



SHIRE OF
MERREDIN
INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT

SHIRE OF MERREDIN

These Minutes were presented to Council at
its Ordinary Council Meeting of
24 February 2026

Donna Crook - Shire President

MINUTES

Ordinary Council Meeting

To be held in Council Chambers
Corner King & Barrack Street's, Merredin
Tuesday, 27 January 2026
Commencing 5:00pm



Common Acronyms Used in this Document

BFAC	Bush Fire Advisory Committee
CEACA	Central East Accommodation & Care Alliance Inc
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CWVC	Central Wheatbelt Visitors Centre
DSO	Development Services Officer
EO	Executive Officer
EMCS	Executive Manager Corporate Services
EMIS	Executive Manager Infrastructure Services
EMS&C	Executive Manager Strategy & Community
GECZ	Great Eastern Country Zone
GO	Governance Officer
LEMC	Local Emergency Management Committee
LGIS	Local Government Insurance Services
LPS	Local Planning Scheme
MCO	Media and Communications Officer
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRCLC	Merredin Regional Community and Leisure Centre
OCM	Ordinary Council Meeting
SCM	Special Council Meeting
SRP	Strategic Resource Plan
WALGA	Western Australian Local Government Association
WEROC	Wheatbelt East Regional Organisation of Councils



January Ordinary Council Meeting

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Shire of Merredin
Ordinary Council Meeting
5:00pm Tuesday, 27 January 2026.



1. OFFICIAL OPENING

The President acknowledged the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet today, and paid her respects to Elders past, present and emerging. The President then welcomed those in attendance and declared the meeting open at 5:01pm.

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

2. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE / APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Councillors:

Cr D Crook	President
Cr R Manning	Deputy President (via Zoom)
Cr H Billing	
Cr P Boehme	
Cr P Madigan	
Cr L O'Neill	
Cr P Van Der Merwe	

Staff:

C Watts	CEO
L Boehme	EMCS
C Brindley-Mullen	SCEM
M Hussey	EO
S Doncon	GO

Members of the Public: Mrs L Armstrong 5:01pm – 5:07pm

Apologies:

Approved Leave of Absence:

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

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.

L Armstrong, Merredin WA 6415

Mrs Armstrong asked about the bus that the Shire has put on for Tea & Tech and why it was not advertised with more notice.

The CEO Mr Watts directed the question to the SCEM Mrs Brindley-Mullen to answer.

A – We have provided some advertising through social media and fliers, but it was not as effective as we had hoped. We will be undertaking another distribution drop of flyers. Advertising of the bus (where provided) will be included on all Tea & Tech fliers from now on.

Mrs Armstrong – Can we have a bus for more shows at Cummins Theatre?

A – Cr Crook advised that Mr Watts would take that on board, depending on the show. Given that the Shire is employing at a new Theatre Manager, they will be tasked to investigate and provide a bus service if they think it is appropriate to do so. However, advertising this service to the community is the key.

Cr Billing asked Mrs Armstrong if there was a better way for us to get the communication out to the community. Mrs Armstrong suggested having flyers at the Seniors Citizen Centre as well so that they can be picked up on Thursday's when they host morning tea, in addition to any social media or notice boards around town.

4. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Nil

5. APPLICATIONS OF LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Nil

6. PETITIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Nil

7. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

7.1 Ordinary Council Meeting held on 16 December 2025 (Attachment 7.1A)

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Resolution

Moved: Cr Boehme

Seconded:

Cr Madigan

83723

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held 16 December 2025 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

CARRIED 7/0

For: Cr Boehme, Cr Billing, Cr Crook, Cr Madigan, Cr Manning, Cr O’Neill, Cr Van Der Merwe

Against:

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE PERSON PRESIDING WITHOUT DISCUSSION

Nil

9. MATTERS FOR WHICH THE MEETING MAY BE CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC

Nil

10. RECEIPT OF MINUTES OF MEETINGS

Nil

11. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR CONSIDERATION

Nil

12. OFFICER'S REPORTS – DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

12.1 Application For Subdivision (WAPC 202638) Lot No 887 & 888 Caw Street, Merredin

<h2>Development Services</h2> 	
Responsible Officer:	Craig Watts, CEO
Author:	Xinyi Zhao, DSO
File Reference:	A547, A549
Disclosure of Interest:	The Author and Responsible Officer declare that they do not have any conflicts of interest in relation to this item.
Attachments:	Attachment 12.1A – WAPC Application Letter Attachment 12.1B – Location Plan for Subdivision Application Attachment 12.1C – Site Survey & Proposed Subdivision of Lots 887 & 888.

