



MINUTES

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING



Thursday 11 December 2025

Commencing at 4.07pm in the
Shire of Wyalkatchem Council Chambers
27 Flint Street, Wyalkatchem

UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

These unconfirmed Minutes are approved for distribution 15 December 2025.

Ian McCabe

ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

DISCLAIMER

No responsibility whatsoever is implied or accepted by the Shire of Wyalkatchem for any act, omission or statement or intimation occurring during this meeting. It is strongly advised that persons do not act on what is heard at this meeting and should only rely on written confirmation of Council's decisions, which will be provided within ten days of this meeting.

DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Councillors and staff are reminded of the requirements of section 5.65 of the *Local Government Act 1995*, to disclose any interest or perceived interest in any matter to be discussed during a meeting, and also the requirement to disclose any item affecting impartiality.

Financial Interest:

Under section 5.60A of the *Local Government Act 1995*, a person is said to have a financial interest in a matter if it is reasonable to expect that the matter will, if dealt with by the Local Government in a particular way, result in a financial gain, loss, benefit or detriment for the person.

Proximity Interest:

Under section 5.60B of the *Local Government Act 1995*, a person is said to have a proximity interest in a matter if the matter concerns a proposed change to a planning scheme affecting land that adjoins the person's land; a proposed change to the zoning or use of land that adjoins the person's land; or a proposed development of land that adjoins the person's land.

Impartiality Interest:

To maintain transparency, it is important to disclose all interests, including impartiality interests which include interests arising from kinship, friendship and membership of associations. If it is possible that your vote on a matter may be perceived as impartial, you should disclose your interest.

Disclosing an Interest:

Disclosures must be made, in writing, to the Chief Executive Officer prior to the meeting at which the matter in which you have an interest is to be discussed.

If you disclose a Financial or Proximity Interest, you must leave the room while the matter is discussed and voted on. Only after a decision has been reached may you return to the meeting, at which time the Presiding Person will inform you of Council's decision on the matter.

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1. DECLARATION OF OPENING

The Presiding Member Cr Christy Petchell declared the meeting open at 4.07pm.

2. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

2.1. Response to Public Questions Previously Taken on Notice

NIL

2.2. Declaration of Public Question Time opened

4.08pm NIL

2.3. Declaration of Public Question Time closed

4.08pm NIL

3. ATTENDANCE, APOLOGIES, LEAVE OF ABSENCE

3.1. Attendance

Cr Dickson attended remotely by TEAMS

3.2. Apologies

3.3. Approved Leave of Absence

3.4. Applications for Leave of Absence

4. OBITUARIES

NIL

5. PETITIONS, DEPUTATIONS, PRESENTATIONS

NIL

5.1. Petitions

5.2. Deputations

5.3. Presentations

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

NIL

6.1. Financial and Proximity Interest

6.2. Impartiality Interests

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE PRESIDING MEMBER WITHOUT DISCUSSION

NIL

8. MATTERS FOR WHICH THE MEETING MAY BE CLOSED

Item 13.1 Appointment of Chief Executive Officer – preferred candidate

9. REPORTS

9.1 GOVERNANCE

9.1.1 REGIONAL HOUSING SUPPORT FUND

Applicant:	Not Applicable
Location:	Not Applicable
Date:	9 December 2025
Reporting Officer:	Ian McCabe Acting Chief Executive Officer
Disclosure of Interest:	No interest to disclose
File Number:	22.23.2
Attachment Reference:	Confidential Attachments: 1. Econisis Key Worker Housing Cost Benefit Analysis - DRAFT (for NEWROC); 2. Preliminary Business Case, Investment in Key Worker Housing – DRAFT (for NEWROC).

VOTING REQUIREMENT

Simple Majority

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION / RESOLUTION

(155/2025) Move: Cr Begley Seconded: Cr Gamble

That Council:

1. Support the preparation and submission of a joint application to the Regional Housing Support Fund, under the auspices of NEWROC, for the purpose of Key Worker Housing.
2. Endorses the identification of \$200,000 within the Community Development Reserve for this purpose.

CARRIED 7/0

Vote For: Cr's Petchell, Stratford, Dickson, Loton, Begley, Gamble, Lawson Kerr

BACKGROUND

Council has identified housing as an area of priority. Housing is a necessary pre-requisite to enable social and economic activity. Equally, the effective functioning of the local

government and the district requires adequate support of its workforce; the workforce of essential workers; the workforce of the local economy.

