

# SHIRE OF MERREDIN



**“Heart of the Wheatbelt”**

**MINUTES OF ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING**

**17 December 2013**

MINUTES OF THE SHIRE OF MERREDIN COUNCIL MEETING HELD  
TUESDAY 17 DECEMBER 2013

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**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Shire of Merredin held in the Council  
Chambers, Corner King and Barrack Streets, Merredin on  
Tuesday 17 December 2013 commencing at 3.01pm.**

**ATTENDANCE:**

Councillors:	KA Hooper	President
	RM Crees	Deputy President
	BJ Anderson	
	CA Blakers	
	JP Flockart	
	DN Hayes-Thompson	
	TS Thomas	
	MD Willis	
	ML Young	
Staff:	G Powell	Chief Executive Officer
	S Lowe	Media and Communication Officer
	J Mitchell	A/Executive Manager of Development Services
	L Wyatt	Executive Assistant to Chief Executive Officer

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**1.0 OFFICIAL OPENING**

The President welcomed everyone and declared the meeting open at 3.01pm.

**2.0 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Nil

**3.0 APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

**81265** Moved: Cr Young                      Seconded: Crees  
***That Councillors Anderson, Hayes-Thompson and Willis be granted leave of absence for the January Ordinary Council meeting.***

**CARRIED 9/0**

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**4.0 DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

Cr Young declared an interest in Item 10.2 as the business is owned by a family member.

**5.0 PETITIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

Nil

**6.0 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

6.1 Ordinary Council Meeting held 19 November 2013  
[Attachment 6.1A](#)

Confirmation of the minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 19 November 2013.

**81266**

Moved: Cr Hayes-Thompson                      Seconded: Cr Blakers

**Officer's Recommendation**

*That the minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 19 November 2013 be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.*

**CARRIED 9/0**

**7.0 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE PERSON PRESIDING WITHOUT DISCUSSION**

The Shire President requested that a list of all staff "on-call" over the festive season be provided to all Councillors.

**8.0 MATTERS FOR WHICH THE MEETING MAY BE CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC**

Nil

**9.0 RECEIVAL OF MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD SINCE THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF COUNCIL**

9.1 GECZ Meeting held 28 November 2013  
[Attachment 9.1A](#)

9.2 WE-ROC Executive Meeting held 27 November 2013  
[Attachment 9.2A](#)

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- 9.3 Audit Committee Meeting held 17 December 2013  
[Attachment 9.3A](#)

**81267**

Moved: Cr Young

Seconded: Cr Crees

***Officers Recommendation***

***That the minutes of the GECZ Meeting held 28 November 2013, WE-ROC Executive Meeting held 27 November 2013 and the Audit Committee Meeting held 17 December 2013 be received.***

**CARRIED 9/0**

**10.0 DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

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**10.1 LOCAL PLANNING SCHEME 6 – APPLICATION FOR BOUNDARY EXEMPTION – GARAGE ON BOUNDARY – LOT 997 JUBILEE STREET MERREDIN**

<b>Reporting Department:</b>	Development Services
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	John Mitchell
<b>Legislation:</b>	Local Planning Scheme No. 6
<b>File Reference:</b>	A2201
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Attachments:</b>	Appendix Four – C & F Kenward <a href="#">(Attachment 10.1A)</a> Wayne’s Design and Drafting – Job 13001 Sheets 1, 2, 3, 4, <a href="#">(Attachment 10.1B)</a>

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**Background:**

An application (PA11/13) to erect a below ground swimming pool, patio (rear yard) and garage on boundary adjacent to House No. 52 South Avenue, Merredin has been received from Mr Corey Nelson of 2 Jubilee Street Merredin.

The garage on the boundary requires Planning Consent of Council.

**Comment:**

The adjoining owners, C & F Kenward have provided a signed Appendix four form (SOM LPS6) with the comment – *“happy and agreeable with plans. Aware of building will be at no cost of ours”*. It is signed by both owners.

Copies of the plans and Appendix four response are attached.

**Statutory/Policy Implications:**

The Provisions of the R Codes 2013 are applicable. The garage is not setback within the front setback area therefore no free open space is required behind the primary building line.

The minimum setback for a garage with a wall length of 10m is 1.5m.

