



North Eastern Wheatbelt Regional Organisation of Councils

Dowerin | Koorda | Mt Marshall | Mukinbudin | Nungarin | Trayning | Wyalkatchem

Council Meeting

Tuesday 24 September 2024

Wyalkatchem CRC

MINUTES

1.30pm Light Lunch
2pm Workshop with SEED
~3.30pm Wheatbelt Drought Resilience Plan Working Session
~4.15pm Meeting
~6pm Drinks and dinner at Wyalkatchem Pub

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ANNUAL CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

| MONTH | ACTIVITY | MEETING |
|-----------|---|-----------|
| January | | Executive |
| February | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 👉 Council refreshes itself on NEWROC Vision, Mission, Values (review Vision and Mission every other year) 👉 Council reviews NEWROC project priorities / strategic plan | Council |
| March | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 👉 WDC attendance to respond to NEWROC project priorities 👉 Submit priority projects to WDC, Regional Development and WA Planning | Executive |
| April | 👉 NEWROC Budget Preparation | Council |
| May | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 👉 NEWROC Draft Budget Presented 👉 NEWROC Executive Officer Contract/Hourly Rate Review (current contract expires June 2027) 👉 Local Government Week agenda | Executive |
| June | 👉 NEWROC Budget Adopted | Council |
| July | | Executive |
| August | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 👉 Information for Councillors pre-election 👉 NEWROC Audit | Council |
| September | | Executive |
| October | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 👉 NEWROC CEO and President Handover (every 2yrs) 👉 NEWROC Dinner | Council |
| November | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 👉 NEWROC Induction of new Council representatives (every other year) 👉 Review NEWROC MoU (every other year) | Executive |
| December | 👉 NEWROC Christmas / End of Year Drinks | Council |

ONGOING ACTIVITIES

Compliance

Media Releases

NEWROC Rotation

Shire of Mt Marshall

Shire of Nungarin

Shire of Wyalkatchem

Shire of Koorda

Shire of Mukinbudin

Shire of Trayning (Oct 2023 – Oct 2025)

Shire of Dowerin

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NORTH EASTERN WHEATBELT REGIONAL ORGANISATION OF COUNCILS

Minutes for the Council Meeting commencing at 4.37pm on 24 September 2024 at the Wyalkatchem CRC

MINUTES

1. OPENING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cr Stratford, acting Chair welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 4.37pm.

2. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

2.1 Attendance

| | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Cr Gary Shadbolt | President, Shire of Mukinbudin |
| Cr Pippa De Lacy | President, Shire of Nungarin |
| Cr Jannah Stratford | President, Shire of Koorda |
| Cr Tony Sachse | President, Shire of Mt Marshall |
| Cr Robert Trepp | President, Shire of Dowerin |
| Cr Owen Garner | President, Shire of Wyalkatchem |
| Leanne Parola | NEWROC CEO, CEO Shire of Trayning |
| Zac Donovan | CEO Shire of Koorda |
| Sabine Taylor | CEO, Shire of Wyalkatchem |
| Ben McKay | CEO, Shire of Mt Marshall |
| David Nayda | A/CEO, Shire of Nungarin |
| Tanika McLennan | A/CEO Shire of Mukinbudin |
| Caroline Robinson | Executive Officer, NEWROC |
| Guests | |
| Cr Rod Lawson Kerr | Shire of Wyalkatchem |
| Cr Justin Begley | Shire of Wyalkatchem |

2.2 Apologies

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Cr Melanie Brown | President, Shire of Trayning, NEWROC Chair |
| Brian Jones | A/CEO, Shire of Dowerin |
| Cr Clayton Marchant | Shire of Trayning |

2.4 Leave of Absence Approvals / Approved

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Cr Brown | October |
| Caroline Robinson | 29 th October (NEWROC Executive) |
| Ben McKay | 29 th October |

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DELEGATIONS REGISTER

3.1 Delegation Register

Please find below a delegations register as per the new policy adopted in March 2017:

| Description of Delegations | Delegatee | Delegated to | Approval |
|----------------------------|-----------|--------------|----------|
| Records Management | CEO | NEWROC EO | Council |

NEWROC Council Meeting 24 September 2024 - MINUTES

| | | | |
|--|---------|-----------|-------------------|
| NEWROC Financial Management | CEO | NEWROC EO | Council Dec 2017 |
| Bendigo Bank Signatory (NEWROC) | CEO | NEWROC EO | Council Dec 2017 |
| Bendigo Bank Signatory (Shire of Trayning) | Council | CEO | Council Dec 2017 |
| NEWROC Website | CEO | NEWROC EO | Council June 2017 |

4. PRESENTATIONS

Nil

5. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 30 July 2024 have previously been circulated.