The North-Eastern Wheatbelt Regional Organisation of Councils (NEWROC) is proposing to seek State funding so that four councils, including Wyalkatchem, can pursue a key worker housing agenda. This aligns with Council objectives.

COMMENT

In February 2024 the North-Eastern Wheatbelt Regional Organisation of Councils (NEWROC) commenced investigation of the issue of workers' accommodation. There was anecdotal evidence that the lack of suitable accommodation was a brake on the local economies of member councils. However, a lack of empirical evidence on existing housing stock or likely requirements made the development of strategic planning difficult. Further, any possible investment by local governments, state government or business would be speculative and potentially wasteful.

NEWROC decided to commission, with the support of the Wheatbelt Development Commission, the development of economic analysis and a subsequent business case that would provide suitable evidence for each member council. Recently issued draft versions of these documents are attached for councillors to review. These are currently endorsed as Confidential by NEWROC and consequently are provided on that basis.

In the interim, the WA State Government has announced a \$25 million Regional Housing Support Fund, to provide grants to boost new housing and residential lot supply projects across regional Western Australia. Grants will be for a maximum of \$5 million for any one project and application is open to local governments and community housing entities. The expectation is that the Fund will be significantly over-subscribed.

NEWROC is preparing a submission on behalf of four member shires (Dowerin, Mukinbudin, Mount Marshall and Wyalkatchem) and this must be completed by 19 December 2025.

Recent recruitment efforts have identified the provision of appropriate housing as a barrier to recruitment. In addition, the appropriateness of provided housing often means a larger property is provided than might be necessary. When properly managed, the construction of more suitable properties could mean that the subsequent liquidation of shire housing stock could feed into the Wyalkatchem residential market. This could allow for family migration into the district.

Finally, the Acting CEO is developing a paper that contemplates an integrated view of housing in Wyalkatchem across all demographics and all stakeholders. This will better support council's vision for the future by identifying opportunities that enable engagement and warrant further investigation.

To commit to this project requires the identification of possible contributory funding. As the timing is outside the budget cycle and the shire is not yet committing to expenditure, for the purpose of this grant application, this project is unbudgeted and preliminary. Accordingly, the Acting CEO recommends Council support the identification of suitable

reserve funding as the source of the local government's future commitment. A subsequent item would be presented to approve expenditure.

STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT

Local Government Act 1995.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There is no directly relevant policy to this item.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The identified reserve to fund this item is Community Development. The balance as at 20 November 2025 was \$709,866 – a 10% contribution to the Wyalkatchem elements of this project could approximate \$200,000.

As an unbudgeted item, this would require a budget variation and approval by Council. This would be pursued should the grant be approved.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

Risk is the effect of uncertainty on meeting business objectives. Should this item be approved, it provides for reduced uncertainty by setting business objectives and making them known. When supported by government, this item would reduce Council's service provision risk by improving worker accommodation. Further, this item furthers the delivery of council objectives for the community and addresses population associated risk.

COMMUNITY AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

There is a case for all of Council's Strategic objectives aligning with this item. However, the following are directly relevant:

Goal 2: Essential services and infrastructure enable local economic growth.

2.2 Develop land and housing development initiatives in partnership with the private sector and all tiers of government.

2.3 Deliver planned Shire housing stock by 2034.

Goal 10: Consult and engage with our community and strategic partners.

10.2 Develop strategic partnerships with regional organisations, State and Federal governments.

Goal 11: High standard of governance.

11.5 Continue to allocate reserves for strategic projects.

10. MOTIONS OF WHICH PREVIOUS NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN
NIL

11. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF WHICH DUE NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN
NIL

12. URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE PERSON PRESIDING OR BY DECISION
NIL

13. MATTERS BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

Officer's Recommendation / Resolution

(156/2025) Moved: Cr Stratford

Seconded: Cr Loton

CARRIED 7/0

Vote For: Cr's Petchell, Stratford, Dickson, Loton, Begley, Gamble, Lawson Kerr

That Council moves behind closed doors in accordance with s. 5.23 (2)(b) of the Local Government Act 1995, to deal with matters relating to the personal affairs of a person.

13.1 RECRUITMENT OF CEO – PREFERRED CANDIDATE

Applicant:	Not Applicable
Location:	Whole of District
Date:	10 December 2025
Reporting Officer:	Ian McCabe, Acting Chief Executive Officer
Disclosure of Interest:	No interest to disclose
File Number:	22.23.5 Selection
Attachment Reference:	Confidential Attachments.