The provisions of Clause 5.1.3 P3.2 are met: -

- a) Makes more effective use of space for enhanced privacy for the occupants of the building;
- b) Does not compromise the design principles of provide direct sunlight to the building and its open spaces (52 South by virtue of the siting of the house), location of pool etc. is the other side of the property therefore the relaxation does not compromise the use of the outdoor areas of 52

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South Avenue and the owners of 52 South have advised that the bulk of the structure does not impose an issue of them;

- c) Does not restrict light and sun to the adjoining properties habitable areas;
- d) The finished design positively contributes to the prevailing development context within the area and the streetscape.

**Financial Implications:**

Planning application fees of \$147.00 have been paid.

**81628** Moved: Cr Young                      Seconded: Cr Anderson

**Officer's Recommendation:**

***That planning consent is granted to (PA11/13) Mr Corey Nelson of 2 Jubilee Street Merredin to construct a garage on the boundary adjacent to 52 South Avenue Merredin in accordance with the plans submitted – Wayne's Design and Drafting – Job 13001 Sheets 1 – 4.***

**CARRIED 9/0**



Cr Young declared and Interest Affecting Impartiality and left the meeting at 3.10pm.

10.2 **LOCAL PLANNING SCHEME 6 – APPLICATION FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF  
AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY SALES AND SERVICE & WAREHOUSE – LOT 25  
COGHILL STREET, MERREDIN**

<b>Reporting Department:</b>	Development Services
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	John Mitchell
<b>Legislation:</b>	Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No. 6 (LPS 6)
<b>File Reference:</b>	A3551
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Attachments:</b>	Correspondence to Applicant

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**Background:**

An application (PA12/13) has been received from Rainday Pty Ltd of 208 Onslow Road, Shenton Park to extend the existing building on lot 25 Coghill Street, Merredin for the purposes of a warehouse and agricultural machinery sales and service.

The uses of land are best described within LPS 6 as “warehouse” and “Industry – rural”.

**Comment:**

Lot 25 Coghill Street, Merredin is zoned “light Industry”. The use of the land for warehouse is permitted, the use of the land for Industry – Rural is an “A” use which requires that Council advertise the application prior to resolving the application.

The plans are incomplete in the following areas: -

- 1) No landscaping shown;
- 2) No onsite parking shown or described;
- 3) No internal features – toilets, number of employees, waste disposal systems are shown;
- 4) Trade display areas not defined, agricultural machinery work areas not defined and parts (a)vi, and location of all required firefighting equipment.

The above requirements have been conveyed via email to the applicant ([Attachment 10.2A](#)). The additional information sought does not prevent Council considering the matter and conditioning the approval/consent to achieve the desired outcomes.

The majority of the required information does not impact on planning consent however it is relevant to consideration of the issue of a building

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licence. For example – the number of toilet facilities, extent of fire prevention. Issues relevant to parking and landscaping can be conditioned.

**Statutory/Policy Implications:**

The application must be advertised in accordance with 4.3.2 of the LPS 6. Advertising occurred in the Merredin Mercury on 17 December 2013.

As described above the application is incomplete and additional information has been sought to ensure Council is properly briefed on the application.

It is hoped that the information is available for the Council meeting. As Council does not meet until the end of January 2014 delegated authority to approve the application is sought providing the information is obtained.

**Financial Implications:**

Application fees of \$212.97 have been paid.

**81269** Moved: Cr Anderson                      Seconded: Cr Willis

**Officer's Recommendation:**

***That Council grants authority to the Chief Executive Officer to consider and grant planning consent for the application of Rainday Pty Ltd to establish a warehouse and agricultural machinery premise on lot 25 Coghill Street Merredin providing the information sought within this report is provided and that no adverse comments are received during the advertising process.***

**CARRIED BY ABSOLUTE MAJORITY 8/0**

Cr Young returned to the meeting at 3.15pm

10.3 **LOCAL PLANNING SCHEME 6 – CONCRETE BATCHING PLANT – LOT 1280**  
**MCKENZIE CRESCENT MERREDIN – MURFIT ENTERPRISES**

<b>Reporting Department:</b>	Development Services
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	John Mitchell
<b>Legislation:</b>	Local Planning Scheme No. 6
<b>File Reference:</b>	A983
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Attachments:</b>	Batching Plant Proposal <a href="#">(Attachment 10.3A)</a>

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**Background:**

An application to commence a concrete batching operation on Lot 1280 McKenzie Crescent has been received from Murfit Enterprises of Chedwigen Avenue Merredin. The application appends.

