implications

Nil

### Statutory Implications

Compliance with the Residential Design Codes.

### Strategic Implications

#### ➤ Strategic Community Plan

Theme:	5. Places and Spaces
Service Area Objective:	5.4. Town Planning and Building Control 5.4.2. The Shire has a current local planning scheme and associated strategy which is flexible and able to suitably guide future residential and industrial growth
Priorities and Strategies for Change:	N/A

#### ➤ Corporate Business Plan

Key Action:	4.1.1 Continue to upgrade the Integrated Planning Framework, meet statutory requirements of the Local Government Act and regulations and regulatory obligations required under other regulations
Directorate:	Development Services
Timeline:	Ongoing

### Sustainability Implications

#### ➤ Strategic Resource Plan

Nil

#### ➤ Workforce Plan

Directorate:	Nil
Activity:	Nil
Current Staff:	Nil
Focus Area:	Nil
Strategy Code:	Nil
Strategy:	Nil
Implications:	Nil

**Risk Implications**

Nil

**Financial Implications**

Nil

**Voting Requirements**



**Simple Majority**



**Absolute Majority**

**Resolution**

**Moved:** Cr Patroni

**Seconded:** Cr Crook

**82865**

**That Council advise the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) that it unconditionally supports the WAPC Subdivision Application No: 161931, incorporating the amalgamation of Lot 350 (No 101) Todd Street and Lot 351 (No 103) Todd Street, Merredin.**

**CARRIED 9/0**



## 13. Officer's Reports - Engineering Services

### 13.1 EOI WaterSmart Farms – Desalination Proposal

*Cr Flockart and Cr Manning declared an Impartiality Interest in this item 13.1.*

<h2 style="margin: 0;">Engineering Services</h2> 	
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Lindon Mellor, Executive Manager Engineering Services
<b>Author:</b>	Daniel Hay-Hendry, Manager of Projects
<b>Legislation:</b>	<i>Local Government Act 1995</i>
<b>File Reference:</b>	Nil
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Attachments:</b>	Attachment 13.1A – Proposed Site Plan

#### Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

#### Background

The Shire has been in discussions with Department of Primary Industry and Regional Development (DPIRD) regarding its WaterSmart Farms Project. The Department has opened an Expression of Interest (EOI) process, seeking partnerships to trial desalination technology in different areas of regional WA.

The opportunity is strongly aligned to the Shire of Merredin's Strategic Community Plan priorities for change under its Environment and Sustainability theme, and the Administration is seeking the support of Council to submit an EOI for consideration.

WaterSmart Farms is a \$1.5m, 3-year project being conducted by DPIRD to research sustainable groundwater supply options using desalination technology. The intention of this research project is to investigate whether the use of this technology to process brackish groundwater, will increase the ability of farming communities to weather dry seasons.

The WaterSmart Farms project builds on work over the past 3 years by DPIRD, Water Corporation, Murdoch University, and the Wheatbelt Development Commission (WDC) to assess on-farm desalination infrastructure and the implications to businesses, regional economies and the environment.

The installation of desalination water treatment units in farming communities will allow a full-scale trial for water supply based on the use of brackish/saline groundwater. This will be

conducted on selected sites and demonstrate the extended operation of a fully autonomous fit-for-purpose water treatment system.

Key areas of the research will focus on:

- Operation, maintenance costs and reliability under field conditions, for a period of approximately 2-3 years.
- Determining and demonstrating the economic, environmental, and technical viability of water treatment.
- Engaging with various stakeholders, including Shires, farmers, and the business community, to build water knowledge and local capability to enable assessment and future adoption.

WaterSmart Farms currently have four desalination units to be deployed as part of their research. Each unit has different specifications, is an 'off the shelf' unit from local Western Australian manufacturers, and combined covers a range of capacities from 10-120kl/day and salinities between 4,000 to 24,000mg/L Total Dissolved Solids. Each of these units will be installed in different areas of the Wheatbelt and Great Southern and would be matched to the proposed sites based on their water requirements.

At present DPIRD are seeking partners to help undertake this work and as such WaterSmart Farms has recently released an Expression of Interest (EOI) seeking proposals to establish partnerships. The successful partners will be provided a desalination unit as part of the research and offered the opportunity to purchase the unit at a significantly reduced rate after the 2-3 year research period has concluded.

