



MINUTES

Ordinary Council Meeting

Held in Council Chambers
13 Cottrell Street, Dowerin WA 6461
Wednesday 30 April 2025
Commencing 4:00pm

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Shire of Dowerin
Ordinary Council Meeting
4:00pm Wednesday 30 April 2025



1. Official Opening / Obituaries

The President welcomes those in attendance and declares the Meeting open at 4:04pm.

2. Record of Attendance / Apologies / Leave of Absence

Councillors:

Cr RI Trepp	President
Cr WG Allsopp	Via Teams
Cr DP Hudson	
Cr JC Sewell	
Cr BA Ward	

Staff:

Ms M Barthakur	Chief Executive Officer
Mr B Forbes	Manager of Infrastructure and Projects
Ms K Rose	Manager of Governance and Community Services
Mr S Mwale	Manager of Corporate Services

Members of the Public:

Apologies:

Cr NP McMorran	Deputy President
Cr AJ Metcalf	

Approved Leave of Absence:

Nil

3. Public Question Time

4. Disclosure of Interest

5.	Applications for Leave of Absence
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Nil

6.	Petitions and Presentations
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Nil

7.	Confirmation of Minutes of the Previous Meeting(s)
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7.1 Ordinary Council Meeting held on 27 March 2025

[Attachment 7.1A](#)

	Voting Requirements
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Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation/ Resolution - 7
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Moved Cr Ward

Seconded: Cr Hudson

1101

That, by Simple Majority pursuant to Sections 5.22(2) and 3.18 of the *Local Government Act 1995*, the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held 27 March 2025, as presented in Attachment 7.1A, be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.

CARRIED 5/0

For: Cr Trepp, Cr Allsopp, Cr Hudson, Cr Sewell, Cr Ward

8.	Minutes of Committee Meeting(s) to be Received
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- 8.1 Asset & Works Committee Meeting held on 18 March 2025
[Attachment 8.1A](#)

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation/ Resolution – 8
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Moved Cr Hudson **Seconded:** Cr Ward

- 1102** That, by Simple Majority pursuant to Sections 5.22(2) and 3.18 of the *Local Government Act 1995*, the Minutes of the Asset & Works Committee Meeting held on 18 March 2025, as presented in Attachment 8.1A be received.

CARRIED 5/0

For: Cr Trepp, Cr Allsopp, Cr Hudson, Cr Sewell, Cr Ward

9.	Recommendations from Committee Meetings for Council Consideration
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10.	Announcements by the President Without Discussion
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Busy month with President duties

GECZ conference – Bruce Rock - 28 March

- Theme was survive or thrive
- Positive outlook for the Wheatbelt

NEWROC Council Meeting – 1 April - Mukinbudin

- NEWROC rebranding endorsed
- Economic Development Committee- completed study of backup micro-grid for Beacon and Bencubbin

Minnivale Bush Fire Brigade AGM – 6 April

- Younger generation stepping into exec positions

Rural Water Council AGM –7 April - Cunderdin

- Demarcation point for WaterCorp asset finishing and private ownership discussed. Backflow devices required to be installed and annual requirements for testing. Clarification required from WaterCorp to the consumer.

Wheatbelt Development Commission Board Meeting – 10 April - Dowerin

- 2009 DPIRD report for water management in Dowerin discussed. Seismic lines, test holes, pump off surveys, Geotech surveys included.

Thank CRC for cinema event – 11 April – town oval - huge success and well attended.

Local Emergency Management Committee - 14 April - Dowerin

- Ratified reviewed Local Emergency Management Arrangements

Audit Entrance Meeting - 16 April

Anzac Day Service and Breakfast - 25 April – Centenary Park and Town Hall

Agrifutures National Rural Issues

- Contracted KPMG for a report in November 2023 – regarding agriculture manufacturing future

Wheatbelt Futures Forum attending on Friday 2 May

11. OFFICER'S REPORTS – CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

11.1 Financial Activity Statements

Corporate and Community Services



Date:	11 April 2025
Location:	Not Applicable
Responsible Officer:	Manisha Barthakur, Chief Executive Officer
Author:	Solomon Mwale, Manager of Corporate Services
Legislation:	<i>Local Government Act 1995; Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996</i>
SharePoint Reference:	Organisation / Financial Management / Reporting / Financial Statements / 2024-2025 Monthly Financial Statements
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Attachment 11.1A – March MFR

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

Summary

This item presents the Statement of Financial Activity to Council for the period March 2025.