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

For Council to consider providing advice to the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) that it has no objection to the proposed subdivision of Lots 887 & 888 Caw Street, Merredin.

Background

An application for subdivision of land located on Lots 887 & 888 Caw Street, Merredin, has been lodged with the Western Australian Planning Commission for approval. The WAPC is seeking comments from Council prior to issuing a determination on the application.

Comment

Downsize Diversity has lodged an application with the WAPC on behalf of the owner of both two lots in question, for the subdivision of the two lots with boundary realignment.

The land in question comprises of two lots – Lots 887 & 888 Caw Street, Merredin. Both lots are zoned 'Residential' under the Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No. 6 (the Scheme) with an R-Code of R10/30.

Lot 888 (No 78) Caw Street has been developed and incorporates an existing dwelling and associated outbuildings.

Lot 887 (No 80) Caw Street has also been developed and incorporates an existing dwelling and associated outbuildings.

The proposed subdivision involves a boundary realignment, resulting in the creation of 2 new lots. Proposed Lot 1 (1469 m²), which will contain all existing buildings and structures on Lot 888 (No 78) Caw Street, with the rear open area of Lot 887 (No 80) Caw Street, and proposed Lot 2 (655 m²), which will contain the balance of Lot 887 (No 80) Caw Street.

Since both lots are connected to mains sewer, the R30 R-code therefore applies. The proposed lots sizes meet the minimum site area requirements for single house (Av 300m²).

However, the existing outbuildings on proposed Lot 2 should comply with the setback requirement in the Residential Design Codes (R-Codes) for at least 1m to the proposed boundary.

It is assumed that the proponent is seeking a one metre portion stretching to the rear of proposed Lot 2 to enable connection to sewer as there is no laneway or ROW to access. It is shown on the submitted plans; however, the imposition of an easement is considered more appropriate. This is common practice and is recommended to be raised as an item to be addressed within the Council response to WAPC.

The one (1) metre stretch of land will require a fence on both sides and be subject to ongoing maintenance. Application of an easement will negate the need for this additional fencing and provide easier access for maintenance.

Bush Fire Management

A portion of the property subject to the subdivision application (boundary realignment) is identified as being bushfire prone. However, according to Planning for Bushfire Guidelines for the Implementation of State Planning Policy 3.7 indicate that a BAL assessment and Bushfire Management Plan are not required.

Consultation

Councillor/Officer Consultation

No Councillor or Officer consultation is required.

Community Consultation

No community consultation is required.

Policy Implications

There are no policy implications.

Statutory Implications

Compliance with the Planning and Development Act 2005.

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

Strategic Implications

∅ Council Plan 2025-2035

Theme: 1 Community and Culture

Strategic Objective: 1.7 Maintain the health, safety and wellbeing of our community through application of regulatory frameworks which support legislative compliance.

Priority Actions: 1.1.1 Promote responsible strategic and statutory planning to meet current and future needs.

Sustainability Implications

There is no impact on capacity, resourcing or asset management to carry out the Officer's recommendation.

Risk Implications

There is a compliance risk associated with this Item as Subdivisional processes are statute-based requirements subject to approval of the WAPC with comments from various stakeholders including the relevant local government authority. The risk rating is considered to be LOW (3), which is determined by a likelihood of Rare (1) and a consequence of Moderate (3). This risk will be minimised by the adoption of the Officer's Recommendation.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this report including within the Long-Term Financial Plan.

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Resolution

Moved: Cr Boehme

Seconded:

Cr Van Der Merwe

That Council:

83724

- 1) **ADVISES** the WAPC that it has no objection to the proposed subdivision of Lots 887 & 888 Caw Street, (WAPC Application No: 202638) resulting in the creation of two new lots, proposed Lot 1 (1469 m²) and proposed Lot 2 (655 m²), as identified in attachment 12.1, subject to;
 - a. All the existing structures maintain appropriate setbacks to the proposed boundary.
 - b. The proposed Lot 2 being connected to sewer via an easement, negating the need for the 1m access to the rear of the property.