RESOLUTION

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 30 July 2024 are received as a true and correct record of proceedings.

Moved: Cr De Lacy Seconded: Cr Shadbolt CARRIED 6/0

Minutes of the Executive Meeting held on 23 August 2024 have previously been circulated.

RESOLUTION

That the Minutes of the Executive Meeting held on 23 August 2024 be received.

Moved: Cr Trepp Seconded: Cr Sachse CARRIED 6/0

5.1 Business Arising

5.1.1 Live Sheep by Sea Trade Policy

Correspondence has been emailed to the Minister for Agriculture (attached). No reply still.

- Feedback is that the transition work is taking a significantly long time by the Federal Government

5.1.2 Regional Education Strategy – Consultation

Contact was made with each School Principal in the NEWROC. Submission made on 19 September 2024 (attached)

- Smaller numbers in some schools has influenced results
- School Boards and P&Cs – understanding their roles and responsibilities is important

6. FINANCIAL MATTERS

6.1 Income, Expenditure and Profit and Loss

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| FILE REFERENCE: | 42-2 Finance Audit and Compliance |
| REPORTING OFFICER: | Caroline Robinson |
| DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST: | Nil |
| DATE: | 19 September 2024 |
| ATTACHMENT NUMBER: | #1P and L |
| CONSULTATION: | |
| STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT: | Nil |
| VOTING REQUIREMENT: | Simple Majority |

COMMENT

Account transactions for the period 1 July – 31 August 2024

| Date | Description | Reference | Credit | Debit | Running Balance |
|-----------------------------------|--|--------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| BB NEWROC Funds-5557 | | | | | |
| Opening Balance | | | 110,067.08 | 0.00 | 110,067.08 |
| 01 Jul 2024 | Bendigo Bank | | 0.00 | 2.00 | 110,065.08 |
| 02 Jul 2024 | Xero Australia | XERO | 0.00 | 66.50 | 109,998.58 |
| 22 Jul 2024 | Payment: Bencubbin Community Resource Centre | Literary Luncheon | 0.00 | 600.00 | 109,398.58 |
| 22 Jul 2024 | Payment: 150Square | INV-0299 | 0.00 | 3,894.13 | 105,504.45 |
| 22 Jul 2024 | Payment: Constructive Visual | Website Annual Fee | 0.00 | 222.00 | 105,282.45 |
| 22 Jul 2024 | Payment: Megatix | Dowerin Down Town | 0.00 | 2,534.25 | 102,748.20 |
| 22 Jul 2024 | Payment: Alyce Smith | 2080 | 0.00 | 3,872.00 | 98,876.20 |
| 01 Aug 2024 | Bendigo Bank | | 0.00 | 2.00 | 98,874.20 |
| 01 Aug 2024 | Xero Australia | XERO | 0.00 | 66.50 | 98,807.70 |
| 05 Aug 2024 | Payment: Shire Of Nungarin | INV-0111 | 33,000.00 | 0.00 | 131,807.70 |
| 07 Aug 2024 | Payment: 150Square | INV-0302 | 0.00 | 4,021.63 | 127,786.07 |
| Total BB NEWROC Funds-5557 | | | 33,000.00 | 15,281.01 | 127,786.07 |
| Closing Balance | | | 127,786.07 | 0.00 | 127,786.07 |
| Total | | | 33,000.00 | 15,281.01 | 17,718.99 |

Balance Sheet

North Eastern Wheatbelt Regional Organisation of Councils As at 31 August 2024

31 AUG 2024

Assets

Bank

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------|
| BB NEWROC Funds-5557 | 127,786.07 |
| BB Term Deposit Account-1388 | 311,785.83 |
| Total Bank | 439,571.90 |

Total Assets

439,571.90

Liabilities

Current Liabilities

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| GST | (4,020.05) |
| Rounding | 0.07 |
| Unpaid ATO Liabilities | 619.00 |
| Total Current Liabilities | (3,400.98) |

Total Liabilities

(3,400.98)

Net Assets

442,972.88

Equity

| | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Current Year Earnings | 16,063.77 |
| Retained Earnings | 426,909.11 |
| Total Equity | 442,972.88 |

RESOLUTION

That the income and expenditure from 1 July 2024 to 31 August 2024, P and L and balance sheet be received.

