



murchisonshire

Ancient land under brilliant skies

Agenda for the Ordinary Meeting of the

Murchison Shire Council

To be held in the Council Chambers, Carnarvon Mullewa Road, Murchison,
on Thursday **26 June 2025**, commencing at 12:00 noon

Ancient land under brilliant skies

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ATTACHMENTS

1 DECLARATION OF OPENING/ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS

Shire President declared the meeting open at

2 RECORD OF ATTENDANCE/APOLOGIES/LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Present

Councillors

Cr R Foulkes-Taylor
Cr A Whitmarsh
Cr Q Fowler
Cr E Foulkes-Taylor
Cr M Fowler
Cr G Mead

Staff

Bill Boehm – CEO
William Herold – Works Manager
Bec Fogarty – Community Manager
Travis Bate (RSM) – Financial Accountant

3 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

3.1 Ordinary Council Meeting – 22 May 2025

Background

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council have previously been circulated to all Councillors.

Recommendation

That the minutes of the Ordinary Council meeting held on 22 May 2025 be confirmed as an accurate record of proceedings.

Voting Requirements:

Simple Majority

Council Decision		
Moved: Cr	Seconded: Cr	
Carried/Lost	For	Against

4 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

5 RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS PUBLIC QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE

Nil

6 STANDING ORDERS

Matter for Consideration

It has been customary practice in the interests of a productive meeting in relation to the Conduct of Members during debates for the Council suspend Standing Orders 8.2 (Limitation on Number of speeches) and 8.3 (Duration of Speeches) under Local Law 2001. To facilitate this, the following recommended resolution is required.

Recommendation

That the following Local Law-Standing Orders 2001 be stood down:

- 8.2 Limitation on the number of speeches
- 8.3 Duration of speeches

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Council Decision		
Moved: Cr	Seconded: Cr	
Carried/Lost	For	Against

7 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

8 NEXT MEETING

Thursday 24 July 2025 commencing at 12:00noon.

9 APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

10 URGENT BUSINESS

Nil

11 NOTICE OF ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

17.1.1 Account Listings Paid since the last list was presented to Council

12 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY PRESIDING PERSON WITHOUT DISCUSSION

13 PETITIONS/DEPUTATIONS/PRESENTATIONS/SUBMISSIONS

14 ANNOUNCEMENTS CONCERNING MEETINGS ATTENDED

14.1 Shire President

14.2 Councillors

15 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Nil

16 WORKS

16.1 Works Report

File: 12.42
Author: William Herold – Works Manager
Bill Boehm – Chief Executive Officer **
Interest Declared: No interest to disclose
Date: 21 June 2025
Attachments: Nil

Construction

The Construction Crew have continued with their work on the Errabiddy Bluff Rd and progressed well considering the weather delays and being pulled away to cart material in for the pool and community center precincts, and then to cart excess material away and to tidy up. The wood for the Polo X carnival has been carted in as well as a general cleanup around the Settlement in preparation for the Shit Box rally and the Polo X carnival. The Errabiddy Bluff Rd. should be a great improvement once completed as it should shed most of the water that used to accumulate keeping the road closed for weeks at times.

Maintenance

The crew have completed the work on the Sharks Bay side of the Byro- Woodleigh Rd, patch graded our section of the Byro Woodleigh Rd. Headed south on the Carnarvon- Mullewa Rd from the Byro- Woodleigh Rd. intersection picking up the Muggon Rd. on their way past. Once back in the Settlement they will spend some time on cleaning grids and catch up on some sign maintenance. This will however be dependent on rainfall, so as not to waste good grading conditions.

SKA Route Works

As we approach the end of the financial year most of the upgrade work has been completed. Squires Resources still have two relatively minor jobs on the Boolardy-Kalli Rd to complete and then it will be maintenance only until the upcoming financial year's work has been submitted and approved.

Walladar have started work on the CGG section of the Carnarvon-Mullewa Rd, kicking off with two re-sheet jobs, about 4 km.

Water Upgrade Work

This is now complete, up and running. MGPWA will return in August for some minor fine tuning in the pump house. Next cab off the rank will be the chlorinator. At the time of writing, I do not have a start date for delivery and installation on site

Flood Damage

These works have continued in the northeast of the Shire. With all the other developments going on it feels like this important work has flown under the radar a bit. My thanks to both THEM Earthmoving and Greenfield Technical Services for getting on with the job at hand and producing the quality of work we have come to expect.

Also, DFES have approved the work from the December 2024 rain event (AGRN1175) with a deadline of 30 September 2025. What this means is the current work will stop until this work is complete. Well done to CEO Bill on not giving up and pursuing this through to a favorable conclusion for ourselves.

