



SHIRE OF
MERREDIN
INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT

AGENDA

Ordinary Council Meeting

To be held in Council Chambers
Corner King & Barrack Streets, Merredin
Tuesday, 27 May 2025
Commencing 4.00pm

Notice of Meeting



Dear President and Councillors,

The next Ordinary Meeting of the Council of the Shire of Merredin will be held on Tuesday, 27 May 2025 in the Council Chambers, corner of King and Barrack Streets, Merredin. The format of the day will be:

2:00pm Briefing Session

4:00pm Council Meeting

CRAIG WATTS
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
22 May 2025

DISCLAIMER

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING IMPORTANT DISCLAIMER BEFORE PROCEEDING:

Statements or decisions made at this meeting should not be relied or acted on by an applicant or any other person until they have received written notification from the Shire. Notice of all approvals, including planning and building approvals, will be given to applicants in writing. The Shire of Merredin expressly disclaims liability for any loss or damages suffered by a person who relies or acts on statements or decisions made at a Council or Committee meeting before receiving written notification from the Shire.

The advice and information contained herein is given by and to Council without liability or responsibility for its accuracy. Before placing any reliance on this advice or information, a written inquiry should be made to Council giving entire reasons for seeking the advice or information and how it is proposed to be used.

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
EMES	Executive Manager Engineering 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
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



May Ordinary Council Meeting

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Shire of Merredin
Ordinary Council Meeting
4:00pm Tuesday, 27 May 2025



1. Official Opening

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2. Record of Attendance / Apologies and Leave of Absence

Councillors:

Cr D Crook	President
Cr R Manning	Deputy President
Cr B Anderson	
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
P Zenni	EMDS
M Wyatt	EO
R Cahill	TO

Members of the Public:

Apologies: C Brindley-Mullen, EMS&C

Approved Leave of Absence:

3. Public Question Time

Members of the public may submit questions up to 2pm on the day of the meeting by emailing ea@merredin.wa.gov.au.

4. Disclosure of Interest

C Watts, CEO declared a Financial Interest in Item 19.2.

5. Applications of Leave of Absence

6. Petitions and Presentations

Nil

7. Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meetings

- 7.1 Ordinary Council Meeting held on 29 April 2025
Attachment 7.1A
- 7.2 Special Council Meeting held 13 May 2025
Attachment 7.2A

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation

That the following Minutes be confirmed as true and accurate records of proceedings:

- 1. Ordinary Council Meeting held on 29 April 2025; and
- 2. Special Council Meeting held 13 May 2025.

8. Announcements by the Person Presiding without Discussion

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

- 19.1 Lease of Reserve 17767 and Lot 1443 Merredin
- 19.2 CEO Annual Performance Review Process

10. Receipt of Minutes of Meetings

- 10.1 Minutes of the Great Eastern Country Zone Meeting held 10 April 2025.
Attachment 10.1A
- 10.2 Minutes of the Local Emergency Management Committee Meeting held 1 May 2025.
Attachment 10.2A
- 10.3 Minutes of the Wheatbelt East Regional Organisation of Councils Inc Board Meeting held 7 May 2025.
Attachment 10.3A
- 10.4 Minutes of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Meeting held 27 May 2025.
Attachment 10.4A
Attachment will be circulated prior to the meeting.

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation


That Council

1. **RECEIVE** the minutes of the Great Eastern Country Zone Meeting held 10 April 2025;
2. **RECEIVE** the minutes of the Local Emergency Management Committee Meeting held 1 May 2025;
3. **RECEIVE** the minutes of the Wheatbelt East Regional Organisation of Councils Inc Board Meeting held 7 May 2025; and
4. **RECEIVE** the minutes of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Meeting held 27 May 2025.

11. Recommendations from Committee Meetings for Council Consideration

12. Officer's Reports – Development Services

12.1 Application for Subdivision (WAPC 201639) Lot 7785 (No 60) Hughes Road Merredin

<div>Development Services</div> <div></div>	
Responsible Officer:	Peter Zenni, EMDS
Author:	As above
Legislation:	<i>Planning and Development Act 2005</i> <i>Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No.6</i>
File Reference:	A7180
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Attachment 12.1A – WAPC Referral Documentation.

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

For Council to consider that it advises the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) that it has no objection to the proposed subdivision of Lot 7785 (No 60) Hughes Road, Merredin (WAPC Application No: 201639) resulting in the creation of two new lots, proposed Lot A (3.2801Ha) and proposed Lot B (124.052Ha).

Background

An application for subdivision of land located approximately 2 kilometres east of the Merredin townsite, has been lodged with the WAPC for approval. The WAPC is seeking comments from Council prior to issuing a determination on the application.

The proposed subdivision will divide existing Lot 7785 (No 60) Hughes Road, Merredin into 2 new Lots. Lot A (3.2801Ha) which will contain all existing building and structures (Homestead Lot) and Lot B (124.052Ha) which will contain the balance of the rural land.

Comment

Planning Considerations

The portion of the land in question which will incorporate the proposed Lot A (Homestead Lot) is zoned Rural Residential, the balance of the land forming part of the proposed Lot B being zoned both Rural Residential as well as General Farming (Rural) under the Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No.6 (the Scheme). All existing buildings incorporating the

farmhouse and sheds will be located on the proposed Lot A (Homestead Lot). There are currently no buildings located on the proposed Lot B.

The WAPC Development Control Policy 3.4 – Subdivision of Rural Land as well as provisions of the Scheme highlight the need to maintain the viability and rural character of the land in question.

With respect to the creation of a homestead Lot, Development Control Policy 3.4 – Subdivision of Rural Land, states as follows;

The creation of homestead lots is intended to allow primary producers to continue to occupy their dwelling when they cease to farm, and provide settlement opportunities in areas where land fragmentation is limited and unlikely to increase. Homestead lots are to be created in a manner that is consistent with the rural character of the landscape of a locality. Homestead lots may be facilitated through boundary rationalisation or the creation of a new lot”

Homestead lots may therefore be created to enable an approved existing house on a rural lot to continue to be occupied provided that;

- a) The land is in the DC 3.4 Homestead lot policy area;*
- b) The homestead lot has an area between one and four hectares, or up to 20 hectares to respond to the landform and include features such as existing outbuildings, services or water courses;*
- c) There is an adequate water supply for domestic land management and fire management purposes;*
- d) The dwelling is connected to a reticulated electricity supply or an acceptable alternative demonstrated;*
- e) The homestead lot has access to a constructed public road;*
- f) The homestead lot contains an existing residence that can achieve an appropriate buffer from adjoining rural land uses;*
- g) a homestead lot has not been excised from the farm in the past;*
- h) the balance lot is suitable for the continuation of the rural land use, and generally consistent with the prevailing lot sizes, where it can be shown that this is consistent with the current farming practices at the property; and*
- i) the dwelling on a homestead lot must be of a habitable standard and may be required to be certified as habitable by the local government.*

In this case, given the Lot sizes in question, their location and existing infrastructure on the Lots, it is believed that the proposed subdivision meets the required criteria in that the viability of the rural land is not jeopardised and at the same time the creation of the homestead Lot will not generate any undue additional need for government and community services.

Bush Fire Management

The supporting documentation forwarded to the Shire of Merredin (the Shire) by the WAPC incorporates correspondence from FM Surveys – Licensed Surveyors, stating that the Homestead Lot (proposed Lot A) is not within the Bushfire Prone area, with a portion of the rural land (proposed Lot B) being in a Bushfire Prone area, but that no future development is to occur in this area.

Site Soil Evaluation

Contact has been made with the owner of the land which confirmed that the existing onsite effluent disposal system has been in the ground for some time and is functioning well. In addition, there is ample space for the provision of a replacement, or an additional onsite effluent disposal system should the need arise. As such the Shire Administration is of the opinion that a formal Site Soil Evaluation (SSE) is not warranted in this case.

Road Access

Lot 7785 (No 60) Hughes Road, Merredin currently has road access from Hughes Road. Following the proposed subdivision, both Lot A and Lot B will have potential road access from Hughes Road.

Policy Implications

Compliance with WAPC Development Control Policy 3.4 – Subdivision of Rural Land

Statutory Implications

Compliance with the *Planning and Development Act 2005*.