Background

Section 6.4 of the *Local Government Act 1995* requires a local government to prepare financial reports.

Regulations 34 and 35 of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* set out the form and content of the financial reports which have been prepared and are presented to Council.

Comment

To fulfil statutory reporting requirements and provide Council with a synopsis of the Shire of Dowerin's overall financial performance on a year-to-date basis, the following financial information is included in the Attachment.

The statements are draft financial statements with end of year adjustments still to be processed. Employee costs are lower than YTD budget due to a payroll system error which staff are urgently attending to with the assistance of ReadyTech. The offset for this lower expenditure is disclosed in Note 5 Payables - Payroll Creditors. Statements of Financial Activity – Statutory Reports by Program and Nature or Type

The Statements of Financial Activity provide details of the Shire's operating revenues and expenditures on a year-to-date basis. The reports further include details of non-cash adjustments and capital revenues and expenditures, to identify the Shire's net current position.

Note 1 – Statement of Financial Activity

Notes supporting the Statement of Financial Activity by Program and by Nature and Type.

Note 2 – Cash and Financial Assets

This note provides Council with the details of the actual amounts in the Shire's bank accounts and/or investment accounts as at the reporting date.

Note 3 – Receivables

This note provides Council with both Rates Receivables and General Receivables outstanding as at the reporting date. This report has been expanded to further break down the detail of General Receivables.

Note 4 – Other Current Assets

This note provides details of other current assets that the Shire may hold.

Note 5 – Payables

This note provides details of Shire payables unpaid as at the reporting date. This Note is new to the financial statements.

Note 6 – Rate Revenue

This note provides details of rates levied during the year.

Note 7 – Disposal of Assets

This note gives details of the capital asset disposals during the year.

Note 8 – Capital Acquisitions

This note details the capital expenditure program for the year.

Note 9 – Borrowings

This note shows the Shire's current debt position and lists all borrowings.

Note 10 – Cash Backed Reserves

This note provides summary details of transfers to and from reserve funds, and associated interest earnings on reserve funds, on a year-to-date basis.

Note 11 – Other Current Liabilities

This note outlines any provisions the Shire has on hand relative to other current liabilities.

Note 12 – Operating Grants and Contributions Received

This note provides information on operating grants received.

Note 13 – Non-Operating Grants and Contributions Received

This note provides information on non-operating grants received.

Note 14 – Explanation of Material Variances

Council adopted (in conjunction with the Annual Budget) a material reporting variance threshold of 10% or \$10,000, whichever is the greater. This note explains the reasons for any material variances identified in the Statements of Financial Activity at the end of the reporting period.

Consultation

Manisha Barthakur, Chief Executive Officer

Solomon Mwale, Manager of Corporate Services

Megan Shirt, Consultant

Policy Implications

The Shire of Dowerin has a comprehensive suite of financial management policies. Finances have been managed in accordance with these policies.

Strategic Implications

Strategic Community Plan

Community Priority:	Our Organisation
Objective:	<i>We are recognised as a transparent, well governed, and effectively managed Local Government</i>
Outcome:	5.3
Reference:	5.3.2

Asset Management Plan

Nil

Long Term Financial Plan

Nil

Statutory Implications

Council is required to adopt monthly statements of financial activity to comply with Regulation 34 of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*.

Risk Implications

Risk Profiling Theme	Failure to fulfil statutory regulations or compliance requirements
Risk Category	Compliance
Risk Description	No noticeable regulatory or statutory impact
Consequence Rating	Insignificant (1)
Likelihood Rating	Rare (1)
Risk Matrix Rating	Low (1)
Key Controls (in place)	Governance Calendar, Financial Management Framework and Legislation
Action (Treatment)	Nil
Risk Rating (after treatment)	Adequate

Timely preparation of the monthly financial statements within statutory guidelines is vital to good financial management. Failure to submit compliant reports within statutory time limits will lead to non-compliance with the *Local Government Act 1995* and the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*.

Financial Implications

Nil

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation/Resolution – 11.1

Moved: Cr Sewell

Seconded: Cr Ward

1103

That Council, by Simple Majority pursuant to Regulation 34 of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*, receives the draft statutory Financial Activity Statement report for the period of March 2025, as presented in Attachment 11.1A.