CARRIED 7/0

For: Cr Boehme, Cr Billing, Cr Crook, Cr Madigan, Cr Manning, Cr O'Neill, Cr Van Der Merwe

Against:

13. OFFICER'S REPORTS – INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

13.1 Crooks Road Speed Limit

<h2>Infrastructure</h2>		
Responsible Officer:	Craig Watts, CEO	
Author:	As Above	
File Reference:	Nil	
Disclosure of Interest:	The Author/Responsible Officer declare that they do not have any conflicts of interest in relation to this item.	
Attachments:	Nil	

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

For Council to consider submitting a request to Main Roads WA seeking to reduce the speed limit on Crooks Road, Merredin to 80 kilometres per hour.

Background

The Shire has previously applied to the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation to seek a vegetation clearance permit for the northern side of Crooks Road however this has stalled. To minimise mature tree loss, the road design has been realigned to limit the need to remove trees and negate the requirement for a vegetation clearance permit.

Due to a concern being raised by Councillors, the Shire Administration has reassessed the northern entry to the rail crossing on Crooks Road, as well as a tree located on the western side of the road, approximately 500 metres from the Great Eastern Highway intersection.

Comment

The Shire Administration has sought further clarification from the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation in relation to potential exemptions from the requirement for a vegetation clearance permit. Applying the Departments "Guide to the exemption for clearing native vegetation for maintenance in existing transport corridors", this can be utilised for the tree which is blocking sight lines to the road rail intersection and associated safety warning lights to minimise danger and accidents to road users.

However, these same exemptions cannot be utilised for the tree located 500 metres from the Great Eastern Highway intersection. Once constructed, the road will be widened to 8 metres, with the road edge will be approximately 500mm from the tree. Currently the road has no

speed limit restrictions in place (110 km/h), however, to improve safety to road users and address the interaction between roadside vegetation, road geometry and speed, it is proposed to reduce the speed limit along the road to 80 km/h.

Even with the safety improvements to Crooks Road currently underway, the 110 km/h limit creates a disparity between driver expectations and the road conditions, especially for heavy vehicles. These safety risks include increased likelihood of run off road crashes involving fixed objects (ie trees), increased crash severity due to immovable roadside hazards, and reduced reaction time when encountering slow moving agricultural machinery.

Reducing the speed limit to 80 km/h is expected to have the following benefits and provide a proportionate safety treatment:

- An 80 km/h speed environment aligns more closely with the existing road geometry, formation width, and roadside hazards.
- Reduced speeds significantly decrease the severity of run-off-road crashes involving trees.
- Improved driver response times and braking distances in constrained environments.
- Compliance with Main Road’s WA safety principles, recognising that roads with unforgiving roadsides should operate at lower speeds.
- A cost-effective and immediate risk mitigation measure compared with major reconstruction or extensive vegetation clearing.

The Shire does not have the authority to permanently amend the speed limit on the road, however, can request Main Roads restrict the speed limit on the road. To support the request, Council is requested to consider and endorse the officer’s recommendation.

Consultation

Councillor/Officer Consultation

The safety of Crooks Road has been discussed with Councillors at previous briefings with the original intent to remove potentially hazardous trees from the road edge.

Community Consultation

The Shire Administration has contacted both CBH and TransPlus to seek their comment on the proposed changes. CBH has indicated support for a lower speed limit to support road user safety. TransPlus have indicated that they support a lower speed limit and confirmed that their drivers are directed not to exceed 60km/h on Crooks Road.

Policy Implications

There are no policy implications.

Statutory Implications

Speed limits and corresponding signage must be set in accordance with the Road Traffic Act and Road Traffic Code 2000, and applicable reference documents including Australian Standards (including AS 1742.4), Austroads Guidance (including the Austroads Guides to Traffic Management and Road Safety), International Standards, and other Main Roads Policies, Supplements and Operational Documents.

Strategic Implications

- Theme: 6 Transport and Networks
- Strategic Objective: 6.1 Maintain safe and efficient sealed road and transport networks, together with supporting infrastructure within the Shire of Merredin.
- Priority Actions: 6.1.4.3 Install and maintain appropriate signage to provide for safe traffic movements.

