



Mr Craig Watts
Chief Executive Officer
Shire of Merredin
PO Box 42
MERREDIN WA 6415

Dear Mr Watts,

Date for Local Government Extraordinary Election 2026

Thank you for your recent email advising of the resignation of Councillor Renee Manning, and confirming that an extraordinary election will therefore be required for the Shire of Merredin.

I note that as per section 4.9(1) of *the Local Government Act 1995*, Council has one (1) month after the vacancy occurring (the day the resignation is received) to decide on and fix the election day for the extraordinary election. The *Local Government Act 1995* allows for either the WAEC to conduct the extraordinary election or for the Local Government to conduct the election in-house, with the CEO as the Returning Officer.

To assist your Council in making this decision, I am writing to advise you that the earliest date that the Western Australian Electoral Commission (WAEC) can conduct an extraordinary election is **Thursday 25 June 2026**. This is also our preferred date for the election.

This letter also serves as your cost estimate. The WAEC has estimated the cost to conduct this election at approximately **\$18,000** (ex GST). This cost has been based on the following assumptions:

- The method of election will be postal
- 1 Councillor vacancy
- 2300 electors
- response rate of approximately 40%
- appointment of a local Returning Officer
- the Shire providing all other electoral officers to assist in the conduct of the election
- count to be conducted at your office using CountWA.

The WA Electoral Commission conducts elections on the basis of full accrual cost recovery, in accordance with *the Local Government (Elections) Regulations 1997*. This means if the actual costs to conduct the election are less or greater than what we have estimated, the final cost may differ from the estimate we have provided.

We aim to keep additional costs at a minimum, however examples of where cost increases may arise include:

- you select Australia Post Priority Service for the lodgement of your election package
- casual staff are required to be provided for the issuing of Replacement Election Packages;
- casual staff are required to be provided to assist the Returning Officer on election day or with the count at night
- unanticipated cost increases from our suppliers

Please advise us in writing as soon as practicable that you accept to take this cost estimate to Council, so I can provide you with my written agreement to conduct the election in a separate letter. Both the cost estimate letter and the written agreement letter then need to be taken to Council for a decision.

The WA Electoral Commission is available to you to provide any further advice or support. If you have any queries please contact Phil Richards, Manager Election Events, at lgelections@waec.wa.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Dennis O'Reilly
ELECTORAL COMMISSIONER

16 March 2026