Compliance with the Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No.6

Strategic Implications

Ø Strategic Community Plan

Theme:	5. Places and Spaces
Service Area Objective:	5.4 Town Planning & Building Control 5.4.2 The Shire has 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:	Nil

Ø Corporate Business Plan

Theme:	5. Places and Spaces
Priorities:	Nil
Objectives:	5.4 Town Planning & Building Control 5.4.2 The Shire has current local planning scheme and associated strategy which is flexible and able to suitably guide future residential and industrial growth

Sustainability Implications

Ø Strategic Resource Plan

Nil

Risk Implications

Subdivisional processes are statute-based requirements subject to approval of the WAPC with comments from various stakeholders including the relevant local government authority. Risks associated with the Shire not opposing the proposed subdivision are considered low (3) based

on the likelihood (1) and consequence (3) of adverse events associated with the proposed subdivision taking place. Adoption of the officer's recommendation will eliminate the risk.

Financial Implications

Nil

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation

That Council ADVISES the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) that it has no objection to the proposed subdivision of Lot 7785 (No 60) Hughes Road, Merredin (WAPC Application No: 201639) resulting in the creation of two new Lots, proposed Lot A (3.2801Ha) and proposed Lot B (124.052Ha), as identified in Attachment 12.1A, subject to;

1. The proposed boundaries not encroaching upon any existing structures or onsite effluent disposal facilities, and;
2. All new Lots being connected to a constructed road via crossovers to the satisfaction of the Shire of Merredin.

12.2 Application for Development Approval – Shed with Reduced Front Setback Lot 501 Goldfields Road Hines Hill

Development Services



Responsible Officer:	Peter Zenni, EMDS
Author:	As above
Legislation:	<i>Planning and Development Act 2005</i> <i>Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No.6</i>
File Reference:	A6122
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Attachment 12.2A – Application for development approval and supporting documentation

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

For Council to consider approving an application for Development Approval (DA) for the erection of a shed incorporating a reduced front setback on Lot 510 Goldfields Road, Hines Hill.

Background

The Shire of Merredin (the Shire) has received an application for development approval for the erection of a shed incorporating a reduced front setback on Lot 501 Goldfields Road, Hines Hill.

Comment

Statutory Requirements - Planning Considerations

Lot 501 Goldfields Road, Hines Hill is zoned 'General Farming' under the Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No.6 (LPS).

The erection of a shed on land zoned General Farming is a permitted activity and would normally be granted development approval at the officer level under delegation from Council.

On this occasion the applicant seeks to erect the shed on Lot 501 Goldfields Road, Hines Hill incorporating a reduced front setback. Whilst the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) has delegated authority to approve reduced setbacks on Residential zoned land, in this case the land is zoned General Farming and as such the matter is being referred to Council for its consideration.

The land in question is not subject to the Residential Design Codes (R Codes), in addition as General Farming zoned land is not captured by provisions of the LPS Table Two – Development Table, which stipulates minimum front, rear and side boundary setbacks, the

default setback for General Farming zoned land is a 20m front boundary setback and a 10m side and rear boundary setback.

Although the land is zoned General Farming, Lot 501 Goldfields Road Hines Hill comprises an area of only 1.72 Hectares. The applicant is seeking approval for a reduced front setback of 7.0m from the front boundary on the basis that the placement of the shed on a different portion of the Lot is problematic due to a large portion of the Lot on the east side being low lying and subject to water inundation as well as the presence of existing bores on the northern portion of the Lot.

Moreover, the Shire has recently approved the placement and use of two (grouped) relocatable dwellings on Lot 500 Fitzpatrick Road, Hines Hill, with one of these dwellings incorporating a reduced setback. This dwelling will be located immediately adjacent to the proposed development on Lot 501 Goldfields Road, Hines Hill with both Lots being owned by the same party. The applicant intends to live in the dwelling and use the shed on the adjoining Lot for hobby farm related purposes. The previously approved reduced front setback for the dwelling on Lot 500 Fitzpatrick Road Hines Hill will align with the proposed reduced setback for the shed.

Furthermore, the LPS specifically allows for discretion by Council with respect to an application of this nature in accordance with Clause 4.5 of the LPS, which states as follows;

4.5 VARIATIONS TO SITE AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS

4.5.1 Except for development in respect of which the Residential Design Codes apply, if a development is the subject of an application for development approval and does not comply with a standard or requirement prescribed under the Scheme, the local government may, despite the non-compliance, approve the application unconditionally or subject to such conditions as the local government thinks fit.

4.5.2 In considering an application for development approval under this clause, where, in the opinion of the local government, the variation is likely to affect any owners or occupiers in the general locality or adjoining the site which is the subject of consideration for the variation, the local government is to –

a) consult the affected parties by following one or more of the provisions for advertising uses under clause 64 of the deemed provisions; and

b) have regard to any expressed views prior to making its determination to grant the variation.

4.5.3 The power conferred by this clause may only be exercised if the local government is satisfied that –

a) approval of the proposed development would be appropriate having regard to the criteria set out in clause 67 of the deemed provisions; and

b) the non-compliance will not have an adverse effect upon the occupiers or users of the development, the inhabitants of the locality or the likely future development of the locality

Given the specific circumstances of Lot 501 Goldfields Road, Hines Hill, the f is not subject to the Residential Design Codes and that the proposal will not be inconsistent with existing development in the locality, it is recommended that Council use its discretion to approve the development application.

Statutory Requirements – Health Act Considerations

Statutory considerations are specifically related to development on a given Lot (individual land parcel in question) as such land parcel may be sold independently in its own right and there is no guarantee that facilities on adjacent Lots will be available for use by the neighbouring landholder.

In this case the application relates to the erection of a shed, notwithstanding the fact that the applicant in this case will have access to a previously approved dwelling on the immediately adjacent Lot, the Shire must assess the application on its merits looking solely at the Lot subject to the application before Council.

Section 144 of the *Health (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1911*, specifically prohibits the conversion, adaptation or use as a dwelling of any building not originally constructed or erected as a dwelling house.

This has been addressed by the Shire having received a Statutory Declaration from the applicant confirming that the proposed shed will not be used for the purposes of habitation.

Statutory Requirements – Building Act Considerations

Building work including the placement or erection of a building or incidental structure on land is subject to building permit requirements. An application for a building permit must be submitted to the Shire and be approved before any building work can commence on site, since the property is located within the Hines Hill townsite.

Policy Implications

Compliance with Local Planning Scheme Policy No.1 – Moveable Buildings

Statutory Implications

Compliance with the *Planning and Development Act 2005*.

Compliance with the Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No.6.

Compliance with the *Building Act 2011*.

Compliance with *Health (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1911*.

Strategic Implications

Ø Strategic Community Plan

Theme:	5. Places and Spaces
Service Area Objective:	5.4 Town Planning & Building Control 5.4.2 The Shire has 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:	Nil

Ø Corporate Business Plan

Theme:	5. Places and Spaces
Priorities:	Nil
Objectives:	5.4 Town Planning & Building Control

5.4.2 The Shire has current local planning scheme and associated strategy which is flexible and able to suitably guide future residential and industrial growth

Sustainability Implications

Ø Strategic Resource Plan

Nil

Risk Implications

The proposed development will not result in an adverse impact on the amenity of the surrounding area. Council has discretion to approve an application in accordance with Clause 4.5 of the LPS which allows for variation from LPS standards and requirements. The specific circumstances of the Lot in question offers sufficient justification for use of Council's discretion and minimise risk of such a decision setting a precedent. 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 development taking place.

Financial Implications

Development application fees have been paid.

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation

That Council GRANTS development (planning) approval for the erection of a shed incorporating a reduced front setback on Lot 501 Goldfields Road, Hines Hill as outlined in Attachment 12.2A.

