

# Notice of Meeting



Dear President and Councillors,

The next Ordinary Meeting of the Council of the Shire of Merredin will be held on Tuesday, 24 March 2026 in the Council Chambers, corner of King and Barrack Streets, Merredin. The format of the day will be:

3:00pm Briefing Session

5:00pm Council Meeting

CRAIG WATTS  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
20 March 2026

## 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	
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
WAEC	Western Australian Electoral Commission
WALGA	Western Australian Local Government Association
WEROC	Wheatbelt East Regional Organisation of Councils



## March Ordinary Council Meeting

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Shire of Merredin  
Ordinary Council Meeting  
5:00pm Tuesday, 24 March 2026.



**1. OFFICIAL OPENING**

*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 H Billing	via Teams
Cr P Boehme	
Cr P Madigan	
Cr L O'Neill	
Cr P Van Der Merwe	

**Staff:**

C Watts	CEO
L Boehme	EMCS – via Teams
C Brindley-Mullen	SCEM
M Hussey	EO

**Members of the Public:**

**Apologies:**

**Approved Leave of Absence:**

*Cr Billing and Mrs Boehme's attendance via Teams was approved by the Shire President in advance in accordance with Regulation 14C.2(b) of the Local Government (Administration) Amendment Regulations 2022.*

**3. ELECTION OF THE DEPUTY PRESIDENT**

Administration



Responsible Officer:

Craig Watts, CEO

Author:	As Above
Disclosure of Interest:	The Author declares 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 elect a new Deputy Shire President (DSP).

### Background

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) received the formal resignation of Deputy Shire President Councillor Renee Manning confirming her last day in the role as being Tuesday 10 March 2026. The Department of Local Government, Industrial Relations and Safety has been notified of the resignation.

### Comment

The resignation of Councillor Manning leaves both a vacancy within Council and the position of the DSP. The WAEC has been contacted to arrange for an extraordinary election to fill the vacancy.

The *Local Government Act 1995* (the Act) includes provisions for the election of a new DSP where an extraordinary vacancy occurs. The election of a new DSP is required to be the first matter dealt with at the council meeting following the resignation. A Special Council meeting is not required to be called as the March Ordinary Council Meeting will be within three (3) week deadline for the election of a DSP.

Schedule 2.3, Division 2 of the Act requires that an election be conducted for the position of DSP as the next item of business after the election of the Shire President at the first meeting of Council following an ordinary local government election.

The CEO is to act as Returning Officer for the electoral process.

As of Friday 20 March 2026, the CEO and Shire has received one (1) written nomination for the position of Deputy Shire President. A final call for nominations and closure time will be announced by the CEO during the meeting.

The result will be declared by the CEO. The successful candidate will be called upon to make their declaration of office in accordance with s2.29 of the *Local Government Act 1995* and regulation 13 of the *Local Government (Constitution) Regulations 1998*.

## 4. 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](mailto:ea@merredin.wa.gov.au).

## 5. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

## 6. APPLICATIONS OF LEAVE OF ABSENCE

## 7. PETITIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

## 8. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

8.1 Ordinary Council Meeting held on 24 February 2026 (Attachment 8.1A)

### Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

### Officer's Recommendation

**That the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held 24 February 2026 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.**

## 9. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE PERSON PRESIDING WITHOUT DISCUSSION

## 10. MATTERS FOR WHICH THE MEETING MAY BE CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC

## 11. RECEIPT OF MINUTES OF MEETINGS

11.1 Minutes of the Great Eastern Country Zone Meeting held Thursday 12 February 2026. Attachment 11.1A.

11.2 Minutes of the CEACA Meeting held Monday 16 February 2026. Attachment 11.2A.

11.3 Minutes of the WEROC Board Meeting held Monday 16 February 2026. Attachment 11.3A.

### Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

### Officer's Recommendation

**RECEIVES the minutes of the GECZ Meeting held Tuesday 12 February 2026;**

**RECEIVES the minutes of the CEACA Meeting held Monday 16 February 2026;**

**RECEIVES the minutes of the WEROC Board Meeting held Monday 16 February 2026.**

## **12. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR CONSIDERATION**

NIL

**13. OFFICER'S REPORTS – DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**


NIL

**14. OFFICER'S REPORTS – INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES**

NIL

## 15. OFFICER'S REPORTS – CORPORATE SERVICES

### 15.1 Statement of Financial Activity – February 2026

<h2>Corporate Services</h2>		
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Leah Boehme, EMCS	
<b>Author:</b>	As Above	
<b>File Reference:</b>	Nil	
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	The Author/ Responsible Officer declare that they do not have any conflicts of interest in relation to this item.	
<b>Attachments:</b>	Attachment 15.1A – Statement of Financial Activity Attachment 15.1B – Detailed Statements Attachment 15.1C – Capital Works Progress Attachment 15.1D – 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 February 2026 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

#### Officer's Recommendation

**That Council RECEIVE the Statements of Financial Activity and Investment Report for the period ending 28 February 2026 in accordance with Regulation 34 of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996.**

## 15.2 List of Accounts Paid – February 2026

<h3>Corporate Services</h3> 	
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Leah Boehme, EMCS
<b>Author:</b>	As above
<b>File Reference:</b>	Nil
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	The Author/ Responsible Officer declare that they do not have any conflicts of interest in relation to this item.
<b>Attachments:</b>	Attachment 15.2A - Payments Listing February 2026

### Purpose of Report

Executive Decision

Legislative Requirement

For Council to receive the schedule of accounts paid for the month of February 2026.