Moved: Cr De Lacy

Seconded: Cr Sachse

CARRIED 6/0

Discussion:

- Final payment fee has been received by Crisp Wireless

7. MATTERS FOR DECISION**7.1 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| FILE REFERENCE: | 041-5 Strategic and Future Planning |
| REPORTING OFFICER: | Caroline Robinson |
| DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST: | Nil |
| DATE: | 19 September 2024 |
| ATTACHMENT NUMBER: | |
| CONSULTATION: | |
| STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT: | Nil |
| VOTING REQUIREMENT: | Simple Majority |

BACKGROUND

The McCusker Centre for Citizenship partners with more than 500 not-for-profit, community, government and non-government organisations to provide a structured and quality internship program for UWA students.

Internships are currently open for intern applications and host organisations.

The internship would take place for approximately 3 days a week between Monday 11 November – Friday 13 December 2024.

As an organisation to be eligible, it must be:

- A not-for-profit or government organisation with regular staff members who can supervise an intern.
- Have a meaningful project/activity that adds value to the organisation and allows the intern to understand the link to the broader community impact.
- The project/activity equates to a minimum of 100 hours of work by the intern.
- An appropriate work environment is provided so that the student is embedded in the organisation and able to work safely.
- The student is provided with supervision and the opportunity to receive feedback on their work.
- The host can commit to providing a short evaluation on the intern's performance and the program at the end of the internship period.

COMMENT

One of the outcomes in the NEWROC Economic Development Strategy is:

1 e) There is a skilled local workforce, including volunteers for health services in the NEWROC.

The NEWROC EO would like to propose developing a scope of works to be undertaken by an intern to:

Investigate the current state of volunteerism across the St John's Volunteer Ambulance Service in the NEWROC.

To develop strategies for the NEWROC and St Johns Ambulance Service to consider ensuring there is a long-term local supply of St John's volunteers.

If NEWROC was interested in hosting an intern from UWA to undertake this work, the following needs to be considered:

- Initial engagement with St John's to gain their support, so too local sub centres in preparing the scope of works.
- Where will the intern work from? Shire, CRC, home?
- Who will manage, oversee the intern, evaluate their work? NEWROC EO, CEO or CRC Manager?
- Travel, equipment and work costs. NEWROC?

Discussion at Executive

- Shire of Mukinbudin has some office space. Also close to Peter Geraghty as a key stakeholder.
- Travel costs will likely be small and NEWROC can cover these.
- Item to be forwarded to members for endorsement, as the application period closes before the next meeting

RESOLUTION

NEWROC develop a scope of works (St Johns Ambulance volunteers) and apply for the internship. The NEWROC EO to oversee the intern and the Shire of Mukinbudin 'host' the intern at their office, if required.

Moved: Cr Shadbolt

Seconded: Cr De Lacy

CARRIED 6/0

7.2 RENEWABLES / MINING – COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS AND BENEFITS

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| FILE REFERENCE: | 041-5 Strategic and Future Planning |
| REPORTING OFFICER: | Caroline Robinson |
| DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST: | Nil |
| DATE: | 20 August 2024 |
| ATTACHMENT NUMBER: | |
| CONSULTATION: | Renee Manning, Shire of Merredin Councillor and Wheatbelt Development Commission |
| STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT: | Nil |
| VOTING REQUIREMENT: | Simple Majority |

BACKGROUND

At the July NEWROC Council meeting the following the following action was requested:

NEWROC EO engage with the Shire of Merredin regarding community investment outcomes as a result of the renewable energy developments in their town.

COMMENT

The NEWROC EO made contact with Renee Manning as she is currently working on energy within her portfolio at the Wheatbelt Development Commission, and she is a Shire of Merredin Councillor. These viewpoints were her own.