#### Comment

As part of the Shire of Merredin Strategic Community Plan there is a strong focus on sustainable water, conservation and usage practices. Specific priorities for change include ensuring continuous potable and non-potable water supplies, and advocacy for drylands farming support. One identified strategy to achieve this was working with State and Federal agencies and representatives for the inclusion of our local farming community in schemes to develop drylands farming techniques and support water short regions.

The Smart Farms EOI provides a strongly aligned opportunity, for the Shire to partner with DPIRD, Water Corporation and Murdoch University, to meet some of its current sustainability goals, as part of a supported research project.

This project has the potential to improve water security in Merredin by increasing the number of available water sources. This would mean the Shire has access to three water sources; treated wastewater, captured stormwater, and desalinated brackish bore water, offering security and flexibility in Merredin's irrigation network.

Climate change prediction models suggest an increase in droughts and a decrease in growing season rainfall with high confidence by 2030 in the wheatbelt (CSIRO). This means the Shire will need to transition to more rainfall independent water sources. Desalination of brackish groundwater and treated wastewater are both largely rainfall independent. The use of both these water sources should allow the Shire to continue to irrigate its green spaces with minimal impact from the changing climate.

Brackish bore water is currently drawn from four bores located within the Merredin Town site and pumped out the evaporation basins located on the corner of Crooks Road and Great

Eastern Highway. The water is drawn from these bores to prevent waterlogging and salt damage to infrastructure caused by a rising groundwater level that forces salt upwards towards the grounds surface. However, the brackish bore water produced is too saline to be suitable for use in any irrigation of agricultural applications and is therefore left to evaporate from the existing basins.

The Administration suggests the Shire apply for the largest of the available units as part of the project EOI. The recommended concept for submission is for the installation of a 100kL/day desalination unit (provided by DPIRD) to be located on Gabo Avenue adjacent to the 3 existing water storage tanks (Reserve 32848). The tanks and associated infrastructure (including power and pipework) were previously utilised for the Merredin Townsite Groundwater Pumping and Desalination Pilot Project completed in 2004 and remain usable for this project. (Refer to Attachment 1 – Proposed Site Plan). The desalination unit would utilise the existing brackish bore water currently pumped into the evaporation basins, turning this into usable water.

The outputs of this process would fill 2 of the 3 tanks and could be used to supply water to a locally available hardstand or standpipe, providing water access to farmers, businesses and be used for other purposes like fire mitigation and road construction (for example if the upgrade works of Crooks Road are successful in securing funding).

Any surplus water produced, would then overflow into the Shires existing reuse water network dam system, providing further capacity to the network. This further capacity would allow the Shire the opportunity to expand its existing reuse water network and provide further greenspace in Merredin, reducing the heat island effect. Buildings, roads and other infrastructure absorb and radiate heat more than natural landscapes, so increasing tree coverage and greenspaces can reduce ambient temperatures in town.

As part of the partnership, the Shire will be responsible for the installation and associated costs for any required modifications to the unit to ensure it is fit for purpose. Operating costs such as power would also be met by the Shire for the life of the project; however, this would be off-set by the direct and in-direct value of the water produced.

It is proposed that should the EOI be successful, the installation would proceed in the 2022/23 financial year and will therefore be included as part of the budget planning for the new financial year.

The proposed location would simplify the installation of the unit by utilising existing infrastructure, with only minor works required to allow the connection to existing brackish water bores, pipework infrastructure, tanks, and existing evaporation basins. Based on initial investigations a preliminary cost estimate for these works is between \$20,000 to \$50,000. This is based on the assumption the equipment will be fit-for-purpose for the Merredin site.

The Administration is seeking Council's support in submitting a proposal for the WaterSmart Farms Project EOI, which closes on the 4th March 2022.

Should the Shire's proposal be successful, a formal agreement would be brought back to Council for approval before the project proceeds further. At that time a detailed design and accurate cost estimate based on the operating parameters of the equipment will be developed.