CARRIED 5/0

For: Cr Trepp, Cr Allsopp, Cr Hudson, Cr Sewell, Cr Ward

11.2 List of Accounts Paid

Corporate & Community Services



Date:	11 April 2025
Location:	Not Applicable
Responsible Officer:	Manisha Barthakur, Chief Executive Officer
Author:	Solomon Mwale, Manager of Corporate Services
Legislation:	<i>Local Government Act 1995; Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996</i>
SharePoint Reference:	Organisation/Financial Management/Reporting/Financial Statements and Credit Cards
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Attachment 11.2A – March 2025 LOP (confidential) Attachment 11.2B – February Credit and Caltex Card Statements

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

Summary

This Item presents the List of Accounts Paid, paid under delegated authority, for March 2025.

Background

Nil

Comment

The List of Accounts Paid as presented have been reviewed by the Chief Executive Officer.

Consultation

Manisha Barthakur, Chief Executive Officer
Solomon Mwale, Manager of Corporate Services
Susan Dew, Finance and Administration Officer

Policy Implications

The Shire of Dowerin has a comprehensive suite of financial management policies. Finances have been managed in accordance with these policies. Payments have been made under delegated authority.

Strategic Implications

Strategic Community Plan

Community Priority: Our Organisation

Objective: *We are recognised as a transparent, well governed, and effectively managed Local Government*

Outcome: 5.3

Reference: 5.3.2

Asset Management Plan

Nil

Long Term Financial Plan

Nil

Statutory Implications

Regulation 12 and 13 of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* requires that a separate list be prepared each month for Council showing creditors paid under delegated authority.

Risk Implications

Risk Profiling Theme	Failure to fulfil statutory regulations or compliance requirements
Risk Category	Compliance
Risk Description	No noticeable regulatory or statutory impact
Consequence Rating	Insignificant (1)
Likelihood Rating	Rare (1)
Risk Matrix Rating	Low (1)
Key Controls (in place)	Governance Calendar
Action (Treatment)	Nil
Risk Rating (after treatment)	Adequate

Financial Implications

Nil

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation/Resolution – 11.2

Moved: Cr Hudson

Seconded: Cr Ward

1104

That Council, by Simple Majority pursuant to Section 6.8(1)(a) of the *Local Government Act 1995* and Regulation 12 & 13 of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*, receives the report from the Chief Executive Officer on the exercise of delegated authority in relation to creditor payments from the Shire of Dowerin Municipal Fund, as presented in Attachments 11.2A and 11.2B, and as detailed below:

List of Accounts Paid – March 2025

EFT 13317 to EFT 13430	\$528,038.36
Direct Debit: Bookeasy Australia	\$242.00
Direct Debit: Gull Motorcharge	\$462.99
Direct Debit: Shire of Dowerin – Visa Payment	\$3,993.36
Direct Debit: Superloop	\$395.00
Direct Debit: Synergy	\$3,945.73
Direct Debit: Telstra	\$609.91
Direct Debit: Xenex Systems	\$470.53
PPE 11 March 2025 - Wages	\$54,609.77
PPE 25 March 2025 - Wages	\$50,472.70
Superannuation PPE – 11 March 2025	\$8,452.93
Superannuation PPE – 25 March 2025	\$7,940.18
TOTAL	\$659,633.46

CARRIED 5/0

For: Cr Trepp, Cr Allsopp, Cr Hudson, Cr Sewell, Cr Ward

11.3 Budget Amendment – Bowling Green Replacement

Corporate and Community Services



Date:	31 March 2025
Location:	Not Applicable
Responsible Officer:	Ben Forbes, Manager of Infrastructure and Projects
Author:	Kahli Rose, Manager of Governance and Community Services Solomon Mwale, Manager of Corporate Services
Legislation:	<i>Local Government Act 1995; Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996</i>
SharePoint Reference:	Technical > Asset Management
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Nil

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

Summary

Following storm-related damage, LGIS has approved a full insurance claim to replace the Dowerin Bowling Green's synthetic playing surface. While the insurance will cover the cost of a like-for-like replacement (Ultra Plus surface), the Dowerin Bowling Club has requested an upgrade to a higher-quality Gold Fleck surface. The cost difference between the two surfaces is \$9,500, which the Club has formally requested be funded from the Bowling Green Reserve, currently holding \$144,188.