### Background

The attached list of accounts paid during the month of February 2026, 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*.

### 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

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 February 2026 as listed, covering cheques, EFT's, directly debited payments and wages, as numbered and totaling \$984,842.02 from the Merredin Shire Council Municipal bank account and \$0 from the Merredin Shire Council Trust bank account.**

### 15.3 Budget Review 2 – March 2026

<h2>Corporate Services</h2>		 SHIRE OF <b>MERREDIN</b> INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Leah Boehme, EMCS	
<b>Author:</b>	As above	
<b>File Reference:</b>	Nil	
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	The Author/Responsible Officer declare that they do not have any conflicts of interest in relation to this item.	
<b>Attachments:</b>	Attachment 15.3A – Statutory Budget Review 2025.26	

#### Purpose of Report

Executive Decision

Legislative Requirement

For Council to consider budget amendments proposed as part of the statutory budget review. The review is based on the year-to-date budget figures as at 28 February 2026.

#### Background

Regulation 33A of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* provides that the Council is required to conduct a review of its approved annual budget after considering the changes in its operating environment since the beginning of the financial year, with a view to forecasting the financial impacts likely to arise for the remainder of the year. This is required to be completed between 1 January and the last day of March in each financial year.

#### Comment

Council is required to consider the submitted budget review and make a determination in relation to the outcomes and recommendations.

The review of the 2025/26 Annual Budget has been completed. A number of variations to existing budget allocations have been identified and included in the revised budget, which can be found in Attachment 15.3A.

It should be noted that actual costs presented in this document are representative of February 2026 end of month figures.

#### Issues and options considered.

The budget review has comprised of:

- a review of the adopted budget and an assessment of actual income and expenditure to date against that budget;
- an assessment and projection of likely results over the remainder of the financial year against the adopted budget; and
- consideration of any issues not provided for in the current adopted budget that may need to be addressed.

The review of the adopted budget has taken into account what has transpired in the first two-thirds of the financial year, the likely operating environment over the remaining part of the year, and the most likely impact on the Council's financial position.

The focus of this review has been on ensuring that there is sufficient operational capacity to deliver the services, projects and budgeted programs as set out in the adopted 2025/26 Annual Budget and to accommodate events and issues that have arisen since budget adoption.

The most significant variations between the original adopted budget and the revised budget are as follows:

### **Surplus Brought Forward**

The actual surplus brought forward from 2024/25 was confirmed at \$5,502,688, a \$67,086 increase on the figure used during Budget Review 1.

### **Administration Allocation**

The Shire is currently in the process of upgrading its Enterprise Resource Planning software. During Budget Review 1, \$560,000 was budgeted as a capital expenditure in readiness for the upcoming migration, however final quotes have come in at \$450,000. The Shire have also been advised by the auditors that this should be recorded as an operational, rather than capital expense due to the nature of Software as a Service (SaaS) system. Moving this expense into the Function 14 'ADMIN' accounts has meant that a review of the Shire's Administration Allocated throughout the budget was necessary.

### **Public Works Overheads (PWO)**

The decision to reduce the Town Maintenance team by two staff members and replace these with contractors required a full review of the outside workforce salaries and wages, as well as the related on-costs. The Executive Manager Infrastructure Services vacancy also made a significant difference to the total PWO requiring allocation throughout the budget.

### **Plant on-costs**

In 2023/24, plant costs were not being accurately costed out throughout the year – resulting in a large under allocation throughout the budget. At the time, the former Executive Manager Engineering Services reviewed the plant charge out rates (cost per hour for a mower/ute/digger/grader/loader etc) and asked the finance team to update these in the finance system to correct this issue. During 2024/25 cost out of plant was still lower than it needed to be, so the finance team met with the Works and Services Manager and supervisors of both outdoor teams and stressed that they should not be approving time sheets that didn't have plant allocated. The team have been completing this more consistently in 2025/26, which has resulted in an over allocation – rather than an under allocation. To rectify this for 2026/27, a reduction in the plant charge out rates will be required.

### **Salaries and Wages**

A review of the salaries and wages throughout the internal staff was also undertaken, with a significant decrease in required funds due to a number of long-term vacancies across the organisation throughout the financial year. This includes the Environmental Health Officer (vacant for the entire financial year), Sport and Recreation Coordinator (vacant for five months), Theatre Coordinator (vacant for two and a half months), HR Manager (vacant for the entire financial year), Administration Officer (vacant for three months) and Asset Management and Infrastructure Officer (vacant for three months).