**Comment:**

The land is zoned “light industry” which is defined as “an industry: -

- a) In which the processes carried on, the machinery used, and the goods and commodities carried to and from the premise do not cause any injury to or adversely affect the amenity of the locality;
- b) The establishment or conduct of which does not or will not impose an undue load on any existing or proposed service for the supply or provision of essential services.”

Older type/style concrete batching operations are classified as “general industries” which have required greater separation and strict controls to prevent degradation of the environment.

The consent for this application may set a precedent. Council must be mindful of the need to ensure conformity with the definition of a light industry.

Over the last ten years more effective methods of supply of product, watering systems and noise associated with machinery have been introduced to ensure greater compliance with OSH and environmental legislation. The applicant needs to demonstrate that the processes effectively control dust and mishaps to the environment. Similarly there may be noise issues with the equipment used.

The Department of Environmental Regulation does not require an environmental licence (REFIRE) until the operation produces more than 300 tonne of product per annum.

The site was previously used as a Main Roads Department depot and works from the site included concrete works, bitumen road works, storage of sand, gravel and blue metal and the like.

The land around the site is undeveloped particularly to the east and south. Existing developments include agricultural machinery repairs, works depot for earth moving firm, fuel depot and service station; and tyre repair and fitting workshop with general businesses including machinery repairs, boiler/welding shops and the like. The area contains a mixture of industrial premises.

The use as a concrete batching plant can be considered a light industry providing the operation does not detrimentally impact on neighbours or the definition of a light industry. However it is likely that there will be incidents where the relevant definitions (of light industry e.g. dust, noise from elevators) will be exceeded creating the opportunity for complaint.

As previously stated the consent could create a precedent.

**Statutory/Policy Implications:**

For the industry to be listed as a light industry the definition must be addressed.

- a) *Processes carried on, the machinery used, and the goods and commodities carried to and from the premise do not cause injury. –*

The applicant advises that the cement is delivered by pallet in bulka bags, sand and blue metal stored on site is kept in concrete bunkers with sprinkler systems to maintain dust levels to minimums, OSH legislation places obligations on premise with large heavy plant to have workplace policies for the prevention of injury in the workplace;

- b) *Processes carried on, the machinery used, and the goods and commodities carried to and from the premise do not adversely affect the amenity of the area of the locality.*

The area is zoned light industry – within the area there are; heavy plant premise, agricultural machinery sales and service, road train delivery and the like. The vehicle and deliveries would not create a greater risk than already exists on the road. Additionally the products used, including blue metal, sand and water are not classified as hazardous. Whilst cement product is listed as a hazardous material it is transported in 500kg bulka bags which are double lined and plastic lined. Other products delivered into the industrial area of a hazardous nature include fuels, oils and pesticides;

- c) *The establishment or conduct of which does not or will not impose an undue load on any existing or proposed service for the supply or provision of essential services.*

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The previous operation was as a Main Roads WA depot and bitumen and concrete batching site. The proposed operation is on a smaller scale than that previously operated from the site.

Many practices and operations on premises within the Light Industrial area already create dust and with heavy plant moving around the area the zoning is better described as “general industry”.

There are no general industry lots for sale within Merredin that can support the proposed development. It would take approximately three years to provide for a new general industry development at a cost in the region of \$80,000 per lot minimum cost for small lots released. The Acting Executive Manager Development Services is currently attempting a light industry development near Merredin and has spent in excess of twelve months to achieve a western power quotation.

The development is not associated with any residential premise. The closest sensitive premise is more than 500m from the subject land.

Planning conditions would need to include a datum point and maximum noise levels in dB(A) and  $L_{A1\text{assigned level}}$  as defined within the Environmental (Noise) Regulations 1997. The maximum level would be set at 80dB(A)  $L_{A1\text{assigned level}}$  and maximum noise level of 90dB(A) at any time and 65dB(A) for  $L_{A10\text{assigned level}}$ . The term 1 and 10 relate to percentage of time that the levels cannot be exceeded i.e. levels cannot exceed 80dB(A) for 1% of the time or 65dB(A) for 10% of the time.

These assigned levels will ensure that plant and equipment is maintained to a good operating and safe condition.