Background

In 2024, a storm event caused significant damage to the Dowerin Bowling Green, rendering the existing synthetic surface unplayable. An insurance claim was lodged through LGIS, and full approval has now been granted to proceed with a like-for-like replacement of the Ultra Plus surface.

The Dowerin Bowling Club has since approached the Shire with a formal request to consider an upgrade to the Gold Fleck surface. This product is recognised as a higher standard, providing improved playing characteristics and longevity. The total cost of the upgrade is \$9,500 above the amount covered by insurance.

Comment

The Bowling Green Reserve was established to support upgrades, renewals, and long-term maintenance of the green and associated infrastructure. The current reserve balance is \$144,188. Approval of this request would leave the reserve with a remaining balance of \$134,688.

The request aligns with the reserve's intended purpose and reflects the Club's commitment to improving facility standards for both club members and visiting players. As the remainder of the work is being funded through insurance, this represents a cost-effective opportunity to implement an upgraded surface with minimal financial outlay from Council-held reserves.

Consultation

Manisha Barthakur, Chief Executive Officer
Ben Forbes, Manager Infrastructure and Projects
Solomon Mwale, Manager Corporate Services
Dowerin Bowling Club
LGIS

Policy Implications

3.11 – Purchasing Policy
4.7 – Asset Management Policy

Strategic Implications

Strategic Community Plan

Community Priority:	Our Infrastructure
Objective:	We have functional infrastructure that meets the needs of the community
Outcome:	3.2
Reference:	3.2.1

Asset Management Plan

Supports the long-term use and improvement of key community sport and recreation assets.

Long Term Financial Plan

Minimal financial impact; reserve usage aligns with intended purpose.

Statutory Implications

Local Government Act 1995

- *Section 6.8(1)(b) – A local government is not to incur expenditure from its municipal fund for an additional purpose unless authorised by a resolution of Council by absolute majority. This includes budget amendments that were not included in the original annual budget.*
- *Section 6.11(2) – Money held in a reserve account is not to be used for any purpose other than that for which the reserve was established unless authorised by a resolution of Council by absolute majority.*

Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996

- *Regulation 33A – Requires a local government to conduct a budget review between 1 January and 31 March each financial year, and present it to Council. This budget amendment falls within the scope of that review.*

Risk Implications

Risk Profiling Theme	Asset Management Practices
Risk Category	Property (Plant, Equipment, Buildings)
Risk Description	\$5,001 - \$50,000
Consequence Rating	Moderate (3)
Likelihood Rating	Likely (4)
Risk Matrix Rating	High (10)
Key Controls (in place)	Asset Management Plan Ongoing Monitoring
Action (Treatment)	Asset Management Plans
Risk Rating (after treatment)	Adequate

Financial Implications

Cost of upgrade: \$9,500 (above insurance-funded amount)

Source of Funds: Bowling Green Reserve

Current Reserve Balance: \$144,188

Balance after allocation (if approved): \$134,688

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation/Resolution – 11.3**Moved:** Cr**Seconded:** Cr

~~That Council, by Absolute Majority, in accordance with Section 6.8(1)(b) and Section 6.11(2) of the Local Government Act 1995 and Regulation 33A of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996, resolves to:~~

- ~~1. Support the request from the Dowerin Bowling Club to upgrade the synthetic surface to the Gold Fleck product, at an additional cost of \$9,500 above the amount covered by insurance; and~~
- ~~2. Approve the transfer out and expenditure of \$9,500 from the Bowling Green Reserve to fund the cost difference.~~

CARRIED/**For:****MOTION FAILED FOR LACK OF A QUORUM**

11.4 Budget Amendment – Retention of P7 Ford Ranger

Corporate and Community Services



Date:	31 March 2025
Location:	Not Applicable
Responsible Officer:	Ben Forbes, Manager of Infrastructure and Projects
Author:	Kahli Rose, Manager of Governance and Community Services Solomon Mwale, Manager of Corporate Services
Legislation:	<i>Local Government Act 1995; Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996</i>
SharePoint Reference:	Technical > Asset Management
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Nil

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

Summary

This report recommends the retention of the P7 Ford Ranger, which was budgeted for disposal as part of the 2024/25 plant replacement program. Following consultation at the Asset and Works Committee workshop, it is proposed that the vehicle be reassigned for use by the future Building Maintenance Officer. The role has been vacant for over 12 months, and recruitment is currently underway. Council approval is required due to the financial impact on the Plant Replacement Reserve.