ADVICE NOTES

- 1. The applicant is advised that if the development, the subject of this approval, is not substantially commenced within a period of 24 months from the date of the approval, the approval will lapse and be of no further effect. For the purposes of this condition, the term "substantially commenced" has the meaning given to it in the Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015 as amended from time to time.*
- 2. The applicant is advised that granting of development approval does not constitute a building permit and that an application for relevant building permit must be submitted to the Shire of Merredin and be approved before any building work can commence on site.*
- 3. The applicant is advised that if an applicant or owner is aggrieved by this determination, there is a right of review by the State Administrative Tribunal in accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2005 Part 14. An application must be made within 28 days of the determination.*

12.3 Adoption of Amended Local Planning Strategy and Omnibus Scheme Amendment

Development Services



Responsible Officer:	Peter Zenni, EMDS
Author:	Paul Bashall – Planwest (WA) Pty Ltd
Legislation:	<i>Planning and Development Act 2005</i> <i>Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No.6</i>
File Reference:	CM/19/93
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Attachment 12.3A – West Australian Public Notice Attachment 12.3B – Schedule of Submissions Attachment 12.3C – Local Planning Scheme 6 Amendment 8 - Omnibus Amendment, and Local Planning Strategy Pt 1 & 2

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

For Council to consider that it;

1. Adopts the officer recommendations for each submission received following the advertising of the Shire of Merredin Local Planning Strategy (the 2024 Strategy) in accordance with the Schedule of Submissions.
2. Endorses the Shire of Merredin Local Planning Strategy (the 2024 Strategy) as advertised without modification.
3. Requests the WA Planning Commission's (WAPC) final approval for the Shire of Merredin Local Planning Strategy (the 2024 Strategy).
4. Adopts the officer recommendations for each submission received following the advertising of the Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No 6 Amendment No 8 (Omnibus) in accordance with the Schedule of Submissions.
5. Supports the proposed amendment to the local planning scheme with proposed modifications to address issues raised in the submissions.
6. Requests the WA Planning Commission's recommendation for the Minister for Planning's final approval for the Omnibus Amendment.

Background

The Planning and Development Act 2005 requires a local planning scheme to be reviewed every five years. Although there is some flexibility in this review period, the Council resolved

to review its Scheme because it was originally gazetted in 2011. In accordance with the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015*, Council prepared a 'Report of Review'. This was adopted by Council on 22 February 2022 and duly forwarded to the WAPC for approval.

On the 27 May 2022 the WAPC approved the Report of Review that also sort to concurrently amend several components of the Local Planning Strategy (the Strategy). The Strategy was prepared in 2007.

Although not specified at the time of the WAPC approval of the Report of Review, the Strategy is now required to comply with the latest format and content. The task of rewriting the Strategy has subsequently been completed and will be put before Council for approval prior to forwarding the document to the WAPC for approval.

Unlike a Scheme that is a statutory document and requires the Minister's final approval, the Strategy is a strategic document that only requires the WAPC's endorsement.

Local Planning Strategy

The Strategy has been duly updated to reflect changes to State Planning Policies and the same components that are included in the Omnibus Scheme amendment.

Probably the most significant of these changes are those that relate to future industrial and industrial investigation areas. This reflects Council's awareness of the benefit of ensuring a potential supply of land in the various sectors, not only to provide a choice of residential options, but also in providing a variety of employment areas and workplaces.

Omnibus Amendment

The Scheme Amendment is determined to be defined as a 'Complex' amendment needing specific advertising requirements as set out in the Regulations 2015.

Principally, the Amendment seeks to make 15 changes reflected in the Strategy, as summarised below (Parts 'a' to 'o'). The details and explanation of the changes are contained in the amendment documentation attached to this Agenda Item.

Parts a) to Part j) relate to amendments to the Scheme maps, and in some cases connected amendments to the Scheme text.

- a) To rezone several lots in the townsites of Burracoppin, Nangeenan and Nukarni from 'Parks and recreation' or 'General farming' to 'Townsite' with new R10 density codes.
- b) Reclassifying Lot 377 and portion of Lot 1 Kitchener Road, Merredin, from 'Residential' to 'Special Use - Place of Worship' and deleting the R10/30 density code accordingly.
- c) Reclassifying Lot 461 Throssell Road, Merredin, from 'Public purposes – Kindergarten' to 'Residential' with an R-Code of 'R10/30'.
- d) Rezoning lots around the Lukin/Goldfields Road area, Merredin, from 'General farming' and 'Special use – Tourist development' to 'Special Residential' and 'Parks and Recreation'.
- e) Reclassifying Crown Reserve 29700 Chandler-Merredin Road, Merredin, from 'Public Purposes – Public use' to 'Special use – Tourist development'.
- f) Rezoning Lots 4, 5 and 20261 Merredin-Narembreen Road, Merredin, from 'Special use – Airstrip' and 'General agriculture' to 'Special use' – Airstrip Mixed Use with modified Special Control Area provisions.
- g) Reclassifying Lot 26740 Chandler-Merredin Road, Merredin, from 'Public purposes – Public use' to 'Special use - Concrete batching plant'.

- h) Deleting the Development Area shown on the Scheme Map in the area surrounded by Farrar Parade, Third Avenue, Second Avenue, Marino Street and Fifth Avenue, Merredin.
- i) Reclassifying portion Lot 501 Bates, Duff and Coronation Streets, Merredin, from 'Public purposes – Civic and cultural' to 'Residential' with an R-Code of R80, and 'Parks and recreation'.
- j) Rezoning of Lots 503 and 601 Goldfields Road, Lot 504 Gabo Avenue, and the northern portions of Lots 82 Adamson Road, Merredin, from 'General farming' to 'General industry', and the southern portion of Lot 82 Adamson Road, Merredin, from 'General farming' to 'Light industry'. An objection was lodged in relation to Lot 602 Gamenya Avenue which has been supported by the officers, therefore this will remain "General farming" land.

The following Parts relate to Scheme text amendments only.

- k) Amending Table One – Zoning Table by amending the permissibility of a Convenience Store from an 'A' use in the Residential zone to an 'X' use in the Residential zone, and amending the permissibility of a Road House to an "X" use within General Industry and Light Industry zones.
- l) Amending Schedule One – Dictionary of Defined Words and Expressions by deleting, and then adding, updated definitions of several words and expressions of tourism related use classes.
- m) Amending Table One – Zoning Table by amending the permissibility of a 'Grouped dwelling' from an 'X' use in the 'Town centre' zone to an 'A' use in the 'Town centre' zone.
- n) Adding new provisions relating to Renewable energy facilities to provide definitions and requirements for development approval applications and superseding existing wind farm provisions.
- o) Amending the text of Special Control Areas by making the referral all applications to the EPA from obligatory to discretionary.

	Comment
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The 2024 Strategy and Omnibus Amendment were advertised for submissions The notice was included in the West Australian newspaper, the Shire of Merredin (the Shire) web site and on the local government notice board at the Shire office. The advertisement invited submissions to both documents.

The Deemed provisions of the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015* determine the advertising requirements for Schemes, amendments and strategies.

The Omnibus Amendment, being a 'Complex' amendment, was advertised for 60 days between 21 December 2024 and 24 February 2025.

A Strategy is required to be advertised for 21 days; however, it was advertised concurrently with the Omnibus Amendment resulting in a 60-day advertising for the 2024 Strategy.

During this advertising period, the Shire received 14 submissions to the Omnibus Amendment and 3 submissions to the 2024 Strategy.

Attached is a Schedule of these submissions, for both the Strategy and Omnibus, including;

- a) the date that the submission was received by the Council;
- b) the name and address of the person making the submission;
- c) where it is relevant, a description of the property that is the subject of the submission;
- d) a summary of the submission;
- e) an officer comment and recommendation;
- f) the response of the local government in respect to each submission; and
- g) particulars of any modifications to the proposed amendment or strategy proposed by the local government in response to the submissions.

Once the Council has determined the submissions, the revised Scheme and Strategy documents will be modified and forwarded to the WAPC.

Strategic Considerations

The existing Shire of Merredin Local Planning Strategy (the 2007 Strategy) has been reviewed concurrently with the Omnibus Amendment and seeks to identify areas where future residential options and industrial areas could be created.

Environmental Impact

The proposals considered in the Omnibus Amendment are not considered to be environmentally sensitive and was not required to be assessed by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA).

Policy Implications

Nil, however, the local planning policies will be reviewed following the completion of the Omnibus Amendment.

Statutory Implications

The Omnibus Amendment is classified as a Complex amendment and will need to be advertised for 60 days – or a longer period approved by the WAPC.

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 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:	5. Places and Spaces
Priorities:	Nil

- Objectives:
- 5.4 Town Planning & Building Control
 - 5.4.2 The Shire has current local planning scheme and associated strategy which is flexible and able to suitably guide future residential and industrial growth

Sustainability Implications

Ø Strategic Resource Plan

Nil

Risk Implications

The proposed LPS Omnibus Amendment received clearance from the EPA and the WAPC for advertising. Both the Omnibus Amendment and Local Planning Strategy are based on good planning principles and allow for the controlled growth of Merredin for the next 10 -15 years. Both the Omnibus Amendment and Local Planning Strategy have been advertised for public comment. Accordingly, the risks associated with this proposal are considered Low (3) based on the likelihood of Rare (1) and consequence of Moderate (3) of any adverse events.