1. Recommendation of the Selection Panel; 2. Selection Report; 3. Total Reward Package components, contract terms.

VOTING REQUIREMENT

Absolute Majority

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION / RESOLUTION

(157 / 2025) Moved: Cr Lawson Kerr Seconded: Cr Stratford

That Council:

1. Notes the information provided by the recruitment consultant within the attached Selection Report; and,
2. Receives the recommendation of the Selection Panel that Candidate A, as identified in Confidential Attachment 1, is considered the most suitably experienced and qualified applicant; and,
3. Agrees that in making an assessment against the CEO selection criteria identifies Candidate A, as named in Confidential Attachment 1, as the preferred candidate for appointment on the basis of knowledge, experience, qualifications and skills; and,
4. Approves the President in making of an offer of employment to the preferred candidate, named in Confidential Attachment 1, for the position of CEO at the Shire of Wyalkatchem, as the candidate the Council believes is most suitably qualified for the position, subject to satisfactory completion of all necessary background checks and acceptable negotiated terms of contract; and,
5. Authorises the President, with the support of the Acting Chief Executive Officer, to negotiate a written contract according to the terms attached to this item; and,

6. Request that the negotiated contract and acceptance of employment be presented to Council so the terms of contract and employment may be approved by absolute majority; and,
7. Extends thanks to all applicants who expressed an interest in the position of Chief Executive Officer, Shire of Wyalkatchem.; and,
8. Extend thanks to Ms Emily Bulloch, consultant, for the support of the panel and Council in this matter; and,
9. Extend thanks to Mr David Holdsworth for his participation as a Selection Panel member.

CARRIED 7/0

Vote For: Cr's Petchell, Stratford, Dickson, Loton, Begley, Gamble, Lawson Kerr

SUMMARY

'A local government is to employ a person to be the CEO of the local government' (s.5.36 Local Government Act 1995).

The CEO recruitment selection panel has made a recommendation to Council as per Attachment 1.

BACKGROUND

The Shire of Wyalkatchem commenced a recruitment process to employ a Chief Executive Officer with the setting of a recruitment timeline 17 July 2025; and the selection of a recruitment advisor 16 October 2025.

Guided by Council's Adopted Standards for CEO Recruitment policy, a selection panel was formed, and advertising commenced 3 November 2025, with interviews being held 4 December 2025.

The selection panel has made a recommendation to Council.

COMMENT

A temporary CEO has been in place since 10 July 2025. The timing of key organisational obligations, the limitations of caretaker provisions and consideration of possible changes to council composition, resulted in deferral of a CEO recruitment process until after the local government election.

An independent person to participate as a member of the Selection Panel was identified October 2025. As a former councillor and shire president, and significant contributor to the community and Freeman of the Shire, Mr David Holdsworth was assessed by Council to have the necessary qualifications and experience to contribute to the Panels' work.

Council approved a selection criteria and job description and resolved to retain a recruitment consultant.

A competitive quotation process was conducted through the West Australian Local Government Association (WALGA) Vendor Panel application. There were nine submissions assessed and Beilby Downing Teal were selected. Principal Consultant Ms Emily Bulloch managed the process and met with the Acting CEO, the President and the Selection Panel across a range of dates between 20 October 2025 and the date of this item.

The work of the Selection Panel, with the support of the Consultant, included interview preparation, review of applications, short-listing of candidates, and interview. The panel were able to identify a preferred candidate and have made a recommendation to Council that complies with the Model Standard.

This item recommends an offer of employment be made, subject to completion of background checks and contract negotiation. That contract and acceptance of employment is then approved by Absolute Majority by Council at a subsequent meeting.

STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT

Division 4, Local Government Act 1995

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This item is in compliance with policy 5.24, the Adopted Model Standards for CEO Recruitment, Performance and Termination.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The recruitment, on-boarding and remuneration of Chief Executive Officer is budgeted for in the approved 2025/ 26 financial budget.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

Risk is the effect of uncertainty on business outcomes. The appointment of a Chief Executive Officer will reduce uncertainty. This item does not in itself create risk and will address matters of uncertainty.

COMMUNITY AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The CEO is Council's chief advisor and implementor of objectives. This item has a relationship to all community and strategic objectives.

Officer's Recommendation / Resolution

(158 / 2025) Moved: Cr Stratford

Seconded: Cr Lawson Kerr

That Council moves from behind closed doors and returns the meeting to being open to the public.

CARRIED 7/0

Vote For: Cr's Petchell, Stratford, Dickson, Loton, Begley, Gamble, Lawson Kerr

14. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

There being no further business, the Presiding Member closed the meeting at 4.15pm.