Background

As part of the adopted 2024/25 budget, the Parks and Gardens team's Ford Ranger (P7) was scheduled for replacement with a new Toyota Hilux. The budget assumed \$14,351 in revenue from the sale of the Ranger to partially offset the purchase of the new Hilux.

During the Asset and Works Committee workshop on 18 March 2025, it was proposed that instead of selling the vehicle, it be retained for use by the incoming Building Maintenance Officer. This officer position, while currently vacant, is being actively advertised and remains a key operational need within the Shire.

Comment

The reassignment of the Ford Ranger presents a practical and cost-effective solution to support the reintroduction of the Building Maintenance Officer role. Retaining the vehicle eliminates the need for a future procurement and ensures an existing asset is utilised efficiently.

- a. As this amendment affects the budgeted revenue from the plant replacement program, a Council decision is required to adjust the funding source for the new Toyota Hilux. The shortfall will be covered by the Plant Replacement Reserve.

Consultation

Manisha Barthakur, Chief Executive Officer
Ben Forbes, Manager of Infrastructure and Projects
Solomon Mwale, Manager Corporate Services
Asset & Works Committee, 18 March 2025 Workshop

Policy Implications

3.11 – Purchasing Policy
4.7 – Asset Management Policy

Strategic Implications

Strategic Community Plan

Community Priority:	Our Infrastructure
Objective:	We have functional infrastructure that meets the needs of the community
Outcome:	3.2
Reference:	3.2.1

Asset Management Plan

The retention of the P7 Ford Ranger supports the Shire's Asset Management Plan by maximising the use of existing plant assets, extending the vehicle's lifecycle, and avoiding the need for future capital expenditure on a separate vehicle for the Building Maintenance Officer.

Long Term Financial Plan

While the retention of the vehicle removes the previously budgeted \$14,351 in sale revenue, this shortfall is funded through the Plant Replacement Reserve. The adjustment has minimal impact on the Long-Term Financial Plan and supports efficient resource allocation across the Shire's operational needs.

Statutory Implications

Local Government Act 1995

- *Section 6.8(1)(b) – A local government is not to incur expenditure from its municipal fund for an additional purpose unless authorised in advance by a resolution of Council by absolute majority. As this change represents a variation to the adopted budget, Council endorsement is required.*
- *Section 6.11(2) – Money held in a reserve account (in this case, the Plant Replacement Reserve) must not be used for any purpose other than that for which the reserve was established unless authorised by absolute majority resolution of Council.*

Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996

- *Regulation 33A – Requires a local government to undertake a budget review between 1 January and 31 March each financial year and present the results to Council for consideration. This proposed amendment aligns with the scope of that review.*

Risk Implications

Risk Profiling Theme	Asset Management Practices
Risk Category	Property (Plant, Equipment, Buildings)
Risk Description	\$5,001 - \$50,000
Consequence Rating	Moderate (3)
Likelihood Rating	Likely (4)
Risk Matrix Rating	High (10)
Key Controls (in place)	Asset Management Plan Ongoing Monitoring
Action (Treatment)	Plant Maintenance Plan Asset Management Plans
Risk Rating (after treatment)	Adequate

Financial Implications

The adopted budget anticipated \$14,351 in revenue from the sale of the Ford Ranger (P7), which would contribute towards the purchase of the new Toyota Hilux. Should Council endorse the retention of the Ford Ranger, this amount will instead be drawn from the Plant Replacement Reserve.

- **Original Reserve Balance:** \$547,662
- **Adjustment Required:** \$14,351
- **Revised Reserve Balance (Post-Adjustment):** \$533,311

This amendment does not affect the overall capital expenditure for the year but reallocates funding internally within the Shire's financial reserves.