### **Insurances**

The Shire is not provided with actual insurance costs until after adoption of the Annual Budget each year. To develop the budget, previous year charges are considered, with a best guess percentage increase applied. As actual figures have been received and all invoices paid, all insurance charges throughout the budget have been amended to match the actual cost. This effects all buildings, houses, employee cost accounts (workers compensation insurance charges) and insurance charges in the General Administration Overheads and Plant Operating Costs areas.

### **Operating Income and Expenditure**

Throughout the budget, a range of amendments are proposed. The key items of note are presented below.

#### *Income*

- *All income accounts have been adjusted to reflect the actual income received and predictions on income to be received to 30 June 2026.*
- *Reserve fund interest has been decreased in line with actuals received and predicted monthly amounts for the remainder of the financial year. This has also resulted in a small decrease in the transfer of reserve interest to the four identified reserves.*
- *Municipal fund interest has been increased in line with actuals received and predicted monthly amounts for the remainder of the financial year. These funds have supported the extra reserve funds budgeted.*
- *The \$450,000 budgeted to be drawn down from the Information Communication Technology Reserve to fund the majority of the proposed ERP upgrade has been reduced to \$300,000 due to the project cost being less than originally budgeted.*

#### *Expenditure*

- *Transfers to Reserve have increased by a total of \$525,000.*  
*This includes:*
  - *\$100,000 into the plant replacement reserve*
  - *\$12,000 into the Building Reserve*
  - *\$48,850 into the recreation reserve*
  - *\$273,850 into the housing reserve*
  - *\$100,000 into the swimming pool reserve*

*Due to a decrease in predicted reserve account interest, the IT reserve transfer was reduced by \$8550, and the Building Recreation and Housing reserve transfers were each reduced by \$1,150.*

- *The Bush Fire Brigade and State Emergency Services expense accounts have been increased due to larger than predicted operational spend. This was mainly due to significant maintenance and servicing costs of the fleet. It is anticipated that this overspend will be repaid to the Shire by DFES in the 2026/27 financial year.*

- *Both the SENIORS and REC loan interest accounts have been increased to cover the costs of the loan guarantee fees payable to WA Treasury. Original budgets accounted for the interest repayments only.*
- *All expense accounts related to Merrittville have been decreased due to the Shire management of the asset occurring later than initially planned.*
- *2080492 SENIORS – Depreciation has been decreased due to the decision not to add Merrittville to the Shire’s asset register until the new financial year.*
- *The Other Housing area has increased by overall. This is due to some slightly higher than expected utility bills, and some larger maintenance items being required.*
- *W0075 Merredin Landfill Site has been reduced. This is mainly due to a decrease to plant usage charges. This is a result of engaging a contractor to complete earth moving requirements at the landfill site. There has also been a decrease to PWO allocation, due to a reduction in outside staff wages. Cleaner wages are being costed to this account, however they do not include on costs.*
- *2100711 – COM AMEN – Cemetery Burials has increased due to actual charges year to date. This has been due to more burials occurring and also due to the increase to PWO allocation.*
- *The Public Halls and Civic Centre area has increased overall. This is due to some slightly higher than expected utility bills, and some larger maintenance items being required, particularly at Muntadgin Hall. Insurance costs for the North Merredin PS Precinct have also been moved to this area of the budget as they were previously costed to a different area.*
- *2110365 – REC – Parks and Gardens Maintenance/ Operations has increased. Though wages in this area have been reduced to balance out contractor costs and water costs have also been reduced in line with actual year to date spend, increase were required to materials and contracts due to the engagement of a contractor for mowing and the high cost of replacement parts required for the reticulation system. Installation charges for new playgrounds at Upper and Lower French Avenue parks have also been costed here. New insurance charges have also been incurred due to the completion of Town Centre and Apex Park. These are also costed to this area.*
- *The disposal of the MRCLC lawn bowling green from the Shire’s Asset Register reflected a loss.*
- *W0040 – Military Museum Building Maintenance has been increased due to works required on the drainage system.*
- *‘Built up areas’ and ‘Sealed outside BUA’ road maintenance accounts have been reduced to reflect staff time being spent on capital projects, particularly Crooks Road and Chandler-Merredin Road.*
- *There has been a small increase to the ‘Gravel outside BUA’ account due to the increase of PWO and plant costs.*
- *There has also been an increase to ‘Formed outside BUA’ road maintenance. Though wage costs have been decreased, PWO allocation and Plant costs have increased.*
- *W0262 – Stand Pipes has been increased due to actual water bills received for the year to date. Stand Pipe Income has also been increased, however the Shire’s use of these stand pipes for our road projects causes the difference between the income and expenditure.*
- *ADMIN – Employee Costs has been reduced to reflect vacancies across the organisation throughout the year.*
- *A new job has been created for the ERP System upgrade (W0067) within the General Administration Overheads area.*