Nil

### Statutory Implications

*Local Government Act 1995.*

### Strategic Implications

#### ➤ Strategic Community Plan

Theme:	3 Environment and Sustainability
Service Area Objective:	3.1 Environmental Management 3.1.1 The Shire of Merredin observes a number of sustainable water and energy harvesting, conservation and usage practices
Service Area Objective:	3.2 Waste Management 3.2.1 Reduced waste through increased recycling, re-use and reduction education and practices
Service Area Objective:	3.3 Environmental Planning 3.3.2 Natural assets are protected and conserved
Theme:	4 Communication and Leadership
Service Area Objective:	4.6 Regional Collaboration 4.6.1 The Shire is proactive in seeking out regional collaboration and partnership opportunities which seek to benefit the Shire of Merredin and the wider eastern wheatbelt region
Theme:	5 Places and Spaces
Service Area Objective:	5.2. Parks and Gardens 5.2.1 Parks within the Shire are maintained to a high standard, with adequate facilities for community members of all ages and abilities

#### ➤ Corporate Business Plan

Key Action:	Nil
Directorate:	Nil
Timeline:	Nil

### Sustainability Implications

#### ➤ Strategic Resource Plan

Nil

#### ➤ Workforce Plan

Directorate:	Nil
Activity:	Nil

Current Staff:	Nil
Focus Area:	Nil
Strategy Code:	Nil
Strategy:	Nil
Implications:	Nil. If successful, the Manager of Projects would undertake this project as part of his role.

### Risk Implications

The installation of a desalination unit will reduce the Shire’s reliance on rainfall and mains water sources for irrigation. If this opportunity is not explored now, it is likely that the Shire would need to identify and solely fund significant infrastructure projects in the future to maintain current irrigation volumes due to predicted decrease in rainfall.

### Financial Implications

Funding for this project will need to be allocated as part of the 2022/23 financial year budget.

### Voting Requirements

Simple Majority  Absolute Majority

### Resolution

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

#### That Council:

- 82866**
1. Supports in principle, the Shire of Merredin entering into a partnership agreement with the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development for the WaterSmart Farms project as outlined in this report, subject to the agreement of both parties;
  2. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to submit an Expression of Interest to the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development WaterSmart Farms project, to install a desalination unit in Merredin in line with the proposal outlined in this report; and
  3. Notes, that if the Expression of Interest is successful a further report will be submitted to Council to consider the partnership agreement, and for acceptance of associated project budget.

**CARRIED 9/0**

## **14. Officers' Reports – Corporate and Community Services**

Nil

## 15. Officer's Reports - Administration

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

### Council Decision

**Moved:** Cr Flockart

**Seconded:** Cr Boehme

**82867** That Council accept late Item 18.1 – Burracoppin Hall – Memorandum of Understanding and Kitchen Improvements.

**CARRIED 9/0**

### 18.1 Burracoppin Hall - Memorandum of Understanding and Kitchen Improvements

<h2>Community Services</h2> 	
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Andrina Prnich, DCEO
<b>Author:</b>	As above
<b>Legislation:</b>	<i>Local Government Act 1995</i>
<b>File Reference:</b>	Nil
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Attachments:</b>	Attachment 18.1A – Draft Memorandum of Understanding Between the Shire and Burracoppin Progress Association

### Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

## Background

The Burracoppin Hall is a multi-use venue, fundamental to the social connectivity, community engagement and physical and mental wellbeing of people in Burracoppin and surrounds. Owned by the Shire of Merredin (the Shire), it is home to numerous community clubs including the Burracoppin Tennis Club, Burracoppin Football Club and the Burracoppin Hockey Club as well as rural women's groups such as the Burracoppin branch of the Country Women's Association of WA (CWA) and the Burracoppin Ladies Day and Daffodil Day committees. The venue is overseen and cared for by the Burracoppin Progress Association (BPA) in consultation with the Shire.

The Burracoppin Football Club celebrates its 100-year anniversary in 2022 and continues to play a key role in the Eastern Districts Football League of WA. Annually, a flagship 'Back to Burra' game is held at the Burracoppin oval. This event is the largest fundraiser for the club and one of the biggest events held at the Hall each year. There are over 30 family and 50 single members of the club, many of whom are youngsters involved in the club's junior football engagement training.

The CWA has 40 members who meet monthly at the Burracoppin Hall to engage in personal development and social activities. The group's purpose is to support the health and wellbeing of regional women and their families and provide charitable care and service to those in need.