Sustainability Implications

There is no impact on capacity, resourcing or asset management to carry out the Officer's recommendation.

Risk Implications

There is a health risk associated with this Item as the current speed rating of the road, together with the vegetation presents a significant crash risk resulting in serious injury or worse. The risk rating is considered to be High (15), which is determined by a likelihood of Possible (3) and a consequence of Catastrophic (5). This risk will be reduced by the adoption of the Officer's Recommendation.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this report including within the Long-Term Financial Plan. Any new signage and trimming of vegetation will be captured within the Crooks Road safety improvement budget.

Voting Requirements

- Simple Majority Absolute Majority

Resolution

Moved: Cr Van Der Merwe Seconded: Cr Madigan

83725 That Council SUPPORT the reduction in speed limit on Crooks Road, Merredin from 110km/h to 80km/h.

CARRIED 7/0

For: Cr Boehme, Cr Billing, Cr Crook, Cr Madigan, Cr Manning, Cr O'Neill, Cr Van Der Merwe

Against:

14. OFFICER'S REPORTS – CORPORATE SERVICES

14.1 Statement of Financial Activity – December 2025

<h2>Corporate Services</h2>		
Responsible Officer:	Leah Boehme, EMCS	
Author:	As Above	
File Reference:	Nil	
Disclosure of Interest:	The Author/Responsible Officer declare that they do not have any conflicts of interest in relation to this item.	
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 December 2025 and be advised of associated financial matters.

Background

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

Comment

Statement of Financial Activity

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

Consultation

Councillor/Officer Consultation

No Councillor or Officer consultation is required.

Community Consultation

No community consultation is required.

Policy Implications

There are no policy implications.

Statutory Implications

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

Strategic Implications

∅ Council Plan 2025-2035

Theme: 4 Communication and Leadership

Strategic Objective: 4.8 Financial Management

Priorities Actions: 4.8.1 Maintain strong fiscal and financial management of Council's budget

Sustainability Implications

∅ Strategic Resource Plan

There is no impact on capacity, resourcing or asset management to carry out the Officer's recommendation.

Risk Implications

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

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

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

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

The establishment of control measures through a series of efficient systems, policies and procedures, which fall under the responsibility of the CEO as laid out in the *Local Government (Financial Management Regulations) 1996* regulation 5, seek to mitigate the possibility of this occurring.

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

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

Financial Implications

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

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Absolute Majority

Resolution

Moved: Cr Billing

Seconded:

Cr O'Neill

83726

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

CARRIED 7/0

For: Cr Boehme, Cr Billing, Cr Crook, Cr Madigan, Cr Manning, Cr O'Neill, Cr Van Der Merwe

Against:

14.2 List of Accounts Paid – December 2025

<h3>Corporate Services</h3>		
Responsible Officer:	Leah Boehme, EMCS	
Author:	As above	
File Reference:	Nil	
Disclosure of Interest:	The Author/ Responsible Officer declare that they do not have any conflicts of interest in relation to this item.	
Attachments:	Attachment 14.2A - Payments Listing December 2025	

Purpose of Report

Executive Decision

Legislative Requirement

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

Background

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

Comment

Nil

Consultation

Councillor/Officer Consultation

No Councillor or Officer consultation is required.

Community Consultation

No community consultation is required.

Policy Implications

There are no policy implications.

Statutory Implications

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

14.3 Corporate Governance Framework

<h2>Corporate Services</h2>		
Responsible Officer:	Craig Watts, CEO	
Author:	Leah Boehme, EMCS	
File Reference:	Nil	
Disclosure of Interest:	The Author and Responsible Officer declare that they do not have any conflicts of interest in relation to this item.	
Attachments:	Attachment 14.3A – Shire of Merredin Corporate Governance Framework	

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

For Council to consider a newly developed Corporate Governance Framework for the Shire.

Background

Governance is an important concept that impacts on all parts of the Shire and all sectors of the community. The practice of good governance is increasingly seen as critical for ensuring that:

- the Shire meets legal and ethical compliance
- decisions are made in the interests of stakeholders and the broader community; and
- the Shire behaves as a good corporate citizen should.