- *PWO – Employee Costs has been reduced to represent the Executive Manager vacancy.*
- *PWO – Sick Pay, Annual Leave and Personal Leave accounts have been reduced due to the removal of two Town Maintenance officer positions.*

### **Capital Expenditure**

Capital expenditure has various proposed amendments, the main items are outlined below:

- *BC001 – Administration Building – Building (Capital) has been decreased due to the quote for replacement of carpet coming in under budget.*
- *4080410 SENIORS – Building (Capital) has been reduced due to the Shire not anticipating the need for capital works at Merrittville prior to 30 June. However, some funds have been retained in case of urgent works being required.*
- *The kitchen renovation at 9 Cummings Crescent has been delayed to 2026/27.*
- *BC005 Old Administration Building – Building (Capital) has been reduced due to quotes for replacement of carpet coming in under budget.*
- *Funds budgeted for repair of shade sails at North Merredin PS were moved to maintenance as the cost was under \$5,000.*
- *Funds been added to BC020 Swimming Pool – Building (Capital) to enable the re-keying of the facility. Quotes are still to be received and the cost may vary.*
- *Funds earmarked for the purchase of the pool cleaner have been moved to operational due to the cost of each unit being under \$5,000.*
- *Funds in SWIM AREAS – Plant & Equipment (Capital) – have been split with a portion moved to slide and chemical dosing system jobs.*
- *Funds for the replacement of the softfall at the MRCLC have been moved from the REC – Building (Capital) account to job PC043 – Replace Softfall MRCLC Playground.*
- *Funds budgeted for works to the Hydrotherapy pool have been reduced as the cost for works was less than anticipated with the heat pump being fixed under warranty.*
- *New tables for Cummins Theatre were purchased at slightly less than the anticipated budget.*
- *Hines Hill North Culvert works were completed at slightly less than was budgeted.*
- *A decision has been made to utilise available Roads to Recovery funding to complete works on Booran South, Burracoppin South and Woodward Roads, rather than the total being expended on Woodward Road.*
- *Funds allocated for kerbing works have been moved to footpaths, with the individual footpaths and their quoted prices being included.*
- *Funds have been allocated for the installation of a new swipe card system on a Shire standpipe.*
- *Funds budgeted for the implementation of a new ERP system have been moved from Capital to Operational expenditure.*

## **Consultation**

### **Councillor/Officer Consultation**

Executive Staff provided input into the review. Councillors were briefed on the proposed changes prior to the Council meeting and were given the opportunity to ask questions and suggest changes if required.

### **Community Consultation**

Community consultation was not required.

### Policy Implications

The following policies apply:

- 3.12 - Purchasing Policy
- 3.18 - Financial Reserves
- 3.19 - Community Funding

### Statutory Implications

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

#### *Section 33A. Review of budget*

*(1) Between 1 January and the last day of February in each financial year a local government is to carry out a review of its annual budget for that year.*

*(2A) The review of an annual budget for a financial year must —*

*(a) consider the local government's financial performance in the period beginning on 1 July and ending no earlier than 31 December in that financial year; and*

*(b) consider the local government's financial position as at the date of the review; and*

*(c) review the outcomes for the end of that financial year that are forecast in the budget.*

*(d) include the following —*

*(i) the annual budget adopted by the local government;*

*(ii) an update of each of the estimates included in the annual budget;*

*(iii) the actual amounts of expenditure, revenue and income as at the date of the review;*

*(iv) adjacent to each item in the annual budget adopted by the local government that states an amount, the estimated end-of-year amount for the item.*

*(2) The review of an annual budget for a financial year must be submitted to the council on or before 31 March in that financial year.*

*(3) A council is to consider a review submitted to it and is to determine\* whether to adopt the review, any parts of the review or any recommendations made in the review.*

*\*Absolute majority required.*

*(4) Within 14 days after a council has made a determination, a copy of the review and determination is to be provided to the Department.*

*[Regulation 33A inserted in Gazette 31 Mar 2005 p. 1048-9; amended: Gazette 20 Jun 2008 p. 2723-4; SL 2023/106 r. 18.]*

### 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 as the proposed changes are within the Shire's available resources.

### 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 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

Suggested amendments to the 25/26 Annual Budget, as outlined in Attachment 15.3A.

### Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Absolute Majority


### Officers Recommendation

That Council;

1. **APPROVES** the review of the 2025/26 Annual Budget (Budget Review 2) as at 28 February 2026;
2. **AUTHORISES** the recommended budget amendments, as detailed in Attachment 15.3A; and
3. **PROVIDES** a copy of the 2025/26 Annual Budget Review 2 to the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety, in accordance with Regulation 33A of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*.

**16. OFFICER’S REPORTS – COMMUNITY SERVICES**

**16.1 Pioneer Pathways – Future Options**

<h2 style="margin: 0;">Community Services</h2> 	
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Codi Brindley-Mullen EMS&C
<b>Author:</b>	As above
<b>File Reference:</b>	ED/3/5
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	The Author/Responsible Officer declare that they do not have any conflicts of interest in relation to this item.
<b>Attachments:</b>	Attachment 16.1A – 2026 Pioneers Pathways Advisory Group – Future Options Analysis

**Purpose of Report**

- Executive Decision
  Legislative Requirement

For Council to consider the future of Pioneer Pathways Advisory Group.