Settlement Development Works **

By the time the Council meets, turf and irrigation works around the caravan park ablutions block, pool and splashpad should have been completed as well as fencing of the pool area including installation of card key access. Once pool water operational training has been completed the formal pool and splashpad inspection can be undertaken.

Additional Paving and turf work at the Community Centre and most of the cleanup work will also have been finalised after the exist of the Shit Box Rally.

Meanwhile as previously foreshadowed, tender for the construction and delivery of Houses and Cabin Supply to the Settlement has been advertised and is scheduled for consideration by Council at the July Meeting.

Recommendation

That Council resolve that the Works Report be noted.

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Council Decision		
Moved: Cr	Seconded: Cr	
Carried/Lost	For	Against

17 FINANCE

17.1 Accounts Paid since the last list was presented to Council

File: 4.37.1
Author: Bill Boehm – Chief Executive Officer
Interest Declared: No interest to disclose
Date: 21 June 2025
Attachments: 17.1.1 EFT & Cheque Details for May 2025 (Elected Members Only)

Matter for Consideration

The *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996 Regulation 13* requires that if the local government has delegated to the CEO the exercise of its power to make payments from the municipal fund or the trust fund, then the CEO is to prepare a list of accounts paid by the CEO for each month and present this to the next ordinary meeting of the Council after the list has been prepared and have this list recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

A list of payments presented in accordance with *Regulation 13* of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* made since the last report to Council is attached.

Strategic Implications

None

Policy Implications

None

Budget/Financial Implications

Nil

Consultation

Nil

Recommendation

- 1 That that pursuant to LGA s5.23(2)(b) & (e) of the *Local Government Act 1995* that attachment 17.1.1 EFT & Cheque Details for May 2025 be discussed behind closed doors
- 2 That Council receive and note attachment 17.1.1 EFT & Cheque Details for May 2025 and that the accounts since the last report to Council, as provided to Councillors be recorded in the minutes as being presented to Council.

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

1 Item to be Discussed behind closed doors

Council Decision		
Moved: Cr	Seconded: Cr	
Carried/Lost	For	Against

The meeting was moved to behind closed doors at

3 Motion to open the meeting to the public

Council Decision		
Moved: Cr	Seconded: Cr	
Carried/Lost	For	Against

The meeting was moved out of closed doors at

2 Decisions Disclosed from the Closed Section of Meeting associated with Attachment Item 17.1

Council Decision		
Moved: Cr	Seconded: Cr	
Carried/Lost	For	Against

17.2 Financial Activity Statements 31 May 2025

File: 2.6
Author: Travis Bate (RSM) – Financial Accountant
Interest Declared: No interest to disclose
Date: 21 June 2025
Attachments: 17.2.1 Monthly Management Financial Report May 2025

Matter for Consideration

The Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996 Regulation 34 requires that local government report monthly and prescribes what is required to be reported. Council is required to consider and receipt the Monthly Financial Statements.

Comments

These statements are being presented to meet a statutory obligation to have each month's end and report presented within the following two months.

Key comments in relation to the report are as follows

- 1 Statement of Financial Activity
 - a Closing Surplus \$2,681,690 compared to budget \$410,382. The material variances are outlined in Note 2.
- 2 Note 2 Material Variances
 - a Revenue variances relate to same matters as reported in April.
 - i Note new item in relation to workers compensation reimbursements raised in May
 - b Expenditure variances
 - i Note new variance in relation to Employee Costs related to proportion of overhead costs allocated to operating expenditure year to date.
 - ii Other items the same as reported in April.
- 3 Note 4 – Total Cash Balances \$5,854,272. \$1,860,912 unrestricted and \$3,993,360 restricted reserves.
- 4 Note 6 Rates outstanding \$63,281, down from \$92,817 at April.
- 5 Note 9 Capital Expenditure
 - a Road Works
 - i SKA Route capex \$2.6M YTD (Apr \$2.4M)
 - b Infrastructure Other
 - i Drinking Water Reticulation \$303K (April \$206K)

Budget/Financial Implications:

Reports showing year to date financial performance allow monitoring of actual expenditure, revenue and overall results against budget targets.

Consultation

RSM Australia

Recommendation

That Council note the financial statements as presented for the period ending 31 May 2025 as attached.