Further conditions of use would include damping materials before batching commences or the product is moved around the yard and limiting hours of operation to 7am – 5pm Monday to Friday and 7am – 12pm on Saturdays

**Financial Implications:**

Planning fees of \$147 have been paid.

**81270** Moved: Cr Young                      Seconded: Cr Blakers

**Officer’s Recommendation:**

***That the application to establish a cement batching plant on Lot 1280 McKenzie Crescent be declined as the proposed use is considered to be a ‘General Industry’ and is not permitted in the Scheme.***

**CARRIED 9/0**

John Mitchell left the meeting at 3.26pm and did not return.

**11.0 ENGINEERING SERVICES**

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Nil recommendations to Council

**12.0 CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES**

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**12.1 LIST OF ACCOUNTS PAID**

<b>Reporting Department:</b>	Finance & Administration
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Evelyn Arnold
	Finance and Administration
<b>Legislation:</b>	Local Government Act 1995 & Financial Management Regulations
<b>File Reference:</b>	Nil
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Attachments:</b>	List of Accounts Paid

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**Background**

The attached List of Account Paid ([Attachment 12.1A](#)) during the month under Delegated Authority is provided for Council's information.

**Statutory/Policy Implications**

Local Government Act 1995 and Financial Management Regulations.

**Financial Implications**

All liabilities settled have been in accordance with the Annual Budget provisions. It should be noted that outstanding creditors total \$104,353.37.

**81271** Moved: Cr Crees                      Seconded: Cr Blakers

**Officer's Recommendation**

***That Council receive the schedule of accounts as listed, covering cheques, EFT's, bank charges, directly debited payments and wages, as numbered and totalling \$780,359.10 from Council's Municipal Fund Bank Account and \$2,680 from Council's Trust Account.***

**CARRIED 9/0**

12.2 **MONTHLY FINANCE REPORT**

<b>Reporting Department:</b>	Finance and Administration
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Evelyn Arnold
<b>Legislation:</b>	Local Government Act 1995
<b>File Reference:</b>	Nil
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Attachments:</b>	Monthly Finance Report

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**Background**

The Monthly Finance Report is attached for Council's information.  
([Attachment 12.2A](#))

**Statutory/Policy Implications**

Local Government Act 1995 and Financial Management Regulations.

**Financial Implications**

As outlined in [Attachment 12.2A](#).

**81272** Moved: Cr Young                      Seconded: Cr Thomas

**Officer's Recommendation**

***That Council receive the Monthly Finance Report for November 2013.***

**CARRIED 9/0**



**13.0 ADMINISTRATION**

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**13.1 NORTH MERREDIN PRIMARY SCHOOL SITE**

<b>Reporting Department:</b>	Administration
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	CEO
<b>Legislation:</b>	Local Government Act 1995, Land Act 2005
<b>File Reference:</b>	GP 17/40, Reserve 13876
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Attachments:</b>	Correspondence from Department of Lands Community Consultation Summary

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**Background**

At its October meeting, Council considered a number of issues relating to the acquisition and management of the land being the former North Merredin Primary School. Council resolved as follows:

**81250 Moved: Cr Hayes-Thompson Seconded: Cr Crees**

**Officer's Recommendation**

*That Staff continue to investigate community reaction and open discussions with the Department of Education and submit a further report to Council, once this has been completed.*

**CARRIED 7/0**

**Comment**

Advice has been received from the Department of Lands that Department of Education is "following due process to have the value of the buildings written off." A copy of the entire letter is attached at [Attachment 13.1A](#). The issue of having to recompense the Department of Education would appear to be resolved and is no longer a concern.

The Department of Lands proposes to issue a management order in favour of the Shire of Merredin for the purpose of "Aged Care". On the face of it, this may be too restrictive. Discussions have been opened with the Department with a view to the purpose being "Aged Care and Community Purposes" with the power to lease for up to 21 years. There is acceptance of this at the officer level but will need formal approval.

Community opinion on whether Council should take over the land and buildings and the uses to which it could be put were canvassed principally via Facebook and the topic was mentioned elsewhere and through a stall at the markets. A summary of the consultation can be found at [Attachment 13.1B](#).