Financial Implications

The cost of the proposed Omnibus Amendment formed part of the Shire's Annual Budget as a component of the Shire's planning obligations to maintain the currency of its local planning strategy and scheme.

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority




Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation

That Council

1. **ADOPTS** the Officer Recommendations for each submission received following the advertising of the Shire of Merredin Local Planning Strategy (the 2024 Strategy) in accordance with the Schedule of Submissions;
2. **ENDORSES** the Shire of Merredin Local Planning Strategy (the 2024 Strategy) as advertised without modification;
3. **REQUESTS** the WA Planning Commission's final approval for the Shire of Merredin Local Planning Strategy (the 2024 Strategy);
4. **ADOPTS** the Officer Recommendations for each submission received following the advertising of the Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No 6 Amendment No 8 (Omnibus) in accordance with the Schedule of Submissions;
5. **SUPPORTS** the proposed amendment to the local planning scheme with proposed modifications to address issues raised in the submissions; and
6. **REQUESTS** the WA Planning Commission's recommendation for the Minister for Planning's final approval for the Omnibus Amendment.

12.4 Proposed Shire of Merredin Parking Amendment Local Law 2025

<div>Development Services</div> <div></div>	
Responsible Officer:	Peter Zenni, EMDS
Author:	As above
Legislation:	<i>Local Government Act 1995</i>
File Reference:	LE/08/2025
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Attachment 12.4A - Proposed Shire of Merredin Parking Amendment Local Law 2025

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

For Council to consider adopting a local law to reflect changes in other legislation and to increase modified penalties currently in place as part of the Shire of Merredin Parking and Parking Facilities Local Law 2002

Background

At the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 17 February 2025, Council resolved to adopt a draft Shire of Merredin Parking Amendment Local Law (CMRef 83544). In accordance with statutory requirements, the proposed local law was subsequently advertised for public comment and a copy sent to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC).

Comment

The proposed amendment local law reflects changes in other legislation and increases modified penalties currently in place as part of the Shire of Merredin Parking and Parking Facilities Local Law 2002.

There were no comments from the public or DLGSC following the advertising of the proposed Amendment local law which published for public comment on 28 February 2025. The Shire of Merredin (the Shire) may now 'make' the Amendment Local Law which will come into effect 14 days after publication in the Government Gazette.

Policy Implications

Compliance with Shire of Merredin Policy 3.13 – Use of Common Seal.

Statutory Implications

The proposed Shire of Merredin Parking Amendment Local Law will reflect changes in other legislation and increase modified penalties currently in place as part of the Shire of Merredin Parking and Parking Facilities Local Law 2002.

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:	4.4.1 The Shire is continuously working to maintain efficient communication, providing open, transparent and factual information, through a variety of channels

Sustainability Implications

Ø Strategic Resource Plan

Nil

Risk Implications

The proposed Shire of Merredin Parking Amendment Local Law will reflect changes in other legislation and increase modified penalties currently in place as part of the Shire of Merredin Parking and Parking Facilities Local Law 2002.

The proposed Parking Amendment Local Law has been subject to public advertising and will receive further consideration by the Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation. Accordingly, the risks associated with this proposal are considered Low (3) based on the likelihood of Rare (1) and consequence Moderate (3) of an adverse event associated with the proposal taking place.

Financial Implications

There are costs associated with the drafting of the amendment local law, advertising for comments, and eventual publication in the Government Gazette. An allocation of funds for the completion of the local law review project forms part of the Shire's 2024/25 Annual Budget.

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation

That Council:

1. **MAKES** the Shire of Merredin Parking Amendment Local Law 2025 as shown in Attachment 12.4A;
2. **AUTHORISES** the Shire President and Chief Executive Officer to affix the Shire of Merredin Common Seal to the Shire of Merredin Parking Amendment Local Law 2025;
3. **PUBLISHES** the local law in the Government Gazette;
4. **SENDS** a copy to the Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries;
5. **GIVES** local public notice in accordance with s3.12(6) of the Local Government Act 1995, after Gazettal;
 - a) Stating the title of the local law;
 - b) Summarizing the purpose and effect of the local law and specifying the day on which it comes into operation;
 - c) Advising that copies of the local law may be inspected or obtained from the Shire offices;
6. **SENDS** a copy of the local law and a duly completed explanatory memorandum signed by the Shire President and Chief Executive Officer to the Western Australian Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation; and
7. **AUTHORISES** the Chief Executive Officer to take any other action necessary to progress the gazettal of the Amendment Local Law.

12.5 Application for Development Approval – Provision of a Free-standing Cover over Historic Cart at the Merredin Railway Museum

Development Services



Responsible Officer:	Peter Zenni, EMDS
Author:	As above
Legislation:	<i>Planning and Development Act 2005</i> Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No.6 <i>Building Act 2011</i>
File Reference:	A228
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Attachment 12.5A – Application for development approval and supporting documentation

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

For Council to consider approving the application for Development Approval (DA) for the erection of a free-standing cover to be placed over a historic cart at the Merredin Railway Museum located on Portion of Reserve 10359, Lot 1503 (No 45) Barrack Street, Merredin.

Background

The Shire of Merredin (the Shire) has received an application for development approval the erection of a freestanding cover to be placed over a historic cart at the Merredin Railway Museum.

Comment

The proposed development consists of the erection of a free-standing cover 3.130m wide x 5.50m long x 2.4m high free-standing cover to be placed over a historic cart at the Merredin Railway Museum.

The proposal is consistent with the current as well as longer-term use of the area.

Statutory – Planning Considerations

The Merredin Railway Museum is located on Portion of Reserve 10359, Lot 1503 (No 45) Barrack Street, Merredin is designated 'Railway Local Scheme Reserve' under the Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No.6. (LPS).

Clause 2.4 of the LPS states that in determining an application for planning approval the local government is to have due regard to the ultimate purpose intended for the reserve and that

in the case of land reserved for the purposes of a public authority, the local government is to consult with that authority before determining an application for planning approval.

In this case the objectives of the Local Planning Scheme No. 6 relating to a Railway Local Reserve areas follows;

- To provide land and facilities for railway purposes and associated activities.
- To protect land from activities considered inappropriate to the successful continued operation of railway infrastructure.

The proposed development does not contravene the above objectives and complements the current as well as long-term use of the area.

The land in question is owned by the State of WA and is a reserve vested in the Public Transport Authority (PTA) with a Licensing agreement for the use of the land in place between the PTA and the Shire.

The Shire Administration has spoken with representatives of the PTA regarding the application and has received emailed confirmation that PTA has no objection to the proposed development subject to works relating to the installation not crossing the fence and infringing upon the rail corridor

The Merredin Railway Station Group (Incorporating the Railway Museum) is listed (Place Number 01577) on the State Heritage Council Register of premises with a high historical significance to the Western Australian Community.

As such any proposed development automatically triggers mandatory development approval provisions under the Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No.6 and requires referral of the proposed development to the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) for consideration of potential Heritage related impacts.

Accordingly, the application for development approval was referred to DPLH (State Heritage) officer for consideration.

DPLH, have provided the following advice;

The proposal, in accordance with the plans submitted, is supported subject to the following condition:

- 1. The steel structure is to be independent and not to be fixed to the significant fabric of the cart dock sleeper retaining walls. A minimum setback of 50mm from the retaining walls is to be maintained.*

The Shire Administration has discussed the above condition with representatives from the Merredin Railway Museum and has been advised that the above condition will be met as part of the building works associated with the erection of the free-standing cover on site.

Statutory – Building Considerations

Building work including the placement or erection of a building or incidental structure on land is subject to building permit requirements. An application for a building permit must be submitted to the Shire and be approved before any building work can commence on site.

Policy Implications

Nil

Statutory Implications

Compliance with the *Planning and Development Act 2005*.

Compliance with the Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No.6.

Compliance with the *Building Act 2011*.

Strategic Implications

Ø Strategic Community Plan

Theme:	5. Places and Spaces
Service Area Objective:	5.4 Town Planning & Building Control 5.4.2 The Shire has 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:	Nil

Ø Corporate Business Plan

Theme:	5. Places and Spaces
Priorities:	Nil
Objectives:	5.4 Town Planning & Building Control 5.4.2 The Shire has current local planning scheme and associated strategy which is flexible and able to suitably guide future residential and industrial growth

Sustainability Implications

Ø Strategic Resource Plan

Nil

Risk Implications

The proposed development will not result in an adverse impact on the amenity of the surrounding area and has received conditional support from DPLH (State Heritage) Officer, 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 development taking place.