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Council Decision**Moved: Cr****Seconded: Cr****Carried/Lost****For****Against**

17.3 2025 - 2026 Rates Review Update

File: 3.1
Author: Bill Boehm – Chief Executive Officer
Interest Declared: No interest to disclose
Date: 22 June 2025
Attachments: 17.3.1 Nil
17.3.2 Proposed Objects and Reasons for Proposed Differential Rates and Minimum Payments for the 2025-26 Financial Year

Matter for Consideration

Update review of Council's Rating Strategy as part of Council considering its proposed 2025-26 Rates and the supporting objects and reasons for differential rates.

Background

At the May 2025 Council Meeting Council considered a comprehensive 2025-26 Rates Review Report before resolving as follows.

- 1 *That the Chief Executive Officers 2025-26 Rates Review Report be noted*
- 2 *That Council endorse the following proposed differential rates and minimum payments for 2025-26 Financial Year for the purpose of giving local public notice of its intentions to impose differential general rates and minimum payments for the 2025-26 Financial Year*

Differential Rate Types	Proposed	
	rate in dollar cents	min payment \$
<i>UV Pastoral</i>	<i>9.932</i>	<i>1,000</i>
<i>UV Mining</i>	<i>19.830</i>	<i>1,000</i>
<i>UV Prospecting & Exploration</i>	<i>19.830</i>	<i>1,000</i>

- 4 *That Council adopts the Objects and Reasons for Differential Rates and Minimum Payments for 2025-26 as attached in attachment 17.3.2.*
- 5 *That public submissions be invited.*

Since this time public notice has been undertake in the Western Australian where it indicates that Electors or ratepayers are invited to make submissions regarding the proposed differential rates, to be received at the Shire Office no later than 4.00 pm Wednesday 25 June 2025.

Comment

At the time of preparing the agenda no submissions have been received. On the basis that no public submissions are received prior to the Meeting then Council is able to adopt the differential rates and minimum as advertised when adopting its budgets. The recommendations below are prefaced on this scenario. Should submissions be received prior to the meeting then Council will need to consider and have regard to them prior to making a final determination on what differential rates and minimums are finally adopted.

Budget / Financial Implications:

Proposed differential rates will be set to meet the estimated budget deficiency in the 2025-26 financial year.

Strategic Implications

Delivery of strategic outcomes are impacted upon through the budget process as underpinned in part through the setting of rates.

Murchison Shire Community Strategic Plan

Element	Description
Vision Statement	<i>Working together to preserve the unique character of the Shire, supporting diverse and sustainable lifestyle and economic opportunities.</i>
Civic Leadership Objective 4	<i>To provide Good Governance to the Murchison Shire through: Detailed and professional administration; Compliance with statutory requirements; High-quality forward planning, particularly for assets and finances;</i>
Strategies	
Financial Planning and Management	<i>To responsibly manage Council's financial resources to ensure optimum value for money and sustainable asset management.</i>
Asset Management	<i>Meet the required level of service in the most cost-effective manner for present and future residents.</i>

Sustainability Implications

Environmental	There are no known significant environmental considerations.
Economic	There are significant economic considerations.
Social	There will potentially be impacts on social considerations.

Policy Implications

Nil.

This report and the one that preceded it at the May 2025 Meeting will assist in an improved policy setting framework. As a result, these documents and draft budgets that result have identified a need to lift revenue and will impact in the setting of rates.

Recommendation

That Council Resolve as follows:

- 1 That the Chief Executive Officers 2025 - 26 Rates Review Update Report be noted.
- 2 That Council continues with its policy position forming part of the 2025-26 Rates Review and for future rates scenarios that as far as practicable aspects associated with natural growth or decline are ignored when setting rates.

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Council Decision		
Moved: Cr	Seconded: Cr	
Carried/Lost	For	Against

18 DEVELOPMENT

18.1 Community Development Progress Report

File:

Author: Bec Fogarty – Community Officer

Interest Declared: No interest to disclose

Date: 20 June 2025

Attachments: Nil

Matter for Consideration

Community Development Progress Report June Council Meeting

Background

This report seeks to inform the Shire of the works undertaken in relation to references to the relevant objectives and strategies contained within the Community Strategic Plan, in accordance with the following Vision Statement.