The principles and practices of good governance plot the specific processes of decision-making, and the processes by which the Shire is directed, controlled and held to account. Good governance ensures that the Shire is able to manage its many complex responsibilities effectively in the best interests of the entire community.

For an organisation to demonstrate good governance, there needs to be a clear understanding about its strategic direction, management responsibility and accountability. The Shire's *Governance Framework* has been developed to set out these matters as well as the roles of elected members and the organisation, and their interdependent relationships, along with the financial, legal and ethical considerations required to provide good governance.

The Shire's framework consists of four key principles required to achieve excellence in governance:

- Vision and Culture;

- Roles and relationships;
- Decision-making and management; and
- Accountability.

The Executive Officer drafted the Governance Framework over several months prior to taking extended leave. She sought best practice examples from a number of Local Governments as part of the development process. The draft was then passed to the Executive Manager Corporate Services for review and finalisation.

Due to competing priorities this review was completed in December 2025. The document was then sent through to the Chief Executive Officer for final review prior to presenting to Council for adoption.

Comment

There are a range of benefits that can be achieved from the development and implementation of an effective Corporate Governance Framework including:

- providing clear guidelines for the roles of the Council, Elected Members and the CEO, ensuring that all responsibilities are properly allocated, and performance expectations are well understood;
- enshrining best practice in relation to processes (which are relevant to the elected Council body);
- assisting the Shire in delivering good governance;
- ensuring legal and ethical compliance;
- influencing processes throughout the organisation by setting guidelines for strategic planning at all levels; and
- assisting as an induction tool for new elected members and employees.

The Shire's Corporate Governance Framework will assist elected members and employees to understand the increasing governance demands that are placed on them within the local government industry. The framework also communicates to the community the governance arrangements in place to ensure the Shire is performing at an optimum level and making progress towards its strategic goals.

It is necessary that the framework is reviewed on a regular basis, thereby ensuring the document remains relevant to the current operations of the Shire and the legal framework in which it operates.

Consultation

Councillor/Officer Consultation

The Executive Officer, Chief Executive Officer and Executive Manager Corporate Services developed this Framework in consultation.

Community Consultation

No Community or Councillor consultation was required.

Policy Implications

There are no policy implications.

Statutory Implications

As outlined in the *Local Government Act 1995* and associated regulations.

Strategic Implications

∅ Council Plan 2025-2035

Theme: 4 Communication and Leadership

Strategic Objective: 4.2 Provide accountable leadership, transparent decision making and good governance.

Priorities Actions: 4.2.1 Support the Shire President and Councillors by working in partnership with the Executive to deliver leadership and oversight of the Shire, providing advice, information and guidance to support sound, informed decision making.

Sustainability Implications

➤ Strategic Resource Plan

There is no impact on capacity, resourcing or asset management to carry out the Officer's recommendation.

Risk Implications

There is a compliance risk associated with this Item. 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

There are no financial implications associated with this report including within the Long-Term Financial Plan.

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority Absolute Majority

Resolution

Moved: Cr Madigan Seconded: Cr Billing

83728 That Council **ADOPTS** the Shire of Merredin Corporate Governance Framework, as presented in Attachment 14.3A.

CARRIED 7/0

For: Cr Boehme, Cr Billing, Cr Crook, Cr Madigan, Cr Manning, Cr O'Neill, Cr Van Der Merwe

Against:

15. OFFICER'S REPORTS – COMMUNITY SERVICES

Nil

16. OFFICER’S REPORTS – ADMINISTRATION

16.1 SEGRA Summit 2026

<h1>Administration</h1> 	
Responsible Officer:	Craig Watts, CEO
Author:	As Above
File Reference:	Nil
Disclosure of Interest:	The Author/Responsible Officer declare that they do not have any conflicts of interest in relation to this item.
Attachments:	Nil

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

For Council to consider the attendance of Councillors, and confirm any other attendees, as a delegates at the SEGRA National Regional and Economic Development Summit, taking place in Lithgow, New South Wales on 24 – 26 March 2026.

Background

The 2026 SEGRA Summit will be held at Lithgow, NSW on Tuesday, 24 March to Thursday, 26 March 2026 which comprises keynote speakers, “SEGTALKS” and site tours. The Summit commences at midday with a choice of site tours with the focus being First Nations, Heritage, Industry or Tourism.