It is clear that there is no common defining use to which the buildings could be put. Nor is there any clarity about willingness to pay for the refurbishment of the building in the first instance and secondly their ongoing costs of operation and maintenance. At this point, should Council take over

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the buildings it would be on the basis that costs will be incurred certainly in the short term and probably in the long term.

An initial proposal was to relocate existing Council facilities into the school site and then the cost of operating the NMPS could be offset by closing the other buildings down. Whether there is merit in doing so with the Visitors Centre, the Library (although the flooring may be problematic) could still be worth exploring.

It should be noted that a Demolition Permit has been issued to remove all but the significant buildings on site; these being the wooden and temporary structures on the northern side of the site.

A further option to consider is the example of the Boddington Old School. The Old School is on reserve land vested in the Shire of Boddington for "Community Purposes" with power to lease. The land and buildings have been leased to a community organization. That organization also sub lease to a range of groups as well as have casual rooms for hire. The purpose of Community Purpose can be difficult to determine in terms of commercial operations and there has been difficulty in having the Department of Lands clarify exactly what is permitted.

In summary, it is apparent there is general agreement that the site is significant from a number of viewpoints and it could be seen in the future as a lost opportunity if Council does not take over the site.

**Statutory/Policy Implications**

Nil

**Financial Implications**

As stated in the October agenda report there are significant financial implications for Council. The initial repair and refurbishment could approach \$500,000. The ongoing costs are unknown but it is unlikely a tenant or tenants could be found to meet these costs.

An option could be to carry out necessary structural repairs and then mothball the building until an opportunity arises for a joint venture (maybe in the aged care area) for the entire site.

**Officer's Recommendation**

- 1. That the Department of Lands be advised that Council wishes to accept a Management Order over Reserve 13876 for the purpose of "Aged Care and Community Purposes" with the power to lease and that the approval of the Department of this proposal be sought;**
- 2. That the buildings remaining on site be secured and "mothballed" pending further investigation of the potential use, cost of repair/refurbishment and preparation of a long term maintenance plan with associated costs;**
- 3. That Council acknowledges the requirement for general site maintenance and makes provision in the 2014/15 budget to undertake the work; and**
- 4. That the community be advised of Council's position on this matter.**

**81273** Moved: Cr Crees

Seconded: Cr Young

**Resolution**

***That the Department of Lands be advised that Council wishes to accept a Management Order over Reserve 13876 for the purpose of "Aged Care and Community Purposes" with the power to lease and that the approval of the Department of this proposal be sought;***

**CARRIED 7/2**

**81274** Moved: Cr Young

Seconded: Cr Crees

**Resolution**

***That the buildings be secured, and future use of the buildings on the site be ascertained, and the community be advised of Councils position on this matter, and a budget for minor maintenance be allocated in the 2014/15 budget.***

**CARRIED 8/1**

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13.2 **SHIRE OF MERREDIN ANNUAL REPORT 2012/2013**

<b>Reporting Department:</b>	Administration
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Greg Powell – Chief Executive Officer
<b>Legislation:</b>	Local Government Act 1995
<b>File Reference:</b>	Nil
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Attachments:</b>	Shire of Merredin Annual Report 2012-2013 including Council's Audited Financial Statements to year ended 30 June 2013

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**Background**

Council's Annual Financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2013 have been completed as has the annual audit of the financial statements by Council's auditors, UHY Haines Norton Chartered Accountants. The Annual Report is included at [Attachment 13.2A](#).

**Comment**

Taking into account the statutory requirements for adoption of the report and advertising of the annual electors meeting, the options for dates are as follows:

<b>Adoption Date</b>	<b>Advertising Availability of Report</b>	<b>Advertising minimum (notice of Meeting)</b>	<b>Electors Meeting (56 days max)</b>
17 Dec 2013	15 Jan 2014	29 Jan 2014	29 January 2014
	22 Jan 2014		5 February 2014
	29 Jan 2014		12 February 2014

It should be noted that the financial statements are required to be adopted by 31 December annually.

**Statutory/Policy Implications**

The Local Government Act 1995 requires Council to adopt the Annual Report and to set the meeting date for the Annual General Meeting of Electors.

The Chief Executive Officer is required to advertise by local public notice, the availability of the Annual Report after it has been adopted by Council, and an Annual Electors meeting is to be held no later than 56 days after the adoption of the report (Section 5.55 of the Act).