Vision Statement	<i>Working together to preserve the unique character of the Shire, supporting diverse and sustainable lifestyle and economic opportunities.</i>
Objectives & Strategies	<i>Description</i>

Murchison Camp Oven Muster

Economic Objective 1	<i>To develop the region's economic potential to encourage families and businesses to stay in the area.</i>
Tourism Development	<i>To promote and support a sustainable tourism industry in the Shire of Murchison.</i>
Economic Development	<i>Retain existing industries and encourage the establishment of new industries to broaden the region's economic base through the provision of residential and industrial land / buildings in Murchison</i>
Environmental Objective 2	<i>To improve the sustainability of land use and improve the condition of the environment.</i>
Social Objective 3	<i>To develop, co-ordinate, provide and support services and facilities which enhance the quality of community life in the Shire by:</i> <i>Supporting and assisting in coordinating projects and events as required.</i> <i>Providing information on services (funding opportunities, Grant processes etc.).</i> <i>Supporting community groups.</i>
Civic Leadership Objective 4	<i>To provide Good Governance to the Murchison Shire through:</i> <i>Regional collaboration where possible;</i> <i>Openness and transparency and enhanced consultation and public participation;</i>
Communication Strategies and more involvement with Pia Wadjari	<i>Increase communication between the Council and all sectors of the Community (both ways).</i>

This years event has attracted sponsorship from Regional Development Australia, RSM Geraldton, Yuin Station, Bullardoo Station/Walladar , UDLA, Them Earthmoving. additional sponsorship has been received from Squires Resources, Hosken Electrical and Mid-West Development Commission.

Current sponsorship total is \$31,500 Up 425% on 2024

This years event capacity is 175 patrons with the camping bookings managed through the ticket booking process. Over 33% of tickets have been sold when this report was written. The marketing campaign will continue to deploy over social media, local newsletters and printed flyers up until the event.

The event program has now been finalised as follows.

murchison camp oven muster

Event Program

Are you coming to the Murchison Camp Oven Muster? ♦

We are glad you're here and hope you enjoy the outback spirit and culinary delights of the Murchison region.

Oasis Roadhouse Opening Hours
 Friday - 07:30 - 18:30
 Saturday - 08:00 - 17:00
 Sunday - 08:00 - 14:00

First Aid and Medical Assistance
 Complete Medical Solutions

Murchison Sports Club Bar
 Open Saturday: 4pm - 10pm

Friday 1/08

from 8:00	Event Registration	Oasis Roadhouse
12:00	Official Welcome	Main event Area
12:15	Wood Working Presentation with Aidan	Main Event Area
13:00	Discover Murchison Flora with Drylands Permaculture	Main Event Area
14:00	Camp Oven Damper with Jo	Murchison Polocrosse Field
	Camp Oven Damper Cook-Off	
	TRANSFERS TO ERRABIDY BLUFF	
17:30	Murchison Picnic Dinner	Errabiddy Bluff
18:30	Screening of Survival in the Outback	Errabiddy Bluff
19:30	Stargazing with CSIRO	Errabiddy Bluff

Saturday 2/08

08:00	Wildflower Walk with Meg	Information Gazebo
09:00	Bringing desert plants to life with Drylands Permaculture	Main Event Area
10:00 - 15:00	Woodworking with Aidan	Main Event Area
10:00 - 15:00	Spinning Flowers with Michael	Main Event Area
10:00 - 15:00	Botanic Dying with Annette	Main Event Area
10:00	Bush Survival Skills with Outback Mike	Information Gazebo
11:00	Botanic Walk with Meg	Main Event Area
12:00	Secrets to growing desert plants from cuttings with Drylands Permaculture	Main Event Area
13:00	LUNCH BREAK	Main Event Area
14:00	Camp Oven Cooking with Outback Mike	Murchison Polocrosse Field
15:00 - 18:00	Camp Oven Dinner Cooking Time	Murchison Polocrosse Field
16:00	Billy Boiling Competition	Around the Community Centre
16:30 - 17:30	Family Games	Main Event Area
18:00	Long Table Dinner	Murchison Community Centre
19:00	Line Dancing with Michelle	Main Event Area
20:00 - 22:00	Music	Main Event Area

Sponsors: Regional Development Australia, MID WEST DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION, HOSKEN ELECTRICAL, EARTHMOVING, CSIRO, YUIN STATION, UDLA, RSM, SQUIRES RESOURCES, WARRALPA.

Tourism

Economic Objective 1 *To develop the region's economic potential to encourage families and businesses to stay in the area.*

Tourism Development *To promote and support a sustainable tourism industry in the Shire of Murchison.*

Civic Leadership Objective 4 *To provide Good Governance to the Murchison Shire through:*

Regional collaboration where possible;

Murchison Tourism Marketing Strategy

The draft strategy is currently being reviewed.

Upcoming events

Murchison Camp Oven Muster 1st & 2nd August, Annual Christmas Tree 13th December.