**Background**

The Pioneers’ Pathway Advisory Group was established in the late 1990s to provide a coordinated governance and delivery framework for the development, promotion and stewardship of the Pioneers’ Pathway Self Drive Trail, from the administration a regional heritage tourism route connecting communities from Toodyay to Merredin. The partnership was formalised through successive Memorandums of Understanding (MOU), with the current draft 2024 - 2027 MOU committing Member Councils to collectively invest \$72,000 over the three (3) year term, alongside substantial in-kind contributions including staff time, infrastructure maintenance, marketing support and tourism development activities.

The Advisory Group was intended to provide strategic leadership, oversee delivery of marketing and product development initiatives, source external funding and maximise the economic return from regional tourism. However, changes in membership and resourcing have altered the operating environment, with the Shire of Trayning withdrawing from the partnership in 2021 and the Shire of Toodyay withdrawing in 2024, reducing both financial contributions and regional representation.

Current annual operational funding of approximately \$17,500 from remaining Member Councils is largely absorbed by essential coordination and marketing costs, including approximately \$12,000 per annum for Executive Officer marketing support, leaving limited capacity for new project delivery or strategic development. With no MOU currently executed

with the recent withdrawal of the Shire of Toodyay it is a timely opportunity to review the effectiveness, structure and future role of the Advisory Group to ensure the Pioneers' Pathway remains a sustainable, relevant and strategically managed regional tourism asset.

### Comment

PP Advisory Group current challenges identified:

- Lack of clearly defined purpose and measurable outcomes
- Limited funding and resourcing to implement meaningful projects
- Inconsistent attendance and engagement from member Councils
- Limited dedicated project coordination or delivery capacity
- Unclear alignment between marketing, asset development and tourism strategy

In its current form, the Advisory Group is not considered sustainable and cannot continue operating as it has. Over the past 12 months, activity has been largely limited to marketing, with little capacity to progress strategic or infrastructure-based projects due to not securing external grant funding.

The Administration acknowledges there remains a clear opportunity in heritage tourism, with the Pioneers' Pathway offering a valuable framework to tell local stories and connect communities. Significant investment has already been made in signage and interpretation across the trail, and it is important this is not lost.

The Administration consider that all options present some level of merit; however, each is subject to varying degrees of risk, resourcing requirements and long-term sustainability.

Options involving a strengthened or expanded model (Options 1 and 2) may provide improved outcomes but are likely to require increased financial commitment and consistent participation from all member Councils, which is proven difficult to achieve.

Option 3 presents a lower-cost approach that would allow the trail to continue to be marketed; however, there are concerns regarding delivery through an external organisation. The Central Wheatbelt Visitor Centre (CWVC) could potentially undertake this role, though its capacity may be limited given existing commitments, including the Eastern Wheatbelt Self-Drive Trail. There is also a risk that competing priorities may impact the level of focus and resourcing dedicated to the Pioneers' Pathway initially.

Option 4 is not considered viable, as independent management is unlikely to result in a coordinated or equitable regional approach.

### Consultation

#### Councillor/Officer Consultation

Consultation within the Strategy and Community directorate, namely Central Wheatbelt Visitor Centre.

#### Community Consultation

No community consultation is required.

### Policy Implications

NIL

#### Statutory Implications

NIL

#### Strategic Implications

Theme:	2 Economy and Growth
Strategic Objective:	2.2 Tourism Information Services – Support sustainable growth and promotion of tourism within the region and raise awareness of the region through enhance tourism opportunities
Priority Actions:	2.2.3 Provide for an expansion of visitor services and offerings.

#### Sustainability Implications

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

#### Risk Implications

There is a low reputational risk associated with this Item. The risk rating is considered to be Low (3), which is determined by a likelihood of low (1) 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

#### Officer's Recommendation

**That Council SUPPORTS Option 3 as per Attachment 16.1A Pioneer Pathways Future options.**

**17. OFFICER’S REPORTS – ADMINISTRATION**

**17.1 Policy Review – 3.14 Cummings Street Rentals and 8.24 – Restrictive Covenant – Carrington Way Sub-division**

<h2 style="margin: 0;">Administration</h2> 	
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Craig Watts, CEO
<b>Author:</b>	Martina Hussey, EO
<b>File Reference:</b>	Nil
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	The Author and Responsible Officer declare that they do not have any conflicts of interest in relation to this item.
<b>Attachments:</b>	Attachment 17.1A – Policy 3.14 Cummings Street Rentals – tracked changes Attachment 17.1B – Policy 3.14 Cummings Street Rentals – Final Attachment 17.1C – Policy 8.24 – Restrictive Covenant – Carrington Way Sub-division – tracked changes Attachment 17.1D – Policy 8.24 – Restrictive Covenant – Carrington Way Sub-division – Final

**Purpose of Report**

Executive Decision

Legislative Requirement

For Council to consider rescinding the Shire of Merredin’s Policies 3.14 – Cummings Street Rentals and 8.24 – Restrictive Covenant – Carrington Way Sub-division.