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation/Resolution – 11.4**Moved:** Cr Sewell**Seconded:** Cr Hudson**1105**

That Council, by Absolute Majority, in accordance with Section 6.8(1)(b) and Section 6.11(2) of the Local Government Act 1995 and Regulation 33A of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996, resolves to:

1. Approve the amendment to the 2024/25 Budget to retain the Ford Ranger (P7), which was originally scheduled for disposal as part of the plant replacement program;
2. Note that the retained vehicle will be reassigned for operational use by the incoming Building Maintenance Officer; and
3. Approve the allocation of \$14,351 from the Plant Replacement Reserve to offset the loss of anticipated sale revenue, thereby maintaining funding for the purchase of the new Toyota Hilux.

CARRIED 5/0**For:** Cr Trepp, Cr Allsopp, Cr Hudson, Cr Sewell, Cr Ward

12. OFFICER'S REPORTS – GOVERNANCE AND COMPLIANCE

12.1 ALGA Federal Election Campaign

Governance & Compliance



Date:	9 April 2025
Location:	Nil
Responsible Officer:	Manisha Barthakur, Chief Executive Officer
Author:	Kahli Rose, Manager of Governance and Community Services
Legislation:	Nil
SharePoint Reference:	Nil
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Nil

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

Summary

The next Federal Election must be held by 17 May 2025.

Working in conjunction with its member state and territory associations, the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) has developed a framework and resources for a national advocacy campaign that will run in the lead up to this election.

Based around the tagline of “Put Our Communities First”, the goal is to secure additional federal funding that will support every council to play a bigger role delivering local solutions to national priorities.

All Australian councils have been asked to participate in this campaign to ensure a coordinated approach that will deliver the best possible outcomes.

Background

The Put Our Communities First campaign will advocate for new federal funding to be distributed to all councils on a formula-basis, like the Commonwealth's Roads to Recovery Program, or the previous Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program.

This will ensure that every council and community benefits and support local decision making based on local needs.

ALGA has developed free campaign resources that can be adapted and used by all councils to ensure a consistent and effective approach.

Participating in a national advocacy campaign does not preclude this council from advocating on additional local needs and issues, but it will strengthen the national campaign and support all 537 Australian local governments.

The five national funding priorities have been determined by the ALGA Board – comprised of representatives from each of Australia's state and territory local government associations – and align with key national priorities.

These five funding priorities are:

- \$1.1 billion per year for enabling infrastructure to unlock housing supply
- \$500 million per year for community infrastructure
- \$600 million per year for safer local roads
- \$900 million per year for increased local government emergency management capability and capacity, and
- \$400 million per year for climate change adaptation.

Further information on each of these priorities is listed below.

Housing enabling infrastructure

A lack of funding for enabling infrastructure – including roads, and water and sewerage treatment connections and facilities – is a significant barrier to increasing housing supply across the country.

Research from Equity Economics found that 40 per cent of local governments have cut back on new infrastructure developments because of inadequate enabling infrastructure funding.

This research also shows that achieving the National Housing Accord's housing targets would incur an additional \$5.7 billion funding shortfall on top of infrastructure funding gaps already being felt by councils and their communities.

A five year, \$1.1 billion per annum program would fund the infrastructure that is essential to new housing developments, and Australia reaching its housing targets.

Community Infrastructure

ALGA's 2024 National State of the Assets report indicates that \$8.3 billion worth of local government buildings and \$2.9 billion worth of parks and recreation facilities are in poor condition and need attention.

Introduced in 2020, the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program supported all councils to build, maintain and upgrade local facilities, with \$3.25 billion allocated on a formula basis.

This program had a significant impact, driving an almost \$1 billion improvement in the condition of local government buildings and facilities; and a \$500 million per year replacement fund would support all councils to build, upgrade and revitalise the community infrastructure all Australians rely on.

Safer Roads

Councils manage more than 75% of Australia's roads by length, and tragically more than half of all fatal road crashes in Australia occur on these roads.

In 2023 the Australian Government announced that it would double Roads to Recovery funding over the forward estimates, providing councils with an additional \$500 million per year.

However, recent independent research by the Grattan Institute highlighted a \$1 billion local government road maintenance funding shortfall, meaning there is still a significant funding gap.

Providing local government with \$600 million per year tied to road safety programs and infrastructure upgrades would support all councils to play a more effective role addressing Australia's unacceptable road toll.

Climate adaptation

Local governments are at the forefront of grappling with climate impacts as both asset managers and land use decision makers.

However, funding and support from other levels of government has failed to keep pace, placing an inequitable burden on councils and communities to fund this work locally.