Event wrap up - Box Rally 20th June

Box Rallies arrived in Murchison Settlement for day one of their over 4,000km journey to Darwin to raise money for cancer research. The Friday evening saw over 516 people in 258 cars arrive from 4:30pm onwards. The patrons were well-behaved and respectful. They enjoyed a night of good food provided by external caterers that utilised the sports club and kitchen. The Murchison Sports Club had a very busy night in the bar. Thank you to Andrew, Lou, Rachel and Kerry-Ann for making the bar an incredible success. Many participants said they would like to come back and spend some time with us as guests, especially when it's swimming pool weather. The Roadhouse experienced a 350% increase in fuel sales and a 50% increase in Roadhouse transactions based on fuel and customer transactions of the Friday of the previous week. This has not taken into account Box Rallies booking out all dirt and grassed camping areas, hire fees associate with the sports club and related infrastructure, this is additional income not included above.



Tourism Partner News

Murchison Geo-Region Great Aussie Road Trip featuring Murchison has launched. The Murchison Geo Region episode aired on May 29th featuring the Bilung Pool, Errabiddy Bluff, Murchison Settlement from the Shire of Murchison. The episode has aired on the Outdoor Chanel to 28 countries. There are multiple repeats planned on weekends, weekdays and other channels. The promotional video can be seen here [GREAT AUSSIE ROAD TRIPS Murchison GeoRegion Promo EP1 on Vimeo](#)

AGO will be delivering an online workshop and campaign briefing on Tuesday, 22nd of July as part of the initiative discussed through the Murchison Executive group. I look forward to participating.

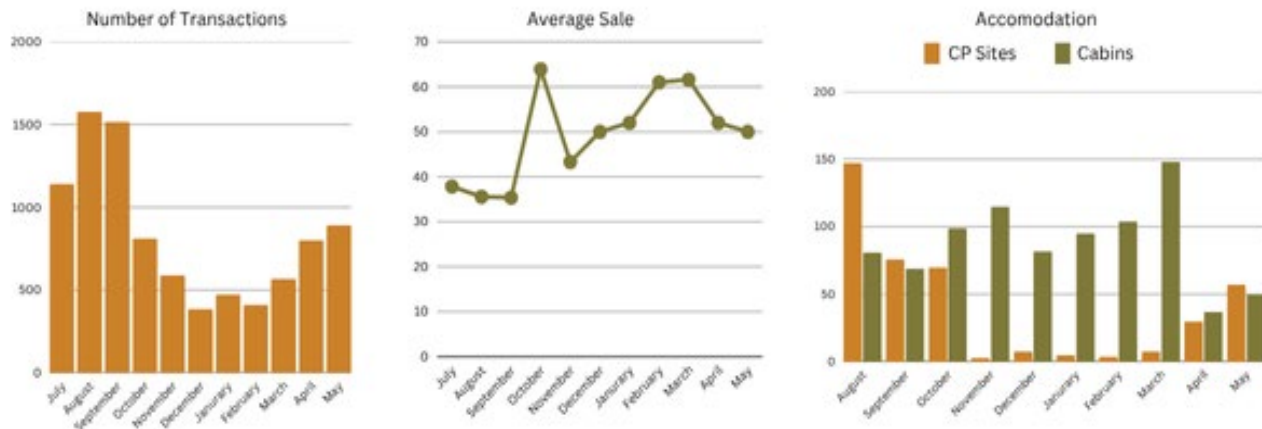
Tourism Council of WA An underspend in the Tourism WA Budget this current 2024-25 financial year has been rolled over to 2025-26 to maintain the budget. Unfortunately, there are no new initiatives in this budget to address the major decline in the future budget in 2026-27, especially in the Destination Marketing budget.

Tourism Council WA is advocating for consistent marketing and event funding over three years to maintain recurring events and marketing efforts. Tourism Council WA will advocate for funding in the December Mid-Year budget review to ensure the budget does not decline, especially for aviation, regional marketing, recurring events and regional event funding.

State Government 2025 Tourism Budget. Significantly the WA Government have also included Tourism infrastructure related budget initiatives with \$7.3M over two years for Mount Augustus Tourism Infrastructure. This aligns well with the collaborative works and discussions currently being had with the Shire of Upper Gascoyne on deployment of digital tourism information bays and road network improvements. It also dovetails in with Murchison, Upper Gascoyne and Meekatharra Shires Future Resources Road MRWA submission to upgrade the Carnarvon-Mullewa Road and east - west Dalgety Downs to Meekatharra link.

Gascoyne Murchison Outback Pathways Tourism Network Meeting The first of a monthly series of network meetings supported by the Murchison Executive Group occurred. The meeting covered off areas for learning on a monthly basis and the inclusion of visitor centre-based staff along with Community Development Officers. Discussions were had regarding data collection implementation, return on investment for AGO campaigns, development of tourism action plans for each shire and how these work as a region.