**Background**

Shire policies should be reviewed regularly to ensure their accuracy and relevance. These Policies were last reviewed in February 2014 and March 2010 and are overdue for review.

**Comment**

Policy 3.14 Cummings Street Rentals was adopted to regulate determination of rental charges and ensure standardisation of tenancy of the Cummins Street Units, to ensure derived income marches Council’s expenditure and continual infrastructure maintenance objectives and to ensure units are allocated to eligible applicants in accordance with the Department of

Housing and Works Eligibility Policy. The Shire sold the Cummings Street Units and settlement was on 30 June 2025.

Policy 8.24 Restrictive Covenant – Carrington Way Sub-division was adopted so that all applications to establish dwellings on Lots 209 – 216, 229 and 230 Carrington Way, Lots 228, 227, 218 – 226 McGinniss Way and Lots 232 – 237 Cummings Street, Merredin be required to comply with this Policy which satisfies Council’s intention with the requirements for carports and garages under the main roof as described in Clause 1.3c of the Restrictive Covenant. The Restrictive Covenant that was placed on these lots expired on 30 June 2019.

It is proposed to update the Shire’s Policy Manual to show that both of these policies have been rescinded, as shown in Attachments 17.1B and 17.1D.

### Consultation

#### Officer Consultation

The Governance Officer completed the policy reviews.

#### Councillor/ Community Consultation

No Community or Councillor consultation was required.

### Policy Implications

Policies 3.14 and 8.24 will be rescinded.

### Statutory Implications

As outlined in the *Local Government Act 1995* and associated regulations. The role of Council includes to determine the Local Government’s policies.

### 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 as the proposed changes are within the Shire’s available resources.

### Risk Implications

There is a compliance risk associated with this Item as the Shire Administration may unintentionally apply these policies which are no longer applicable. The risk rating is considered to be Low (4), which is determined by a likelihood of Unlikely (2) and a consequence of Minor (2). This risk will be eliminated by the adoption of the Officer's Recommendation.

#### Financial Implications

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

#### Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

#### Officers Recommendation

**That Council RESCINDS Policy 3.14 Cummings Street Rentals and 8.24 Restrictive Covenant – Carrington Way Sub-division and updates the Policy Manual to reflect this.**

## 17.2 Status Report – March 2026

<h1>Administration</h1>		 SHIRE OF <b>MERREDIN</b> INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT
Responsible Officer:	Craig Watts CEO	
Author:	Martina Hussey, EO	
Legislation:	<i>Local Government Act 1995</i>	
File Reference:	Nil	
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil	
Attachments:	Attachment 17.2A – Status Report – March 2026	

### Purpose of Report

Executive Decision

Legislative Requirement

For Council to consider the updated Status Report for March 2026.

### Background

The Status Report is a register of Council Resolutions that are allocated to the Shire of Merredin's (the Shire) Executive Staff for actioning. When the Executive Staff have progressed or completed any action in relation to the Council Resolution, comments are provided until the process is completed or superseded by a further Council Resolution.

### Comment

In the interest of increased transparency and communication with the community and Council, the Status Report is provided for information.

### Consultation

#### Councillor/Officer Consultation

The report has been circulated to ELT members for their review and comment.

#### Community Consultation

No Community Consultation is required.

### Policy Implications

Nil

**Statutory Implications**

Nil

**Strategic Implications**

∅ Council Plan 2025-2035

- Theme: 4 Communication and Leadership
- Strategic Objective: 4.2 Provide accountable leadership, transparent decision making and good governance.
- Priority 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**

Nil

**Risk Implications**

There is a reputational risk associated with this Item, as it may be perceived that the Shire is not acting upon or implementing the decisions of Council. The risk rating is considered to be Low (1), which is determined by a likelihood of Rare (1) and a consequence of Insignificant (1). This risk will be eliminated by the adoption of the Officer's Recommendation.

**Financial Implications**

Nil


**Voting Requirements**

- Simple Majority  Absolute Majority

**Officer's Recommendation**

**That Council RECEIVES the Status Report on Council Resolutions for March 2026.**

### 17.3 Council Plan 2025-2035 – 6 month report

<h2>Administration</h2>		 SHIRE OF <b>MERREDIN</b> INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT
Responsible Officer:	Craig Watts, CEO	
Author:	As above	
File Reference:		
Disclosure of Interest:	The Author declares that they do not have any conflicts of interest in relation to this item.	
Attachments:	Attachment 17.3A – Council Plan Progress Worksheet	

#### Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

For Council to note the progress of actions and priority projects contained within the Council Plan 2025-2035.

#### Background

The Shire of Merredin Council Plan 2025-2035 was endorsed at the August 2025 Ordinary Council Meeting, outlining the long-term priorities, goals, and vision that guide Council's decision-making.