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Council is required to give a minimum of 14 days' notice of the Annual Electors Meeting (Section 5.29 of the Act).

As the Annual Report must be adopted at this meeting the 56 days would expire on Tuesday 11 February 2014. Councils February Council meeting is scheduled to be held 18 February 2014 and therefore the Annual Electors Meeting cannot be held on that date and an alternative date adopted and advertised.

**Financial Implications**

Nil.

**Officer's Recommendation**

***That Council:***

- 1. adopt the Shire of Merredin Annual Report for the 2012/2013 financial year and receive the Auditor's Report from UHY Haines Norton Chartered Accountants for the 2012/2013 financial year; and***
- 2. hold its Annual General Meeting of Electors on a date to be determined but on or before 11 February 2014 commencing at 6.00pm in the Council Chambers Administration Centre.***

**81275** Cr Anderson                      Cr Hayes-Thompson

**Resolution**

***That Council:***

- 1. adopt the Shire of Merredin Annual Report for the 2012/2013 financial year and receive the Auditor's Report from UHY Haines Norton Chartered Accountants for the 2012/2013 financial year; and***
- 2. hold its Annual Meeting of Electors on 6 February 2014 commencing at 6.00pm in the Council Chambers Administration Centre.***

**CARRIED 9/0**

13.3 **CUSTOMER SERVICE CHARTER - REVIEW**

<b>Reporting Department:</b>	Administration
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	CEO
<b>Legislation:</b>	Local Government Act 1995
<b>File Reference:</b>	
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Attachments:</b>	Customer Service Charter

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**Background**

Council had previously adopted a Charter which detailed the way in which the corporate entity will deal with the community at large and to a degree lists the expectations of the community in those dealings. The document has been reviewed with some minor amendments.

**Comment**

The community consultation area of Council's operations has seen some changes in recent months with the appointment of a Media and Communications Officer. This has allowed a number of issues to be more intensively canvassed with the community both in terms of issues of importance to the community and increasing Council's capacity to "put its message across" on issues it sees of importance.

A revised Charter can be found at [Attachment 13.3A](#) with tracked changes.

**Statutory/Policy Implications**

There are no implications because of the proposed changes.

**Financial Implications**

Nil

**81276** Moved: Cr Young                      Seconded: Cr Willis

**Officer's Recommendation**

***That the revisions to the Shire of Merredin Customer Service Charter be adopted.***

**CARRIED 9/0**

13.4 **CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP – 2014 LGMA MENTORS AND ASPIRING**

**LEADERS CONFERENCE**

<b>Reporting Department:</b>	Administration
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	CEO
<b>Author:</b>	Lorraine Wyatt
<b>Legislation:</b>	Local Government Act 1995
<b>File Reference:</b>	
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Attachments:</b>	Correspondence ( <a href="#">Attachment 13.4A</a> )

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**Background**

Local Government Managers Australia (LGMA) is a professional association representing managers and aspiring managers in local government throughout Australia and Asia-Pacific. It was founded in October 1936 by Raymond West and, since that time, has continued to expand its charter and membership services and now has around 3,500 members.

As in previous years, LGMA is anticipating holding its Mentors and Aspiring Leaders Conference in 2014 however is looking to Local Governments' for sponsorship to assist with the cost of running the event and in turn reduce the cost to delegates to maximise attendance.

**Comment**

Recruitment of new employees is always difficult for Council. Council has the opportunity to be portrayed positively (as a supportive, and good corporate citizen) and to be upfront in the minds of possible future candidates.

**Statutory/Policy Implications**

Nil

**Financial Implications**

The advertising budget E042250 has an annual allocation of \$21,210 which has a year to date expenditure of \$12715 and a balance of \$8494.15. To date a large proportion of this expenditure has been on advertising vacancies. With the average cost of advertising vacancies being approximately \$1500 per placement, the expenditure of \$550.00 (LG Support Sponsor) is considered a good investment.

**81277** Moved: Cr Crees      Seconded: Cr Blakers

**Officer's Recommendation**

***That Council endorse the Sponsorship the 2014 LGMA Mentors and Aspiring Leaders Conference for \$550 as outlined in Attachment 13.4A***

**CARRIED 7/2**

13.5 **CENTRAL WHEATBELT VISITOR CENTRE MOU - REVIEW**

<b>Reporting Department:</b>	Administration
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	CEO
<b>Legislation:</b>	Local Government Act 1995
<b>File Reference:</b>	
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Attachments:</b>	CWVC MOU (original and revised versions)

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**Background**

The current MOU between the Shire of Merredin and a number of ROC's expired in June 2013. Comments have been sought from the ROC's and a revised MOU prepared. The original and revised documents can be found at [Attachment 13.5A](#).