With synthetic sand dressed courts located behind the Hall, the Tennis club was established in the mid 1950's and has continued to provide both social and physical enjoyment for decades. The Burracoppin Tennis Club has over 40 members and participates in seasonal Pennant competition and other events attracting upwards of 60 competitors and additional supporters. A large focus is given on junior tennis development. The Hall's facilities are crucial to the ongoing operations of the Tennis club.

Though Hockey is not played in Burracoppin, the namesake Club is still heavily involved in Burracoppin community life. Founded in the 1960's the Hockey club now resides in Merredin however celebrates awards nights, social events and fundraising activities at the Hall. This venue provides a 'home' location for the Hockey Club with memorabilia and important club history on display.

In recent years, the Shire has allocated a small budget towards the Burracoppin Hall, for insurance and other minor building and grounds maintenance costs. However, all other works and maintenance has been carried out through voluntary support of the Burracoppin Progress Association.

## Comment

In recent years, the BPA have indicated its intentions to continue to facilitate the improvement and upkeep of the Hall facilities in conjunction with the Shire of Merredin. The BPA have liaised with staff on proceeding with their kitchen renovations for some time.

The kitchen is not currently fit for purpose and does not meet current environmental health requirements, requiring a complete new fit-out. In recent years due to evolving food safety regulations, the use of the kitchen has become extremely restricted and its purpose – limited. Given the compliance requirements, Hall users are currently unable to prepare, store or sell food from this premises, which severely restricts the events that can be held and the community engagement that can be achieved.



At a Council briefing session held in February 2021, Staff discussed the opportunity to seek Federal grant funding (through an EOI process) to support impending kitchen renovations, scheduled for the 2021-22 financial year. The EOI was not successful and since this time the Shire has not identified other appropriate funding sources to assist with this project. During these discussions with Council, it was identified that there was currently no Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in place between the Shire and the BPA. This piece of work was flagged to be included in the review to all Shire of Merredin community user group MoU's, which is yet to be completed.

In the 2021-22 Annual Budget, a Shire contribution of \$25,000 towards cabinet work and white goods has been approved. The BPA have secured \$9,000 in grant funding and also fundraised an additional \$29,000 to complete this \$63,000 project.

In consideration of time factors and the preference by the BPA to directly oversee the works (the BPA are contributing nearly 50% of the funds and have sourced another 13% independently), staff sought guidance from WALGA on the governance aspects relating to the allocation of Shire funds as a contribution towards this project (for example, through a community funding grant). Advice was received as follows:

- In the absence of an agreement for the occupancy of the Burracoppin Hall by the BPA, the Shire of Merredin may incur a risk;
- The allocation of funds by the Shire of Merredin as part of its annual budget towards the project is insufficient without a formal resolution of Council to grant the funds to the BPA; and
- The granting of funds by the Shire of Merredin should be supported by a funding agreement that incorporates the scope of works and associated costings in compliance with Councils purchasing policy and which the funds can be acquitted against.

As such, an MoU has been drafted to ensure appropriate governance and transparency is achieved for all parties. The draft MoU considers the obligations of each party in the ongoing maintenance and upkeep of the Burracoppin Hall and surrounding grounds, in line with what has been delivered in good faith for many years. The MoU sets out the parameters and conditions associated with the undertaking by the BPA of a maintenance service of the Burracoppin Hall and surrounding grounds. Its purpose is to establish a framework for an ongoing cooperative working relationship between the Shire and the BPA.

The timeframe of the draft document is for a six-month period so that it can be reviewed by either party in alignment with the larger review of all Shire MoU's.

For many years, the BPA have operated in a self-sufficient capacity, with minimal financial assistance provided by the Shire. Whilst outside of the guidelines of Council Policy 3.19, where incorporated groups can seek funding through a formal grant funding process, this project (already budgeted within the 2021-22 Annual Budget) could be managed through similar terms and conditions of the community funding initiative of Council. The opportunity to grant these funds to the BPA will see an incorporated not-for-profit organisation enabled to progress the development of a much-needed community facility. The project meets a number of the Council's Strategic Community Plan objectives.

Small rural community halls such as Burracoppin can be a lifeline to isolated individuals and the continued relationship through an MoU commitment will go some way towards investing in accessible facilities for regional communities such as Burracoppin. Such investment can

benefit rural health and wellbeing and supports better rural lifestyles for families, seniors and marginalised members of the community.