Financial Implications

Development approval application fees have been paid.

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation

That Council GRANTS development approval for the erection of a free-standing cover to be placed over a historic cart at the Merredin Railway Museum located on Portion of Reserve 10359, Lot 1503 (No 45) Barrack Street, at as outlined in Attachment 12.5A, subject to compliance with requirements outlined in the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage correspondence dated 29 April 2025 as shown in Attachment 12.5A.

ADVICE NOTES


- 1. The applicant is advised that if the development, the subject of this approval, is not substantially commenced within a period of 24 months from the date of the approval, the approval will lapse and be of no further effect. For the purposes of this condition, the term "substantially commenced" has the meaning given to it in the Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015 as amended from time to time.*
- 2. The applicant is advised that granting of development approval does not constitute a building permit and that an application for relevant building permit must be submitted to the Shire of Merredin and be approved before any building work can commence on site.*
- 3. The applicant is advised that if an applicant or owner is aggrieved by this determination, there is a right of review by the State Administrative Tribunal in accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2005 Part 14. An application must be made within 28 days of the determination.*

13. Officer's Reports – Engineering Services

Nil

14. Officer's Reports – Corporate and Community Services

14.1 Statement of Financial Activity – April 2025

<div>Corporate Services</div> <div>SHIRE OF MERREDIN INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT</div>	
Responsible Officer:	Leah Boehme, EMCS
Author:	As Above
Legislation:	<i>Local Government Act 1995</i> <i>Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996</i>
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 April 2025, and be advised of associated financial matters, including consideration of proposed budget amendments.

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.

Budget Amendments

The Strategy and Community team is currently in the process of programming a series of theatre shows for the 2025/26 financial year. Securing these performances requires upfront payment of deposits at the time of booking to confirm dates and artist.

To proceed with the necessary bookings, we are requesting additional funding from the accounts below be allocated to new jobs for the relevant shows. This funding will support the payment of deposits related to the upfront costs associated with the shows.

New job codes will be created specifically for this purpose, and the allocation details are outlined in the table below.

GL/Job	Description	Current Budget	Variation Amount	Revised Budget
CTG06	Technical Maintenance	\$19,000	(\$4,500)	\$14,500
CTG04	Marketing and Promotion	\$3,500	(\$2,000)	\$1,500
CTG07	Equipment Purchases	\$3,000	(\$1,000)	\$2,000
New Job	Robbie Williams in Concert	\$0	\$2,500	\$2,500
New Job	Moment by Moment	\$0	\$2,500	\$2,500
New Job	Wildflowers	\$0	\$2,500	\$2,500

Furthermore, the Shire has been approached by the Wheatbelt East Regional Organisation of Councils (WEROC) and the Wheatbelt Development Commission (WDC) to auspice funding between the two entities to support payment for land feasibility studies within the WEROC region. Due to time sensitivities to make payment, WDC has suggested that Shire auspice the funds as it is already a WDC Creditor. Amended income and expenditure accounts are shown below.

GL/Job	Description	Current Budget	Variation Amount	Revised Budget
2040251	OTH GOV - Consultancy - Strategic	\$378,000	\$5000	\$383,000
3040235	Oth GOV – Other Income	(\$14,000)	(\$5,000)	(\$19,000)

Policy Implications

Nil

Statutory Implications

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

Authorisation of expenditure - the Local Government Act 1995 Part 6 Division 4 s6.8 (1) requires the local government not to incur expenditure from its Municipal Fund for an additional purpose except where the expenditure:

(b) Is authorised in advance by resolution*

“Additional purpose” means a purpose for which no expenditure estimate is included in the local government’s annual budget.

*requires an absolute majority of Council.

	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
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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
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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.

In regard to the proposed budget amendments, the suggested amendments only move expenditure within operational accounts related to Cummins Theatre. There is no change to the total expenditure and therefor there is no effect on the bottom line.

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority


Officer's Recommendation

That Council:

1. **RECEIVE** the Statements of Financial Activity and Investment Report for the period ending 30 April 2025 in accordance with Regulation 34 of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996; and
2. **APPROVES** amendments to the Shire of Merredin 2024/25 Annual Budget as per the following table, pursuant to section 6.8(1(b)) of the Local Government Act 1995:

GL/Job	Description	Current Budget	Variation Amount	Revised Budget
CTG06	Technical Maintenance	\$19,000	(\$4,500)	\$14,500
CTG04	Marketing and Promotion	\$3,500	(\$2,000)	\$1,500
CTG07	Equipment Purchases	\$3,000	(\$1,000)	\$2,000
New Job	Robbie Williams in Concert	\$0	\$2,500	\$2,500
New Job	Moment by Moment	\$0	\$2,500	\$2,500
New Job	Wildflowers	\$0	\$2,500	\$2,500
2040251	OTH GOV - Consultancy - Strategic	\$378,000	\$5000	\$383,000
3040235	Oth GOV – Other Income	(\$14,000)	(\$5,000)	(\$19,000)

14.2 List of Accounts Paid – April 2025

<div>Corporate Services</div> <div>SHIRE OF MERREDIN INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT</div>	
Responsible Officer:	Leah Boehme, EMCS
Author:	As above
Legislation:	<i>Local Government Act 1995</i> <i>Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996</i>
File Reference:	Nil
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Attachment 14.2A - Payments Listing April 2025

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

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

Background

The attached list of accounts paid during the month of April 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

That Council RECEIVE the schedule of accounts paid during April 2025 as listed, covering cheques, EFT's, directly debited payments and wages, as numbered and totaling \$642,118.50 from the Merredin Shire Council Municipal bank account and \$0 from the Merredin Shire Council Trust bank account.

14.3 Differential Rating Strategy 2025/26

<div>Corporate Services</div> <div>SHIRE OF MERREDIN INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT</div>	
Responsible Officer:	Craig Watts, CEO
Author:	Leah Boehme, EMCS
Legislation:	<i>Local Government Act 1995</i> <i>Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996</i>
File Reference:	Nil
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Attachment 14.3A – Statement of Objects and Reasons for Differential Rating in 2025/26 Attachment 14.3B – 2025/26 Rates % Increase Comparison

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

For Council to decide the percentage rates yield increase for adoption in 2025/26 and to approve advertising of the proposed differential and minimum rates for the 2025/26 financial year and invite community feedback on those proposed.

Background

Process of setting differential and minimum rates:

Local Governments are empowered to impose differential general rates subject to compliance with Section 6.33 of the *Local Government Act 1995*.

Differential rating provides Council with flexibility in the level of rates being raised from specifically identified properties or groups of properties within the community. It is common for Councils to base differential rating for properties on Town Planning Scheme zonings, however other criteria such as land use may be used.

Once a budget deficiency has been determined, and after taking into consideration the objectives of the Strategic Community Plan and Corporate Business Plan, a rating strategy and proposed differential general rates in the dollar can be determined. Rates should not be increased by a fixed amount without due consideration of the deficiency. Unless Ministerial approval is given, the amount expected to be raised through all types of local government rates must be within 90% to 110% of the deficiency of the budget (s6.34). This acts to limit the amount that may be raised by rates, but only in proportion to the expenditure requirement determined by the local government, and not in the manner of a set cap on the maximum level of income which can be raised through rates.

Council is required to give local public notice prior to imposing any differential general rates, or any minimum payment applying to a differential rate category for a minimum of 21 days. Council does, however, have the discretion to vary the rate in the dollar and minimum rate during its budget deliberations without having to re-advertise the changes.

Before local public notice is given, proposed rates should be determined by Council, along with the objects and reasons, providing justification for each differential general rate or minimum payment. It is important that these provide sufficient supporting information to electors and ratepayers, or local governments may be asked to re-advertise by the Minister for Local Government (the Minister).

Differential rating does not currently apply to properties utilising Gross Rental Valuations.

In considering the differential rating, Council must consider the necessary increase to the rates yield that will be required for the 2025/26 financial year.

Considerations:

The following matters are for Council to consider when determining an appropriate rate increase for the Shire of Merredin (the Shire) in the 2025/26 financial year.