**Comment**

**NEWROC**

Comments from NEWROC are as follows (agenda item provided by way of background:

*A meeting was held on 14 June 2013 in Merredin to discuss the Central Wheatbelt Visitor Centre (CWVC) MoU (which has now expired - June 30 2013) and funding of the service.*

*There are two separate issues regarding the Central Wheatbelt Visitor Centre, those being:*

*Participation in the CWVC MoU, and*

*Funding of the CWVC*

*The current purpose of the CWVC MoU is to enhance the involvement of surrounding Shires with the Shire of Merredin and the Visitor Centre.*

*The Shire of Merredin, as the lead body is seeking feedback on the MoU. It is suggested the following MoU amendments are considered;*

- The MoU excludes the Shire of Lake Grace and Shire of Quairading, but who are part of Roe Tourism, likewise Shire of Dowerin is excluded but part of NEWTRAVEL, but not part of RoeROC, WEROC or NEWROC (which hold the MoU agreement) and don't contribute financially to the CWVC but still receive CWVC services (promotion on the website, mail outs etc*
- The MoU states the CWVC is open on the weekend, but at the moment it is closed over the weekends. The weekend service is*



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*a good attraction to Shires who may have a visitor information point open during the week, but not on the weekend, hence the CWVC picks the service up. The opening hours need to be considered and confirmed.*

- The delegates at the MoU meeting should only be LGA representatives under the current MoU not tourism operators, tourism association members etc who have been present in the past and making decisions regarding the CWVC MoU.*

*In addition,*

- The ROC's and LGA's have different compositions to the local tourism associations as well as clearly different roles. There is the possibility of having a CWVC MoU with ROC's and LGA's (centred on CWVC funding) and a separate CWVC Working Group to progress central and eastern Wheatbelt tourism initiatives and enhances the involvement of surrounding Shires with the Shire of Merredin and the Visitor Centre.*

*Suggested MoU amendments:*

- 1. CWVC MoU to be a funding arrangement for services*
- 2. CWVC MoU be an arrangement between individual Shires (rather than ROC's) and include the Shire of Lake Grace and Shire of Quairading (subject to their approval)*
- 3. Confirmation of opening hours for the CWVC need to be determined*
- 4. Voting rights be amended to only include a Council and Shire representative*
- 5. Remove the CWVC Working Group from the MoU and establish a separate CWVC Working Group comprised of local tourism association members, tourism operators and interested parties to progress central and eastern Wheatbelt tourism initiatives and enhance the involvement of surrounding Shires with the Shire of Merredin and the Visitor Centre.*

*Currently individual NEWROC Shires contribute \$2,000 towards marketing the Wheatbelt Way, \$2,000 towards NEWTravel, \$1,500 to the CWVC and \$1,000 to the NEWTravel Tourism Officer (new position). It is suggested that a review on the scope of services delivered by the CWVC, review of statistics provided by the CWVC Manager particularly in regards to the destination of visitors and suggested that a meeting be held with the CWVC Manager regarding what the expectations are from each NEWROC Shire in the coming year. The Shire of Wyalkatchem has invested in their Community Resource Centre and visitor servicing, there could be*

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*potential for the Shire of Wyalkatchem to deliver visitor servicing for the NEWROC.*

*It is important that NEWROC maintain a presence at the CWVC e.g. brochure displays, event listings etc. NEWROC CEO, Tanika McLennan will reiterate to the NEWTravel members what the CWVC service should deliver. The Executive Officer will collate combinations of NEWTravel and NEWROC suggestions regarding the CWVC MoU to be put forward to the Shire of Merredin.*

**RESOLUTION:**

***That NEWROC participates in the Central Wheatbelt Visitor Centre MoU to the 30 June 2014, subject to further review.***

***Moved Cr O'Connell  
Gillett***

***Seconded Cr  
CARRIED 6/0***

**ROEROC**

The Executive Officer of RoeROC has advised it would like to continue to participate in the MoU but it needs to be rewritten. I have inferred that RoeROC supports the NEWROC comments above.