- Local governments are waiting on direction from State Government regarding renewables delivering benefits to communities where they are established (note the work being undertaken by the group of Shires – Moora, Narrogin, West Arthur etc; and over east State Government's have set a per M/W value or payment in lieu of rates).
- State Government sets the rules for access to the grid.
- The Federal Government's Energy Market Operator has oversight on Australia's energy system. It has identified that aboriginal and community engagement, as well as community benefits are necessary for any energy development.
- Communities need to be prepared and ensure they have a representative at the table when planning for renewables / mining development in their Shire.
- Traditionally, community benefit funds have been relatively small compared with the total project investment. Should have a mixture: long term legacy and small funding amounts aimed at community groups.
- Shire of Merredin have an annual \$100K community fund from Collgar, solar farm has a small grant scheme, Nomad (battery) have engaged with the Shire on a sponsorship program.
- Be prepared with a list of projects (challenges that need to be addressed and opportunities).
- Consider the impact on land use and access.
- Consider negative community sentiment e.g. neighbours to a wind farm missing out on a financial benefit, residences proximity to wind turbines.
- Wind turbines are becoming larger. Into the future its not going to look like the Merredin wind farm (size and number of turbines).
- Local governments need visibility over procurement as well.

- Long term employment opportunities for locals.
- Any development is not necessarily good development. Ensure there are lasting benefits to the community.
- Powering WA has been tasked with looking at this issue.

Example work by local governments in this area:

- [News Story - FINAL ADOPTION LOCAL PLANNING POLICY - WIND FARM/TURBINES » Shire of Narrogin](#)
- [MNG-86cw28t53-2024-Community-Prospectus_OUTPUT_Electronic.pdf \(mingenew.wa.gov.au\)](#)

Discussion for the Executive:

1. Have members developed their Community Engagement Framework – how the Shire engages and consults with the community, as well as major project developers?
2. Status of each member's Local Planning Scheme?

Discussion at Executive:

- Policies in this area are just that, policies and can be dismissed by the State Government.
- Minimum requirements of project proponents to engage with communities.
- Consistency across NEWROC – engagement, benefits sought, key projects
- Town planning schemes play a role in project development. This also links to the NEWROC Economic Development Strategy.
- NEWROC EO seek a quote from Liz Bushby regarding updating Town Planning Schemes for members (economies of scale, consistent terminology etc).

RESOLUTION

NEWROC EO develop a draft framework for the members to consider at the November Council meeting (covering community consultation, principles of development projects, NEWROC priorities).

NEWROC EO develop a list of priority infrastructure and service projects for the NEWROC.

Moved: Cr De Lacy

Seconded: Cr Garner

CARRIED 6/0

Discussion:

- Victorian legislation has just passed regarding landholder rights in regard to renewables. EO to investigate.

7. MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

7.2 TREE FARMS - LAND USE POLICY

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| FILE REFERENCE: | 041-5 Strategic and Future Planning |
| REPORTING OFFICER: | Caroline Robinson |
| DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST: | Nil |
| DATE: | 19 September 2024 |
| ATTACHMENT NUMBER: | #2 Eco Group Memo to Members |
| CONSULTATION: | Eco Group Liz Bushby – Town Planning Innovations |
| STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT: | Nil |
| VOTING REQUIREMENT: | Simple Majority |

BACKGROUND

At the July NEWROC Council meeting the following action was requested:

NEWROC EO to ask how the Shire of Perenjori wrote their tree farm policy

COMMENT

The NEWROC EO contacted Liz Bushby from Town Planning Innovations who was engaged to write the Shire of Perenjori's Tree Farm policy, as well as Plantagenet's and Cranbrook's.

Liz provided the following points for the NEWROC to consider:

- WA Planning Commission policy is that tree farms should be supported and encouraged on rural land. Therefore, any local planning strategies or schemes seeking to prohibit or severely restrict tree farming would not be in keeping with State policy.
- The State government has developed the following fact sheet: Clarifying the planning arrangements for tree farms, as set out in [State Planning Policy 2.5 – Rural Planning \(SPP 2.5\) and the Rural Planning Guidelines](#).
- Local government has a different perspective for a number of reasons; it commits farming land to tree production over a long time period, tree farms are often owned by absentee land owners e.g mining companies which creates land management issues (pests, weed control, fire break management etc), absentee land owners flow on to a loss of population and an impact on local services.
- Any policy regarding tree farming does not override legislation / regulations.
- Any policy that is developed needs commitment from all proponents.
- Any policy that is developed needs to be submitted to the WA Planning Commission to ensure it is not inconsistent with legislation.
- Working together, being consistent across Shire boundaries is beneficial.

Members are asked to review two current policies prior to the meeting and provide feedback on preferences.

- [Shire of Plantagenet – Commercial Plantations](#)
- [Shire of Denmark – Private Tree Plantations](#)

Liz Bushby indicated she can assist the NEWROC develop / review a policy that can be 'picked up by each Shire and adapted at a local level'.