Roadhouse Update



May has seen an increase in the booking of caravan park sites along with motel rooms, this is expected as we enter the traditional tourism season. This is supported with the number of transactions increasing through the Roadhouse systems. It is to be expected that the average sale amount decreases as traveller numbers and caravan site bookings increase due to the smaller purchase values.

Local Loyalty Scheme

The Local Loyalty Scheme has been released online through the monologue. We look forward to seeing and processing applications as they arrive.

We have received a total of 13 applications to this point and expect this to increase with the connection of the loyalty card to pool access for local residents.

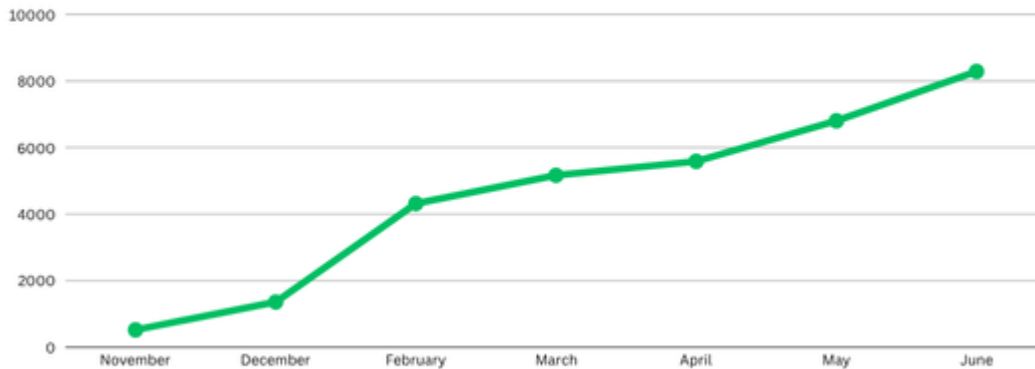
Containers for Change Recycling

Economic Objective 1	<i>To develop the region's economic potential to encourage families and businesses to stay in the area.</i>
Interpretive Centre	<i>Development of an Interpretative Centre was identified within the Tourism Development Strategies of the 2013 Strategic Community Plan.</i>
Tourism Development	<i>To promote and support a sustainable tourism industry in the Shire of Murchison.</i>
Environmental Objective 2	<i>To improve the sustainability of land use and improve the condition of the environment.</i>
Social Objective 3	<i>To develop, co-ordinate, provide and support services and facilities which enhance the quality of community life in the Shire by:</i>
	<i>Supporting and assisting in coordinating projects and events as required.</i>
	<i>Supporting community groups.</i>
Support for Community Groups	<i>Provision of Human Resources to assist community groups.</i>

The latest return of containers has seen the total number of recycled vessels reach 8,286 produced or donated to the shire that is a running total of \$828.60 going back to community initiatives.

Thank you to all Shire residents for supporting the recycling program and changing the bin you put your rubbish in.

Containers collected and donated to the Shire for Community Groups



Community Garden & Orchard

Economic Objective 1	<i>To develop the region's economic potential to encourage families and businesses to stay in the area.</i>
Tourism Development	<i>To promote and support a sustainable tourism industry in the Shire of Murchison.</i>
Economic Development	<i>Retain existing industries and encourage the establishment of new industries to broaden the region's economic base through the provision of residential and industrial land / buildings in Murchison</i>
Environmental Objective 2	<i>To improve the sustainability of land use and improve the condition of the environment.</i>
Social Objective 3	<i>To develop, co-ordinate, provide and support services and facilities which enhance the quality of community life in the Shire by:</i> <i>Supporting community groups.</i> <i>Supporting and maintaining social infrastructure (i.e. Parks, Gardens, Cemetery) and support those groups who use them.</i>
Support for Community Groups	<i>Provision of Human Resources to assist community groups.</i>

The community garden is working its magic with snow peas, cabbages and various greens in full swing. Orchard planning has progressed as the works team brings in local fill to combine with organic matter to provide the nutrition required for our new trees to grow up big and strong.

Communications

Civic Leadership Objective 4	<i>To provide Good Governance to the Murchison Shire through:</i> <i>Regional collaboration where possible;</i> <i>Detailed and professional administration;</i> <i>High levels of accountability;</i> <i>Compliance with statutory requirements;</i> <i>High-quality forward planning, particularly for assets and finances;</i> <i>Openness and transparency and enhanced consultation and public participation;</i> <i>Provision of quality customer services, good financial management and pursuit of excellence in professional administration and communication.</i>
Strategies	
Communication Strategies and more involvement with Pia Wadjari	<i>Increase communication between the Council and all sectors of the Community (both ways).</i>

Email Communications

- ~ 5 Murchison Camp Oven Muster x 4, RFT1 2025-2026 Housing Construction and Supply
- ~ 3 Road Condition Reports

Social Media Communications

The Shire continues to share developments within the settlement and Shire through Facebook. This month has been used to present tourism within the shire in a positive light.