Economic Climate

The changing economic climate and Consumer Price Index (CPI) rises have had a significant impact, contributing to rising costs for services, materials and supply chain disruptions. Though this has steadied across 2024/25, increased costs have remained.

The Shire's Strategic Community Plan 2020-2030 had assumed a minimum annual rate increase of 3% per annum, consisting of 2% CPI and 1% for service changes over time.

Unfortunately, the assumed CPI increases of 2% per annum, was a significant underestimation of the actual annual CPI impact that was felt by the organisation.

Council's decision to increase the Shire's rates yield for 2023/24 by 9% and 2024/25 by 5% has pulled back a portion of this deficit, however higher costs are still having an effect on the Shire's ability to provide services.

Policy levers which have been applied by Council and the Administration to manage CPI and the zero COVID rates increase in the last few budget years, have included small reductions in service levels, delay of non-essential capital renewals, and draw down on reserves. This continued in the 2024/25 financial year.

It is currently predicted that the upcoming CPI (March 2025 to March 2026) will be 2.75%, however this may change pending global factors around trade.

Landgate Revaluations

In the 2024/25 financial year, Landgate completed UV revaluations only. The most significant change relating to Rural Unimproved General Valuations which have seen an overall average change for the Shire of 19.77%. This relates to broadacre agricultural properties.

Rate in the Dollar (RID) Calculations

With the significant increases to Rural UV valuations, it has been necessary to significantly decrease the RID for this rating category to ensure ratepayers did not feel the full effect of these changes. This also meant that a blanket RID increase was unable to occur, due to this method causing the Shire to have a top RID that is more than double the lowest RID, which is not permitted without Ministerial approval. Section 6.33 (3) of the *Local Government Act 1995* outlines "In imposing a differential general rate a local government is not to, without

the approval of the Minister, impose a differential general rate which is more than twice the lowest differential general rate imposed by it.”

To ensure the Shire remains compliant, the UV2 - Urban Rural and UV3 – UV Mining RIDs will need to decrease further, which would mean that the total yield would decrease by between \$10,000 and \$12,500, depending on the percentage total rates yield selected by Council. This equates to roughly a 0.6% decrease to the total rates yield, so a 6% increase would actually provide the Shire with around a 5.4% increase to total rates yield. To counter this, it is proposed that minimum rates be increased by 3% (rounded to the nearest \$10) as per the below table:

Rate Category	Current minimum	Proposed minimum	Increase to revenue
GRV	\$940	\$960	\$3620
UV 1 – Rural	\$1160	\$1190	\$3780
UV 2 – Urban Rural Residential	\$1160	\$1190	\$1080
UV 4 – Special Use Power Generation	\$1160	\$1190	\$60
UV 5 – Special Use Airport	\$1160	\$1190	\$0
UV 3 – Mining Tenement	\$200	\$200	\$0
Total increase:			\$8540

Recreation Services

The operation of the Merredin Regional Community and Leisure Centre (MRCLC) remains an important consideration in relation to the development of the 2025/26 Annual Budget, and therefore the rates yield increase required, with the cost of capital works to be undertaken expected to increase further in the 2025/26 financial year.

It has also been raised that some significant capital works may be necessary at the Merredin District Olympic Swimming Pool during the 2025/26 financial year and beyond.

Currently, the Recreation Facilities Reserve has a balance of \$996,907.72. It would not be advisable to pull all required funds from the reserve, due to the majority of the Shire's reserves being accessed in the past few years, with no significant funds being reinvested, however a portion of the required funds may need to be drawn down to ensure the budget can be balanced, without imposing another large increase on rate payers.

Loan Repayment – CBD Redevelopment

The CBD upgrade project, which is currently in progress has been partly funded with a loan from WA Treasury Corporation (WATC). This was to meet the original Building Better Regions Funds requirements for the Shire to meet at least 50% of the total project costs, matching the federal grant funding of \$2,139,309.

In early 2024, the loan was drawn down with the total loan amount accessed of \$1,480,000, with the annual repayments totalling \$180,200 (split into two repayments of \$90,100 each). These commenced in the 2024/25 financial year and will be budgeted again for the 2025/26 financial year.

The value of these repayments equates to an estimated ~3.5% increase to the total rates yield each year.

Salaries and Wages

Though the wage case has not yet been released for the coming year, it is predicted that this will be around the CPI rate, which was 2.4% for the period March 2024 to March 2024. The SAT determination of a 3% increase for CEOs and Councillors would also indicate a figure in this area for wage increases. Staff wages are the largest average expenditure for the Shire annually, so an increase such as above will require a substantial financial commitment in the budget. Based on 2024/25 budget, a 3% increase would equate to around \$165,000, a further ~3.1% increase to total rates yield.

Safety and Security Improvement Project

Master Lock System Replacement Project – this has been commenced in 2024/25 with locks being updated at the MRCLC and Cummins Theatre. It is hoped that locks at the Shire Depot and Landfill Site will also be updated prior to 30 June 2025. Next year we will look to change the lock system on the North Merredin Precinct and Administration Building, which will likely cost around \$25,000.

CCTV Upgrade Project – this has also been commenced in 2024/25, with the Town Centre and Apex Park areas installed in the first round. The Visitor Centre, Shire Depot, Administration Building and Cummins Theatre are all currently in progress and hoped to be completed prior to 30 June 2025. Next year we hope to move this project forward by installing cameras at the Merredin Library and improving the current cameras at the MRCLC. We will then look to replace the facilities still captured by our old system. It is likely that we will need \$40,000 each year for the following three years (minimum) to complete this project.

Conclusion

As a result of the above, the Administration consider a minimum ~6% increase to total yield as the base required to help partly offset CPI increases and predicted expenditure above that experienced in 2024/25, which will increase the rates yield by a figure of \$315,237.64.

This does not account for any decreases to income that Council may experience or increases to current organisation service levels.

Table of Rates:

The current 2024/25 Table of Rates (Unimproved Valuations) is set out below:

Unimproved Value	Minimum Rate	Rate in \$
UV1 – Rural	\$1,160.00	0.013325
UV2 – Urban Rural	\$1,160.00	0.026650
UV3 – Mining	\$200.00	0.025875
UV4 – Power Generation Gen	\$1,160.00	0.025800
UV5 – Special Use Airstrip	\$1,160.00	0.023971

The Administration has provided, as part of this agenda item below, a number of options for Council to consider in relation to the percentage yield increase that they may choose to apply for the 2025/26 financial year.

It should be noted, to meet the considerations described above, the following total yield increases would be required:

- Minimal CPI offset - 2.4%

- Recreation services works - estimated 7% (\$250,000 for court resurfacing and \$110,000 for pool/ slide)
- Salaries and wages - estimated 3.1%

Total: 12.5%

Based on the above, a 12.5% minimum rate yield increase would be required to meet these considerations without reducing current services or delaying other required capital works. This also assumes that untied financial assistance grants received by the organisation are likely to increase somewhat, to assist in meeting rising service costs.

Should Council choose to adopt a lesser yield increase than the above, this will result in reductions of either service levels across the organisation, or a reduction in capital expenditure (with the exception of committed projects).

It should be noted that reduction in capital is something that has already been implemented over a number of previous financial years, and the remaining capital works have focused on strategically aligned projects, such as grant funded roads and other capital projects (and co-funding where required). This results in less opportunities to delay capital as a policy option than in previous years.

As a result, the most likely opportunity to balance the budget depending on the chosen rates yield would be with reduction across services, varying based on the percentage chosen. This would be dealt with during budget development.

The Administration has stepped out the implications for each of the modelled options, to allow Council to make informed choices about maintaining, or reducing service levels across the organisation.

Options for Consideration of Council:

Option One: 3% increase to total rates yield

Should Council choose to apply a 3% increase to the total rates yield, this would result in an increase of \$151,971.48 from the 2024/25 rates yield.

This revenue would cover the majority of the salary and wage increase predicted for staff in line with the wage case. Choosing this option does not account for the anticipated capital expenditure that will be required across the organisation or the effects to expenditure of CPI. A reduction to services across the organisation would likely be required. This figure does not take into account any increase to current service levels across the organisation, or any reduction in income that Council may propose.

The Table of Rates (Unimproved Valuations) for a 3% yield increase is set out below:

Unimproved Value	Minimum Rate	Rate in \$
UV1 – Rural	\$1.190.00	0.011470
UV2 – Urban Rural	\$1.190.00	0.022940
UV3 – Mining	\$200.00	0.022285
UV4 – Power Generation Gen	\$1.190.00	0.022280
UV5 – Special Use Airstrip	\$1.190.00	0.020505

Option Two: 4% increase to total rates yield

Should Council choose to apply a 4% increase to the total rates yield, this would result in an increase of \$205,967.63 from the 2024/25 rates yield.