The NEWROC EO has developed a set of potential guidelines for members to consider and develop further:

- Small scale tree farms for the purposes of natural resource management, land rehabilitation, reduction in salinity, do not need development approval (*note what is defined as small scale? Comment from the factsheet: However, if a land use is capable of being approved in a local planning scheme, and a development application has addressed relevant scheme requirements, it may not be open to a local government to prevent a landowner from using the landholding for an approvable land use.*)
- Tree farms / plantations should be integrated with existing agricultural uses in the Shire with traditional agricultural activities such as cropping, grazing and food production remaining as the predominant use on rural zoned land.
- Tree farms / plantations with linkages to existing remnant vegetation on the same lot or adjacent lots.
- Appropriate means of access to the tree farm / plantation and that the road network is not adversely damaged and public safety is not affected.
- Ensure the development, management and harvesting of plantations is in accordance with the Code of Practice for Plantations and the Guidelines for Plantation Fire Protection and the Shire's Firebreak Notice.
- To generally discourage the use of farm lots or an entire lot area for tree farms / plantations (particularly where it contains a dwelling) unless the applicant has clearly demonstrated extenuating circumstances or provided significant justification warranting support for a variation to any aspect of the Policy.
- To minimise the potential for any loss of population or agricultural land through the use of farm lots or an entire lot area for tree farms / plantations and encourage tree farms / plantations that provide a supplementary income to farmers.
- To encourage the selection of tree species that are complimentary to native remnant vegetation and will assist in maintaining landscape function.

For members to discuss at their own individual level:

- analysis of available rural land to support tree farms relative to other rural land uses in the Shire – Special Control Areas;
- areas where tree farms may provide environmental benefits such as use of less productive farm land and addressing land degradation such as soil erosion or salinity in the Shire;
- areas where tree farms might be unsuitable e.g. priority agriculture land, bushfire buffers to sensitive land uses or visual landscape protection; and
- the location of the tree farm and its relationship to the surrounding land uses.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

NEWROC discuss the two tree farm policies and provide feedback on preferences for inclusion in a set of guidelines, that demonstrates a coordinated approach by member Shires.

Item lay on the table

Anthony from the Eco Group was unavailable for the Executive meeting, however has provided an email to members to consider (attached).

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

Submitted for discussion

Discussion:

- Different value returns for land owners e.g. Carbon off set (set and forget) v timber processing
- Town Planning Schemes influence this issue but State Government overrides it

RESOLUTION

Item to be discussed and worked upon again at the October Executive meeting.

Moved: Cr Shadbolt

Seconded: Cr Garner

CARRIED 6/0

9. OTHER MATTERS, INTRODUCED BY DECISION OF THE MEETING

Telecommunications (poor coverage)

- NEWROC EO to contact TELSTRA regarding coverage and 3G closure on 28 October

Doctor availability at Hospitals

- Cr Shadbolt to provide feedback to the District Health Advisory Committee via Cr Stratford

10. GENERAL UPDATES

10.1 Housing

- Alex Mackenzie from the WDC is visiting Shires to discuss housing.
- Department of Communities is investigating housing in the region (public housing) Members to send in examples of pain points, EO will liaise with the consultant completing the work.
 - GROH examples: high \$300s rent/week in Mukinbudin. No teacher housing in Nungarin. Public servants working in our communities but keeping their residence in Perth (paying rent and paying a mortgage elsewhere). Important to retain teacher houses for teachers, otherwise a reallocation means its difficult to get the allocation back. Shire of Trayning has built a house for WACHS, 10yr lease due to the lack of housing.

10.2 WALGA Band 4 Meeting 11th October

- Members discussed presenting common priorities, and perhaps approaching the session with what can the State Government do for us?
- OAG issue will influence discussions. Fees and costs need to be transparent

10.3 Regional Waste Grant Application

- No outcome as yet

10.4 Road Safety

- RoeROC recently discussed the State Governments campaign for speed limitations on country roads to improve road safety. A number of other issues impact road safety (road construction, maintenance, signage etc).
- At the next WALGA Zone meeting there will be a discussion on MC's licenses and road safety.

11. 2024 MEETING SCHEDULE

| | | |
|-------------|-----------|------------------|
| 29 October | Executive | Shire of Koorda |
| 26 November | Council | Shire of Dowerin |

12. CLOSURE

Cr Stratford thanked the Shire of Wyalkatchem for hosting the meeting. The acting Chair closed the meeting at 5.29pm.