Mail Communications

None

The next Monologue will be released post the June Council Meeting.

Statutory Environment

Local Government Act 1995.

Sustainability Implications

Environmental There are no known significant environmental considerations.
Economic There are no known significant economic considerations.
Social There are no known significant social considerations.

Strategic Implications

Murchison Shire Council Community Strategic Plan as detailed above for each item.

Recommendation

That Council note the Community Development Progress Report

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Council Decision		
Moved: Cr	Seconded: Cr	
Carried/Lost	For	Against

19 ADMINISTRATION

19.1 WALGA Communications Agreement Feedback

File:

Author: Bill Boehm – Chief Executive Officer

Interest Declared: No interest to disclose

Date 21 June 2025

Attachments: 19.1.1 WALGA Communications Agreement Discussion Paper – Murchison Draft Comments
19.1.2 DLGSC Communications Agreement Discussion Paper
19.1.3 Draft Local Government (Default Communications Agreement) Order 2025

Matter for Consideration:

Provision of Feedback to WALGA to assist them in the composition of a sector-wide response to the Department of Local Government Sport & Cultural Industries consultation on proposed regulations and Ministerial order to give effect to communications agreements.

Background

Communications Agreements were outlined in the Minister for Local Government's Reform Proposals released in 2022. Following sector consultation, WALGA adopted the following advocacy position in relation to Communication Agreements:

2.5.3 Council Communication Agreements

The Local Government sector supports the introduction of a consistent, regulated Communications Agreement between Councils and the CEO within Local Governments.

Amendments to achieve this reform were included in the *Local Government Amendment Act 2023* but are yet to take effect. These include:

- ~ Amendments to Section 5.92 of the *Local Government Act 1995* (the Act) to provide that the right of a Council Member or Committee Member to access information under that section must be exercised in accordance with the Local Government's communications agreement.
- ~ New section 5.92A requiring every Local Government to have a communications agreement between the Council and the CEO regulating the matters specified in the Act and regulations.
- ~ New section 5.92B requiring the Minister to make Ministerial Order setting out a default communications agreement which applies at any time a Local Government does not have its own communications agreement.
- ~ New section 5.92C enabling Local Governments to adopt and amend its own communications agreement with the agreement of the CEO, which will expire at the end of every caretaker period, and upon the end of the CEO's employment with that Local Government.

On 5 June 2025, the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (the Department) published the draft Local Government Regulations Amendment Regulations 2025 (the Draft Regulations) and draft Local Government (Default Communications Agreement) Order 2025 (the Draft Order). The Department has also published a Communications Agreement Consultation Paper (the DLGSC Consultation Paper) which explains the Draft Regulations and Draft Order.

The Draft Regulations prescribe the minimum requirements for all communications agreements and provide the mechanism to require compliance by Local Government employees, Council Members and Committee Members.

The Draft Order sets out what is proposed to be the default communications agreement in Schedule 1. As all Local Governments will be subject to this default agreement on a regular basis (at least every two years after each caretaker period and after a CEO's employment ends) as well as at any time an agreement cannot be reached between Council and the CEO, it is critical that the default agreement is fit for purpose.

Comment

Attached is an Info Page and Discussion Paper provided by WALGA summarising the proposed regulatory amendments and order, together with commentary for each Local Government's consideration plus a copy of DLGSC's discussion paper plus the Draft Legislative Order. Local Governments can choose to provide feedback to some or all sections and can also provide a submission in an alternative format. Alternatively Council, may choose to not provide feedback. Feedback is requested by 4pm Monday 28 July 2025.

In the normal course of events the matters being addressed would be covered under operational protocols and Council Policies. In our instance Code 1.12 Code of Conduct Council Members and Candidates and Policy and Procedures 2.1 Councillor Requirements would largely address matters raised. Improvements could be introduced but by and large these have historically been sufficient.

In my view, shared with others within local government, this additional legislative bureaucratic approach is unnecessary. Once again it sees the State Government attempting to regulate a minority of local governments, some of whom may have their own communication issues by imposing a regulatory burden on others. A discussion with each local government CEO might have been prudent to see if there is a communication problem in the first place. More likely for many a simple set of guidelines would have been sufficient.