This revenue would cover the salary and wage increase predicted for staff in line with the wage case and a portion of the CPI increase expected. Choosing this option does not account for the anticipated capital expenditure that will be required across the organisation or the rest of the effects to expenditure of CPI. A reduction to services across the organisation would likely be required. This figure does not take into account any increase to current service levels across the organisation, or any reduction in income that Council may propose.

The Table of Rates (Unimproved Valuations) for a 4% yield increase is set out below:

Unimproved Value	Minimum Rate	Rate in \$
UV1 – Rural	\$1,190.00	0.011585
UV2 – Urban Rural	\$1,190.00	0.023170
UV3 – Mining	\$200.00	0.023000
UV4 – Power Generation Gen	\$1,190.00	0.022500
UV5 – Special Use Airstrip	\$1,190.00	0.020505

Option Three: 5% increase to total rates yield

Should Council choose to apply a 5% increase to the total rates yield, this would result in an increase of \$260,596.30 from the 2024/25 rates yield.

This revenue would cover the salary and wage increase predicted for staff in line with the wage case and a larger portion of the CPI increase expected. Choosing this option does not account for the anticipated capital expenditure that will be required across the organisation or the rest of the effects to expenditure of CPI. A reduction to services across the organisation would likely be required. This figure does not take into account any increase to current service levels across the organisation, or any reduction in income that Council may propose.

The Table of Rates (Unimproved Valuations) for a 5% yield increase is set out below:

Unimproved Value	Minimum Rate	Rate in \$
UV1 – Rural	\$1,190.00	0.011705
UV2 – Urban Rural	\$1,190.00	0.023410
UV3 – Mining	\$200.00	0.023400
UV4 – Power Generation Gen	\$1,190.00	0.022720
UV5 – Special Use Airstrip	\$1,190.00	0.020915

Option Four: 6% increase to total rates yield

Should Council choose to apply a 6% increase to the total rates yield, this would result in an increase of \$315,237.64 from the 2024/25 rates yield.

This revenue would cover the salary and wage increase predicted for staff in line with the wage case and the CPI increase expected. Choosing this option does not account for the anticipated capital expenditure that will be required across the organisation. A reduction to services across the organisation would likely be required. This figure does not take into account any increase to current service levels across the organisation, or any reduction in income that Council may propose.

The Table of Rates (Unimproved Valuations) for a 6% yield increase is set out below:

Unimproved Value	Minimum Rate	Rate in \$
UV1 – Rural	\$1,190.00	0.011825

UV2 – Urban Rural	\$1,190.00	0.023650
UV3 – Mining	\$200.00	0.023600
UV4 – Power Generation Gen	\$1,190.00	0.022940
UV5 – Special Use Airstrip	\$1,190.00	0.021120

Option Five: 7% increase to total rates yield

Should Council choose to apply a 7% increase to the total rates yield, this would result in an increase of \$368,718.02 from the 2024/25 rates yield.

This revenue would cover the salary and wage increase predicted for staff in line with the wage case and the CPI increase expected. A small portion of the identified capital works at the recreation centre would also be covered. Choosing this option does not account for the remainder of the anticipated capital expenditure that will be required across the organisation. A reduction to services across the organisation would likely be required. This figure does not take into account any increase to current service levels across the organisation, or any reduction in income that Council may propose.

The Table of Rates (Unimproved Valuations) for a 7% yield increase is set out below:

Unimproved Value	Minimum Rate	Rate in \$
UV1 – Rural	\$1,190.00	0.011940
UV2 – Urban Rural	\$1,190.00	0.023880
UV3 – Mining	\$200.00	0.023870
UV4 – Power Generation Gen	\$1,190.00	0.023150
UV5 – Special Use Airstrip	\$1,190.00	0.021315

Option Six: 9% increase to total rates yield

Should Council choose to apply a 9% increase to the total rates yield, this would result in an increase of \$477,291.06 from the 2024/25 rates yield.

This revenue would cover the salary and wage increase predicted for staff in line with the wage case and the CPI increase expected. A larger portion of the identified capital works at the recreation centre would also be covered. Choosing this option does not account for the remainder of the anticipated capital expenditure that will be required across the organisation. A reduction to services across the organisation would likely be required. This figure does not take into account any increase to current service levels across the organisation, or any reduction in income that Council may propose.

The Table of Rates (Unimproved Valuations) for a 9% yield increase is set out below:

Unimproved Value	Minimum Rate	Rate in \$
UV1 – Rural	\$1,190.00	0.012176
UV2 – Urban Rural	\$1,190.00	0.024352
UV3 – Mining	\$200.00	0.024340
UV4 – Power Generation Gen	\$1,190.00	0.023585
UV5 – Special Use Airstrip	\$1,190.00	0.021705

These options are all presented for the consideration of Council.

	Comment
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Rateable properties in the Shire are rated on either GRV or Unimproved Value (UV).

Values are determined by the Valuer General's Office (VGO). Typically, properties within the town boundary are rated using GRV, which is based on an estimate of what the improved property will generate in rent in a year. GRV properties are revalued every three to five years, based on programs determined by the Valuer-General. A revaluation for the Shire occurred in August 2023.

Other properties in the Shire are rated using unimproved values, based on the capital value of the unimproved (bare) land. UV properties are revalued every year by the VGO. Whilst unimproved values are based on the capital value of the land, land prices are still linked to the land's capacity to generate annual revenue.

The Shire generates rate revenue by charging a rate-in-the-dollar (rates) against the valuations. The Shire's UV properties are rated as Rural, Urban Rural, Mining, Power Generation and Special Use Airstrip.

Policy Implications

Nil

Statutory Implications

Section 6.33 of the *Local Government Act 1995* allows for local governments to differentially rate properties.

Section 6.33 (3) of the *Local Government Act 1995* outlines "*In imposing a differential general rate a local government is not to, without the approval of the Minister, impose a differential general rate which is more than twice the lowest differential general rate imposed by it.*"

As the highest UV sub-category rate is less than twice the lowest, Ministerial approval is not required.

Section 6.35 of the *Local Government Act 1995*:

6.35. Minimum payment

(1) *Subject to this section, a local government may impose on any rateable land in its district a minimum payment which is greater than the general rate which would otherwise be payable on that land.*

(2) *A minimum payment is to be a general minimum but, subject to subsection (3), a lesser minimum may be imposed in respect of any portion of the district.*

(3) *In applying subsection (2) the local government is to ensure the general minimum is imposed on not less than —*

(a) *50% of the total number of separately rated properties in the district; or*

(b) *50% of the number of properties in each category referred to in subsection (6), on which a minimum payment is imposed.*

(4) *A minimum payment is not to be imposed on more than the prescribed percentage of —*

(a) *the number of separately rated properties in the district; or*

(b) *the number of properties in each category referred to in subsection (6),*

unless the general minimum does not exceed the prescribed amount.

(5) *If a local government imposes a differential general rate on any land on the basis that the land is vacant land it may, with the approval of the Minister, impose a minimum payment in a manner that does not comply with subsections (2), (3) and (4) for that land.*

(6) *For the purposes of this section a minimum payment is to be applied separately, in accordance with the principles set forth in subsections (2), (3) and (4) in respect of each of the following categories —*

- (a) *to land rated on gross rental value; and*
- (b) *to land rated on unimproved value; and*
- (c) *to each differential rating category where a differential general rate is imposed.*

[Section 6.35 amended by No. 49 of 2004 s. 61.]

Section 53 of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* sets the Prescribed amount in Relation to Minimums.

53. *Amount prescribed for minimum payment (Act s. 6.35(4))*

The amount prescribed for the purposes of section 6.35(4) is \$200.

	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 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
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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 Moderate (6),

which is determined by a likelihood of Unlikely (2) and a consequence of Moderate (3). This risk will be eliminated by the adoption of the Officer's Recommendation.

Financial Implications

Adopting a differential model will result in required rates revenue for the 2025/26 financial year.