**WEROC**

Comments from WEROC are as follows:

***RESOLUTION: Moved: Cr Geier***

***Seconded: Cr Strange***

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***That:***

- 1. the current Central Wheatbelt Visitor Centre Memorandum of Understanding be dissolved;***
- 2. a new Central Wheatbelt Visitor Centre Memorandum of Understanding be prepared on the basis of individual local governments being members;***
- 3. the scope of the membership to the Central Wheatbelt Visitor Centre be broadened to enable all local governments and individual business/operators who see relevance in tourism and likely to be impacted by the operations of the Central Wheatbelt Visitor Centre to become members; and***
- 4. the Central Wheatbelt Visitor Centre institute a fee for service arrangement for local governments and others who wish to use the services offered by the Central Wheatbelt Visitor Centre.***
- 5. WE-ROC advise the Central Wheatbelt Visitor Centre, NEWROC and RoeROC of its position.***

***CARRIED***

The issues raised above are dealt with below:

### **Funding**

There appears little appetite amongst individual Councils through the ROC's to increase funding above \$1,500-\$2,500 per annum per Council. In order to take this issue off the table, it is proposed that a flat fee to offset generic costs be set at say \$2,000 per Council.

Organisations other than Councils could be set what would essentially be a membership fee of say \$500 per annum per organisation or business to reflect the broader representational role of local government.

It is also proposed to adopt a number of optional fee for service proposals such as brochure racking, specific marketing opportunities and any differences in an electronic presence through the website or other media. This could be done on a flat fee basis for some services (such as brochure racking) or fee for service on marketing.

### **Membership**

The draft MOU proposes that membership be by individual Councils rather than the previous approach of membership by ROC's. This will allow membership by non-ROC Councils and also allow membership to expand, hopefully inter-regionally.

Additionally, it is proposed that membership be offered to non-Council entities such as Government agencies and businesses who see advantage from tourism either individually or regionally.

### **Hours of Operation**

It is noted above that there is a preference for the CWVC remaining open over the weekend. The Centre was previously serviced over weekends by volunteers but in recent times the number and the capacity of the volunteers has diminished. Council previously adopted a position, essentially one of cost containment, not to staff the Centre.

It should be noted that the previous MOU did not stipulate operational hours of the CWVC.

On current pay rates, to have the Centre open for four hours each day over the weekend by one employee would increase the wages bill alone by approximately \$19,000 per annum. This does not include overheads or building operational costs. This cost could be reduced by opening the Centre over the core tourism months (say 6 months of each year). However, given the relatively low contributions from member Councils, increasing costs will need careful consideration because of the impact on Council's financial position.

**Operational Matters**

There appears to be some consensus on opening membership to non-Council entities although it is apparent that control should still vest in the Councils. This position could be untenable for the private sector which will participate financially but not be able to influence the broader group as it would have no voting entitlement. An option to consider could be to entitle votes based on financial contribution, ie if Council contribute \$2000 each would have two votes with other entities with a lower contribution or membership, having one vote. This is a point for further discussion.

There is merit in having one group rather than a local government group and another of other organisations and businesses.. Each does not work in isolation and there are common outcomes in terms of industry and product development, increasing the number of visitors etc. It is suggested that Council adopt the position of endorsing one group but its operational issues being determined after further consultation.

**Statutory/Policy Implications**

Nil

**Financial Implications**

There are implications for the Shire of Merredin in that the contribution from MOU members will alter from 1 July 2014. These are yet to be determined.

**81278** Moved: Cr Crees                      Seconded: Cr Young

**Officer's Recommendation**

***That the revised MOU, as attached, be referred to the ROC's and other relevant Councils for comment with a request for comment to be provided by the end of February, 2014.***

**CARRIED 9/0**

**14.0 MOTIONS OF WHICH PREVIOUS NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN**

Nil

**15.0 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS FOR WHICH DUE NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN**

Nil

**16.0 URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE PERSON PRESIDING OR BY DECISION**

Nil

**17.0 MATTERS BEHIND CLOSED DOORS**

Nil

**18.0 CLOSURE**

The President thanked everyone and wished Councillors, staff and their families a safe and happy Christmas. There being no further business the meeting was declared closed at 4.11pm