#### Comment

The Council Plan 2025-2035 sets out the vision for the next decade, defining what the Shire aims to achieve and how it will deliver on these commitments to meet the evolving needs of our community over the next 10 years.

As shown in the attached Council Plan Progress Worksheet, the majority of priority projects are underway or are ongoing. In relation to the key advocacy priorities listed within the plan, the following actions have been undertaken:

#### ***Priority 1 – Provision of safer crossing at Great Eastern Highway***

The Shire has been liaising with Main Roads to support the installation of traffic speed devices, including providing traffic count data and pedestrian count data. The Shire has liaised with local Police who confirm that they have undertaken multiple patrols of the area at various times of day and confirm that the majority of drivers (both light vehicles and heavy vehicles) are complying with speed limits.

#### ***Priority 2 – Provision of affordable housing***

The Shire has partnered with WEROC and WDC to investigate and assess housing need and typology. This has resulted in the development of a housing business case to support an application to the Regional Housing Support Fund, together with a draft Town Action Plan which identifies land suitable for development within Merredin. The Governance and Planning Officer is currently reviewing the priority land identified within the Town Action Plan for development.

***Priority 3 – Provision of additional child care services***

The Shire has met with representatives of REED Child Care to discuss options to expand the capacity of the facility in both the short and longer term. The Shire is currently investigating a potential land transfer to enable additional building and carparking adjacent to the current site.

***Priority 4 – Upgrades to recreation facilities***

The Shire has made improvements to the MRCLC sporting areas including installation of a new bowling green, installation of new LED lighting to the outdoor courts, contract awarded for the indoor court flooring, removal of the Peak and Play equipment to facilitate use of the multi-purpose space.

***Priority 5 – Improvement to community connectivity***

Safety upgrades to Chandler-Merredin Road and Crooks Road well underway. Replacement of the Hines Hill North Road culvert completed to maintain safe use of this road. Winter grading of all unsealed roads was completed in 2025.

***Priority 6 – continued support for economic development***

Awaiting endorsement of the Town Planning Scheme Omnibus Amendment by the WAPC before meeting with Development WA to progress industrial land development. The Shire continues to liaise with and support renewable energy projects within the district.

**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**

The Local Government Act 1995 requires all local governments within Western Australia to have an effective 'plan for the future' that is developed using the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IPR) framework. are no statutory implications.

**Strategic Implications**

Theme:

4 Communication and Leadership

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

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 as not informing the public of progress may result in negative sentiment toward the Shire. The risk rating is considered to be Moderate (6), which is determined by a likelihood of Possible (3) and a consequence of Minor (2). This risk will be eliminated by the adoption of the Officer's Recommendation.

#### Financial Implications

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

#### Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

#### Officer's Recommendation

**That Council RECEIVES the Council Plan 2025-2035 – 6 month report.**

## 17.4 Local Government Extraordinary Election 2026

<h1>Administration</h1>		 SHIRE OF <b>MERREDIN</b> INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT
Responsible Officer:	Craig Watts, CEO	
Author:	Craig Watts, CEO	
File Reference:		
Disclosure of Interest:	The Author and Authorising Officer declare that they do not have any conflicts of interest in relation to this item.	
Attachments:	Attachment 17.4A – WA Electoral Commission Cost Estimate Attachment 17.4B – WA Electoral Commission Written Agreement	

### Purpose of Report

Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

For Council to consider the proposal from the Electoral Commissioner to manage the 2026 Local Government Extraordinary Election for the Shire of Merredin (the Shire).

### Background

The resignation of Councillor Manning leaves a vacancy within Council which is required to be filled. The Western Australian Electoral Commission (WAEC) has been contacted to arrange for an extraordinary election to fill the vacancy. They have provided a cost estimate together with the date on which the extraordinary election can be held.

### Comment

The *Local Government Act 1995* (the Act) provides that a Council may decide whether or not to conduct a postal election or hold a voting in person election. If a Council decides to conduct a postal election, the Electoral Commissioner must conduct the election.

The current procedure required by the Act is that the written agreement of the Electoral Commissioner is required prior to the vote by Council being taken. To facilitate the process, the Electoral Commissioner has written to the Shire agreeing to be responsible for the conduct of the extraordinary election on 25 June 2026 for the Shire in accordance with section 4.20(4) of the Act, together with any other elections or polls that may also be required. This agreement is also subject to the proviso that the Shire also wishes to have the election undertaken by the WAEC as a postal election.

The Shire of Merredin Council 2017, 2019, 2021, 2023 and 2025 elections were administered by the Electoral Commissioner and conducted using the postal method.

Elections conducted by the WAEC utilises their resources and expertise in conducting elections and ensures the impartiality and integrity of the election process. The advantages of using the WAEC to conduct the election include:

- A postal ballot has a higher elector turnout;
- It is seen to be independent from Council; and
- It relieves Administration staff of the workload associated with the election process, although some staff may be contracted by the WAEC to assist with the vote counting.