The Summit’s Wednesday program commences with a morning session of keynote speakers followed by four streams of SEGTALKS. These are short and sharp case study presentations from across rural Australia that aim to share knowledge, learnings and the ‘how to’ of driving improvement and change, including Q&A time. Four themes to choose from: technology applications in regional development, community and economic transition, repurposing community assets and community leadership. The day concludes with a networking dinner.

The Thursday program commences with Big Ideas for Rural Australia panel, followed by a choice of workshops: future-ready rural workforces, unlocking underused assets, navigating uncertainty and resistance, and planning that supports economic self-determination.

Comment

Cr Renee Manning has expressed an interest in attending the SEGRA Summit, however has had to withdraw due to conflicting commitments.

There is a budget allocated for Elected Member training and expenses (Members – Training and Development; 2040104), and travel (Members – Travel and Accommodation; 2040109) which will meet the costs associated with sending up to two (2) Councillors to the Summit.

Should Council wish to send an additional attendees, the associated costs could be met within the available budget, depending on the number of extra representatives that may be supported.

The Shire has previously sent Executive Staff members to attend the SEGRA Summit (Executive Manager Strategy and Community in 2024). The Shire Administration is intending to send the Executive Manager Corporate Services to the 2026 Summit. This is subject to a separate budget (Administration – Training and Development; 2140204), and as this involves travel interstate requires Council approval.

In terms of the value, the Summit will provide benefit to those attending by exploring how communities are navigating transition, building resilience and creating new economic opportunities. Several of the SEGTALK sessions are applicable to the Shire of Merredin, in terms of renewable energy projects, economic effects of Rural Health, regenerative agriculture and the circular economy, community connection, and supporting and enhancing community lead projects.

Consultation

Councillor/Officer Consultation

Details of the conference and program have been circulated to Councillors. The Shire Administration is intending to send the Executive Manager Corporate Services to attend the Summit also.

Community Consultation

No community consultation is required.

Policy Implications

Under the current Policy (1.20 – Councillor Training and Professional Development Policy), should Elected Members wish to attend an interstate conference, an Elected Member is required to submit a request to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), and a Council report will be prepared to consider the request. This policy also details payments for flights, accommodation and incidentals.

Additionally, unless resolved by Council, a maximum of two Councillor delegates can attend any interstate event.

Staff Policy 1.4 (Conferences, Seminars and Training Courses – General Staff Attendance) requires any attendance a conference or seminar held outside the state of Western Australia be approved by Council.

Statutory Implications

There are no statutory implications.

Strategic Implications

Theme:	4 Communication and Leadership
Strategic Objective:	4.2 Provide accountable leadership, transparent decision making and good governance. 4.6 Provide as safe, healthy and inclusive workplace to attract and retain staff.
Priority Actions:	4.6.1 Enhance the performance, capabilities and skills of our staff members through targeted learning and development strategies to meet the needs of our community and our strategic objectives

Sustainability Implications

There is no impact on capacity, resourcing or asset management to carry out the Officer's recommendation.

Risk Implications

There is a reputational risk associated with this Item because if representatives do not attend, the Shire may miss important information and opportunities to draw the maximum the benefit to the community, while supporting renewable energy projects within the District. The attendance supports maintaining a positive reputation of Council within the community and with stakeholders. 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 costs associated with flights, conference attendance, accommodation and incidentals can be met within existing and draft budget allocations. It is expected that this will be in the order of \$3,500 per attendee.

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Resolution

Moved: Cr Van Der Merwe

Seconded:

Cr Boehme

That Council:

83729

- 1) APPROVE the attendance of Cr Billing at the 2026 SEGRA Summit; and
- 2) APPROVE the attendance of the Executive Manager Corporate Services at the 2026 SEGRA Summit.

CARRIED 7/0

For: Cr Boehme, Cr Billing, Cr Crook, Cr Madigan, Cr Manning, Cr O'Neill, Cr Van Der Merwe

Against:

17. MOTIONS OF WHICH PREVIOUS NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

Nil

18. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF WHICH DUE NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

Nil

19. URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE PERSON PRESIDING OR BY DECISION

Nil

20. MATTERS BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

Nil

21. CLOSURE

There being no further business, the President thanked those in attendance and declared the meeting closed at 5:17pm.

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