Whilst the State Government is implementing Local Government "Reform" Proposals it is perhaps worth reviewing the definition of "reform" which means to "*make changes in (something, especially an institution or practice) in order to improve it.*" By any measure, improvements to local government are more often than not undertaken on a continuous review basis with legislation not required.

For the purpose of the exercise I have provided "some" draft responses as a guide within the WALGA framework. Equally or in addition Council could just respond to WALGA indicating along the lines of

"Whilst the Shire of Murchison supports the introduction of a framework of Communications Agreements between Councils and the CEO within Local Government, these should be the domain of each local government to independently develop administer to meet local needs and resources.

The reality though is if the Communications Order becomes legislation, the Council will need develop up its own document as the draft order provisions will likely prove to be excessive.

Strategic Implications

Nil

Budget/Financial Implications:

Nil

Consultation

Tony Brown (Executive Director Member Services) WALGA

Recommendations

That Council

- 1 Note the Chief Executive Officer's WALGA Communications Agreement Feedback Report
- 2 For Council to decide what response if any

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Council Decision

Moved: Cr

Seconded: Cr

Carried/Lost

For

Against

20 CEO ACTIVITY REPORT

File:

Author: Bill Boehm – Chief Executive Officer

Interest Declared: No interest to disclose

Date 22 June 2025

Attachments: Nil

Update

Staffing

The past month has seen several changes in staffing following ongoing recruitment actions.

Colin Smith (Gardner), Gary Pardoe (Gardener) and Cheryl Knight (Finance Officer) have left to pursue other opportunities. Rachel Evans (Tourism and Community Development Support Officer), Noren Gregorio (Finance Officer), Todd Mawdesley (Works Administration Finance Officer) have commenced within the Office and Depot. Brendan Bunter (Plant Operator) has commenced with Liam Gall (Plant Operator) also returning.

Roadhouse backpackers Sebastian Cabas and Diane Menau have also commenced following the departure of Ambroise Montagnac and Anne Bellucci. Recruitment for a Mechanic and relief Roadhouse Managers is also underway. Replacement Gardner options are also being reviewed.

General

The following update of activities is provided.

Date	Activity
21.05.2025	PIA Wadjari School Council Meeting via Teams. Minister Jarvis Letter. Meetings with Roadhouse, Community Manager & Works Manager. General Administration
22.05.2025	Council Meeting. Biggest Morning Tea. Council Minutes. General Administration
23.05.2025	Council Minutes. Council Meeting follow up actions. General Administration. Catch up with Community Manager. Minister Jarvis Audit Fees Review Response
24.05.2025	Future Resources Roads Submission Work. General Administration Works
25.05.2025 to 27.05.2025	Administration Improvements Works Area
28.05.2025	General Administration Works
29.05.2025	General Administration. Employment Interviews with Community Manager
30.05.2025 to 31.05.2025	Administration Improvements Works Area
2.06.2025	Public Holiday. General Administration
3.06.2025	General Administration / LRCIP Work
4.06.2025	General Administration / LRCIP Work. Catch up with Works Manager & Community Manager. Elections Work
5.06.2025	General Administration. Catch up with Works Manager & Community Manager
6.06.2025	General Administration. Pre Budget Work
9.06.2025	TOIL
10.06.2025	TOIL. Travel to Geraldton for MRWA Technical Working Group Meeting
11.06.2025	Meeting with Peter Jone and John Welbourne (Athea Resources & Fenix), Technical Working Group Meeting. Brief Meeting with Leon Wilson MRWA. Travel back to Murchison
12.06.2025	Fuel Review Work. Catch up with Works Manager & Community Manager. WAEC Election Work
13.06.2025	Fuel Review, Budget Preparation & Infrastructure Development Fund Work. Touch base via phone with Josh Hoskens
14.06.2025 to 15.06.2025	Budget Preparation & Housing Tender Work

Date	Activity
16.06.2025	SKA Work. Catch up briefings with Works Manager & Community Manager. Works Timesheet work
17.06.2025	Budget Preparation Work. Payroll assistance
18.06.2025	Payroll Timesheet & Finance Support. Catch up Meeting with Works Manager I & Community Manager
19.06.2025	Payroll Timesheets. Road Asset Management Plan Update. Carnarvon-Mullewa Rd Project Definition & Analysis.
20.06.2025 to 23.06.2025	Budget Preparation and Agenda Work

Recommendation

That Council note the CEO's Activity Report.

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Council Decision

Moved: Cr

Seconded: Cr

Carried/Lost

For

Against

21 OTHER ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

Nil

22 MEETING CLOSURE

The Shire President closed the meeting at.