### Policy Implications

#### Policy 3.19 – Community Funding

If Council resolves to support the proposed recommendation, this will be a variation to Policy 3.10 Community Funding in that the approval would be out of session to the annual, widely advertised, community grant funding rounds.

### Statutory Implications

*Local Government Act 1995.*

### Strategic Implications

#### ➤ Strategic Community Plan

Theme:	1 Community and Culture - Merredin is rich in culture, arts, sport and community life. Everyone is safe. Everyone belongs.
Service Area	1.2 Community Sports & Infrastructure
Service Area Objective:	1.1.1 A community that is engaged in a variety of inclusive events, arts and Sporting clubs are thriving in membership and volunteers, with an appropriate standard of facilities and other support services

#### ➤ Corporate Business Plan

Key Action:	1.1.2 Support community organisations to provide art and cultural activities and events that celebrate and recognise the diversity and uniqueness of Merredin
Directorate:	Community Services
Timeline:	Ongoing

### Sustainability Implications

#### ➤ Strategic Resource Plan

Nil

#### ➤ Workforce Plan

Directorate:	Nil
Activity:	Nil
Current Staff:	Nil
Focus Area:	Nil
Strategy Code:	Nil
Strategy:	Nil
Implications:	Nil

### Risk Implications

In the absence of an MoU or accompanying community funding agreement, there is a potential of exposing the Shire in a scenario where the financial contribution cannot be acquitted against key conditions or milestones.

### Financial Implications

Nil

### Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Absolute Majority

### Resolution

**Moved:** Cr Flockart

**Seconded:** Cr Crook

**82868** That Council;

1. Approve the Draft Memorandum of Understanding between the Shire and Burracoppin Progress Association Incorporated as per Attachment 18.1A;
2. That financial support be provided to the Burracoppin Progress Association Incorporated, as community grant for the Burracoppin Hall kitchen refurbishment project, being a cash contribution of \$25,000; and
3. Authorises the CEO to enter into a grant agreement with the Burracoppin Progress Association Incorporated under the following conditions;
  - a. That the works must be carried out by a registered builder who shall ensure the kitchen fit-out and specifications meet the satisfaction of the Food Act 2008 and relevant food safety standards;
  - b. Acknowledges the support provided by the Shire of Merredin in all communication and media material; and
  - c. Provides to Council a report upon completion of the works; and,
4. Note there are no additional financial implications to Council as this contribution was already approved in the 2021/22 Annual Budget.

**CARRIED 9/0**

## 19. Matters Behind Closed Doors

In accordance with Section 5.23 (2) (b), (c), and (d) of the Local Government Act 1995 Council will go Behind Closed Doors to discuss these matters.

### Council Decision

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

**82869** That Council move Behind Closed Doors and that Standing Orders be suspended at 4.23pm.

**CARRIED 9/0**

### Reason

*Discussion of matters that if disclosed would reveal information that has a commercial value to a person or information about the business, professional, commercial or financial affairs of a person. Section 5.23(2)(e) in accordance with section 5.23(3).*

### 19.1 Gateway Merredin Festival – Closeout Report and Review

*Cr Flockart declared an Impartiality Interest in this item 19.1.*

<h2>Corporate Services</h2> 	
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Andrina Prnich, DCEO
<b>Author:</b>	As above
<b>Legislation:</b>	<i>Local Government Act 1995</i>
<b>File Reference:</b>	Nil
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Attachments:</b>	Attachment 19.1A – Gateway Merredin Festival Report

### Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

## Resolution

**Moved:** Cr Billing

**Seconded:** Cr Simmonds

**That Council;**

**82870**

- 1. Note the findings of the Gateway Merredin Closeout Report and return the matter for further workshopping at a Council briefing session in April; and**
- 2. Notes that the Gateway Merredin Event will not be held in 2022.**

**CARRIED 9/0**

## Council Resolution

**Moved:** Cr Patroni

**Seconded:** Cr Van Der Merwe

**82871**

**That Council return from Behind Closed Doors at 4.26pm and that the resolutions being passed in the confidential session be confirmed in open meeting.**

**CARRIED 9/0**

## 20. Closure

There being no further business, the President thanked those in attendance and declared the meeting closed at 4:27pm

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