Voting Requirements

☐

Simple Majority

☒


Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation

That Council;

1. **ADOPT** for draft budget purposes, Option _____ as stated in the Item, as the differential rate in the dollar and minimum payments for Unimproved Value rated properties for the Shire of Merredin, subject to finalisation of the draft 2025/26 Annual Budget and the establishment of the funding shortfall required from imposition of rates on Gross Rental Value rated properties;
2. **ADVERTISE** its intention to levy differential rates on Unimproved Value properties for the 2025/26 Budget, and advise the public of the availability of the Shire of Merredin's 2025/26 Differential Rating Objects and Reasons (updated to suit the option selected by Council), in accordance with section 6.36 of the Local Government Act 1995; and
3. **NOTES** any public submissions received in response to Item 2 above, will be presented to Council for consideration prior to adoption of the 2025/26 Rates.

14.4 Annual Community Funding

<div>Community Services</div> <div>SHIRE OF MERREDIN INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT</div>	
Responsible Officer:	Codi Brindley-Mullen, EMS&C
Author:	As above
Legislation:	<i>Local Government 1995, S5.42 and S6.12(1)(c)</i>
File Reference:	25/26 Budget
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Attachment 14.4A – Evaluation Table (CONFIDENTIAL)

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

For Council to consider the annual community funding applications to be considered and incorporated into the 2025/26 Annual Budget.

Background

Council adopted Policy 3.19 - Community Funding at the Ordinary Council Meeting held 18 April 2023 (CMRef 83143), which coordinates Council's response to community requests for financial support. It also ensures that Shire of Merredin (the Shire) funding resources are allocated in a way that is transparent, compliant and equitable and that funded projects further the aims and objectives of the Shire and represent responsible use of public monies.

The aims of the Shire's Community Funding Program are:

1. To encourage the development of services, facilities and events that meet identified community needs;
2. To promote active participation of residents in community initiatives and the development of skills, knowledge and opportunities;
3. To provide assistance to the community to develop initiatives and services that support the Shire's objectives;
4. Link to the community vision and strategic goals listed in the Strategic Community Plan; and
5. To enhance the image of the Shire within the community.

Comment

The Shire advertised on Councils:

Website – 4 April 2025

Facebook – 24 April and 4 April 2025.

Email from MRCLC – 14 April and 28 April 2025

Email from MCC – 15 April

The following applications were received and are captured on in the evaluation table as per Attachment 14.4A:

Annual Grant

The Annual Grant is open once per year and is the Shire’s largest funding opportunity for community groups to apply for. The grant may consist of cash, in-kind contributions and/or waivers to organisations.

Administration Staff called for applications aimed at the Shire’s Annual Grants Program for 2025/26. The Grant is for projects seeking cash funding, in-kind contributions or fee waivers up to the value of \$10,000 (ex GST).

Organisation	Project	Project Cost	Amount Requested \$	Recommended Support
Merredin CRC	Merredin Seniors Luncheon Australia Day Breakfast Jan 26 Volunteer Event	\$21,500	\$5,150– cash \$4,850 – in-kind	\$10,000
Merredin Show Inc	Merredin Show 2026	\$95,000	\$10,000 In-kind	\$10,000
Wheatbelt Agcare	Contribution towards Rural family Counselling	\$276,781	\$2,000 cash	\$2,000
Policy Implications				

Policy – 3.19 Community Funding.

Statutory Implications

As outlined in the *Local Government Act 1995*.

Strategic Implications

Ø Strategic Community Plan	
Theme:	4. Communication and Leadership
Service Area Objective:	4.2 Decision Making The Shire is progressive while exercising responsible stewardship of its built, natural and financial resources 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
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Ø Strategic Resource Plan

Nil

	Risk Implications
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If this allocation is not made into the allocated budget, it would mean that the Administration will receive these requests throughout the year. The risk rating is considered to be Moderate (6), which is determined by a likelihood of Unlikely (4) and a consequence of Moderate (3). This risk will be eliminated by the adoption of the Officer's Recommendation.

	Financial Implications
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Comprising of \$7,150 cash and \$14,850 in-kind therefore, a provision of \$22,000 cash and in-kind to be included in the 2025/26 Annual Budget.

Voting Requirements

☐

Simple Majority

☐

Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation

That Council **PROVIDE** financial support to the following community projects, being a cash and in-kind, for the following amounts and under the following conditions:

1. **Merredin Community Resource Centre;**
 - a. **provide support of \$10,000;**
 - b. **acknowledges the support provided by the Shire of Merredin in all promotional material;**
 - c. **provides details to the Shire of Merredin for each event six weeks prior to each event;**
 - d. **provides to the Shire of Merredin a report upon completion of the project;**
2. **Merredin Show Inc;**
 - a. **provide support of \$10,000;**
 - b. **acknowledges the support provided by the Shire of Merredin in all communication and media material;**
 - c. **provides to the Shire of Merredin a report upon completion of the event;**
3. **Wheatbelt Agcare Community Support Services Inc;**
 - a. **provide support of \$2,000;**
 - b. **acknowledges the support provided by the Shire of Merredin in all media material;**
 - c. **provides to the Shire of Merredin a report upon completion of the program;**
4. **ENDORSE an allocation of \$22,000 per financial year, in the draft Annual Budget for a term of three (3) years, commencing 2025/26 for the ongoing support of the community projects listed in this recommendation; and**
5. **NOTES a review of the proposed financial support will be conducted in March 2028 to determine the continued need.**

15. Officer's Reports – Administration

15.1 Confirmation of Land Value

<div>Administration</div> <div>SHIRE OF MERREDIN INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT</div>	
Responsible Officer:	Craig Watts, CEO
Author:	As above
Legislation:	<i>Local Government Act 1995</i>
File Reference:	Nil
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Attachment 15.1A - Land Valuation (CONFIDENTIAL)

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

For Council to consider and confirm the land valuation for 108-110 Barrack Street, Merredin (Community Resource Centre and Women's Rest Centre).

Background

The Shire of Merredin (the Shire) has determined to undertake negotiations to re-lease the property located at 108-110 Barrack Street to the Merredin Community Resource Centre Inc. (CRC). Section 3.58 of the *Local Government Act 1995* details the disposal procedure to lease land, including the market value of the disposition. A valuation for the buildings was received in October 2024.

Comment

The Shire intends to lease the property at 108-110 Barrack Street, as the current lease with the Merredin CRC expires in June 2025. The process for leasing the property is described in Section 3.58 of the *Local Government Act 1995*, which includes advertising the disposal of the property. As part of this advertising process, the land must be subject to a valuation within 6 months of the Council decision, or if the period is longer than 6 months, a declaration of Council is required to confirm that the valuation is a true indication of the value of the property.

A valuation was received by the Shire in October 2024, which confirmed the valuation of the CRC building as being \$23,100 and the Women's Rest Centre as being \$10,400. In the months since these valuations were received, there has been very little movement in the market with

a number of retail tenancies in that are remaining vacant. As such, the Shire Administration believes that this valuation is still a true and correct rental market value. This valuation must be confirmed to enable the Shire Administration to commence the disposal process (via lease) of the CRC Building and Women's Rest Centre. If Council does not confirm the valuation as being a correct reflection of the rental value, a new valuation will need to be sourced.

Policy Implications

Nil

Statutory Implications

The Shire is intending to dispose of land via a lease utilising the provisions of Section 3.38 of the *Local Government Act 1995*. This includes confirming the valuation of the property.

Strategic Implications

Ø Strategic Community Plan

Theme:	4. Communication and Leadership
Service Area Objective:	4.1.2 The Council works closely with the community to successfully achieve projects or outcomes that deliver the community's vision for Merredin
Priorities and Strategies for Change:	Nil

Ø Corporate Business Plan

Theme:	4. Communication and Leadership
Priorities:	Nil
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

There is a reputational risk associated with this Item as the Shire could be viewed as not taking steps to support the community and leaving a premises underutilised. The risk rating is considered to be Moderate (8), which is determined by a likelihood of Likely (4) and a consequence of Minor (2). This risk will be eliminated by the adoption of the Officer's Recommendation.

Financial Implications

Adoption of the Officer's Recommendation would see no financial cost to the Shire. If Council does not adopt the Officer's Recommendation, a new valuation will need to be secured at additional, unbudgeted cost.

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation

That Council **DECLARES** that it believes the valuation undertaken of 108-110 Barrack Street, Merredin, as shown in Attachment 15.1A, is a true indication of the value at the time of the proposed disposition.

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

19.1 Lease of Reserve 17767 and Lot 1443 Merredin

19.2 CEO Annual Performance Review Process

20. Closure

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