It is therefore proposed that the WAEC again conduct the 2025 Local Government Ordinary Election via postal vote.

### Consultation

#### Councillor/Officer Consultation

No Councillor or Officer consultation is required.

#### Community Consultation

No community consultation is required. Contact has been made with the WAEC to confirm they are able to conduct the election on behalf of the Shire.

### Policy Implications

There are no policy implications.

### Statutory Implications

Sections 4.20(4) and 4.61(2) of the *Local Government Act 1995* apply in appointing the WAEC to conduct the election on behalf of the Shire.

### Strategic Implications

Theme:	4 Communication and Leadership
Strategic Objective:	4.2 Provide accountable leadership, transparent decision making and good governance.
Priority 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

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

### Risk Implications

If the WAEC is not endorsed to undertake the election process, the Shire will need to seek an alternate provider or undertake the election using internal resources. This will impose a burden on the Shire Administration, potentially leading to compliance issues with the electoral process including vote counting via the preferential ballot method. The risk rating is considered to be High (12), which is determined by a likelihood of Likely (4) and a consequence of Moderate (3). This risk will be eliminated by the adoption of the Officer's Recommendation.

#### Financial Implications

The estimated cost for the WAEC to conduct the 2025 election via postal ballot is \$18,000 ex GST based on a single position being filled. The details for the costs involved for the WAEC to run the election can be found in Attachment 17.4A.

#### Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Absolute Majority

#### Officer's Recommendation

**That Council:**

- 1. CONFIRM that an extraordinary election for the vacancy on the Shire of Merredin Council will be held on Thursday, 25 June 2026;**
- 2. DECLARE in accordance with section 4.20(4) of the Local Government Act 1995 the Electoral Commissioner be responsible for the conduct of the 2026 extraordinary election together with any other elections or polls which may be required;**
- 3. DECIDE in accordance with section 4.61(2) of the Local Government Act 1995 that the method of conducting the 2026 extraordinary election be as a postal election; and**
- 4. NOTES the associated costs of conducting the 2026 Extraordinary Election will be included in the 2025/26 Annual Budget review.**


**18. MOTIONS OF WHICH PREVIOUS NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN**

**19. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF WHICH DUE NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN**

**20. URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE PERSON PRESIDING OR BY DECISION**

## 21. MATTERS BEHIND CLOSED DOORS


### 21.1 RFQ11-2025/26 Road Sealing Projects (CONFIDENTIAL)

<h1>Infrastructure</h1>		 SHIRE OF <b>MERREDIN</b> INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT
Responsible Officer:	Craig Watts, CEO	
Author:	Craig Watts, CEO	
File Reference:		
Disclosure of Interest:	The Author and Authorising Officer declare that they do not have any conflicts of interest in relation to this item.	
Attachments:	Attachment 21.1A – Confidential Recommendation Report RFQ11-25.26 Sealing Projects	

This report is confidential as it contains information for a contract which includes the tendered price as per Section 5.23 (4)(c) of the Local Government Act 1995.

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## 21.2 Disposal of Land – Lot 108 (11) Carey Street, Merredin

<h3>Corporate Services</h3>		 SHIRE OF <b>MERREDIN</b> INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Leah Boehme, EMCS	
<b>Author:</b>	As above	
<b>File Reference:</b>	Nil	
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	The Author/Responsible Officer declare that they do not have any conflicts of interest in relation to this item.	
<b>Attachments:</b>	Attachment 21.2A – Offers to Purchase Lot 108 (11) Carey Street, Merredin Attachment 21.2B – Valuation Report Attachment 21.2C – Advertising	

This report is confidential as it contains information relating to the sale of property and includes the potential price as per Section 5.23 (4)(g) of the Local Government Act 1995.

### 21.3 Crooks Road Asphalt Surfacing

## Infrastructure




Responsible Officer:	Craig Watts, CEO
Author:	As above
File Reference:	
Disclosure of Interest:	The Author and Authorising Officer declare that they do not have any conflicts of interest in relation to this item.
Attachments:	Nil

This report is confidential as it contains information for a contract which includes the tendered price as per Section 5.23 (4)(c) of the Local Government Act 1995.

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## 21.4 Endorsement of Senior Employee – Executive Manager Infrastructure Services

<h1>Administration</h1>		 SHIRE OF <b>MERREDIN</b> INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT
Responsible Officer:	Craig Watts, CEO	
Author:	As Above	
File Reference:		
Disclosure of Interest:	The Responsible Officer declares that they do not have any conflicts of interest in relation to this item.	
Attachments:	Attachment 21.4A – Selection Report - Shire of Merredin - Executive Manager Infrastructure Services - Round 2 DRAFT	

This report is confidential as it contains information relating to the employment of a senior staff member as per Section 5.23 (2)(b) of the Local Government Act 1995.

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## 22. CLOSURE

There being no further business, the President thanked those in attendance and declared the meeting closed at \_\_\_pm.

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