A \$400 million per year local government climate adaptation fund would enable all councils to implement place-based approaches to adaptation, delivering local solutions to this national challenge.

Emergency management

Fires, floods, and cyclones currently cost Australia \$38 billion per year, and this is predicted to rise to \$73 billion by 2060.

Australian councils play a key role preparing for, responding to and recovering from natural disasters, but aren't effectively funded to carry out these duties.

The Government's \$200 million per year Disaster Ready Fund is significantly oversubscribed, especially considering the scale and cost of disaster mitigation projects.

Numerous national reviews – including the Colvin Review and Royal Commission into Natural Disaster Arrangements – have identified the need for a significant uplift in local government emergency management capability and capacity.

A \$900 million per year fund would support all councils to better prepare their communities before natural disasters, and more effectively carry out the emergency management responsibilities that have been delegated to them.

Comment

The Put Our Communities First campaign provides an opportunity for Council to join a coordinated national effort aimed at securing predictable, long-term federal funding for essential infrastructure and services. Participation strengthens the collective voice of local governments and enhances the likelihood of securing outcomes that directly benefit regional and rural communities like Dowerin.

Supporting the campaign does not restrict the Shire from pursuing additional advocacy on local priorities, but rather complements existing efforts by aligning with national strategic themes such as roads, infrastructure, emergency preparedness, and housing.

Consultation

Australian Local Government Association (ALGA)

Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA)

Policy Implications

Nil

Statutory Implications

There are no direct statutory implications from supporting the ALGA campaign. However, effective advocacy for increased federal funding is consistent with Council's responsibilities under the *Local Government Act 1995*, particularly:

- *Section 3.1 – the general function of local government to provide for the good government of persons in its district;*
- *Section 2.7 – the role of the Council includes determining the local government's policies and ensuring accountability.*

Strategic Implications

Strategic Community Plan

Community Priority:	Our Leaders
Objective:	We have strong leadership
Outcome:	5.1
Reference:	5.1.2

Asset Management Plan

Nil impact

Long Term Financial Plan

Nil impact

Risk Implications

Risk Profiling Theme	Engagement Practices
Risk Category	Reputation
Risk Description	Failure to actively participate in national advocacy efforts may result in missed opportunities for federal funding and diminished influence in policy discussions affecting local government.
Consequence Rating	Moderate (3)
Likelihood Rating	Possible (3)
Risk Matrix Rating	Moderate (9)
Key Controls (in place)	Participation in WALGA and ALGA initiatives; and Established communication channels with federal representatives
Action (Treatment)	Actively engage in the "Put Our Communities First" campaign to enhance advocacy efforts and potential funding opportunities.
Risk Rating (after treatment)	Adequate

Financial Implications

Nil.

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation/Resolution – 12.1

Moved: Cr Hudson

Seconded: Cr Ward

1106 That, by Simple Majority, Council:

1. Supports the national federal election funding priorities identified by the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA); and
2. Supports and participates in the Put Our Communities First federal election campaign; and
3. Writes to the local federal member(s) of Parliament, all known election candidates in local federal electorates and the President of the Australian Local Government Association expressing support for ALGA's federal election funding priorities.

CARRIED 5/0

For: Cr Trepp, Cr Allsopp, Cr Hudson, Cr Sewell, Cr Ward

12.2 Confirmation of Permanent Appointment – Chief Executive Officer

Governance & Compliance



Date:	11 April 2025
Location:	Nil
Responsible Officer:	Cr Robert Trepp, Shire President
Author:	Kahli Rose, Manager Governance and Community Services
Legislation:	<i>Local Government Act 1995</i>
SharePoint Reference:	Nil
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Nil

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

Summary

Council to formally appoint Mrs Manisha Barthakur as Chief Executive Officer on a permanent basis as per contract.

Background

Following an intensive recruitment process, the Council appointed Mrs. Manisha Barthakur as Chief Executive Officer, with her official start date on 3 October 2024. A six-month probationary period was applied, concluding on 3 April 2025.

At the March Council meeting, councillors verbally acknowledged and commended Mrs. Barthakur's hard work and dedication during her probation. In line with standard practice, her appointment transitioned to permanent status effective 4 April 2025.

This motion serves as a formal record of the Council's endorsement of the CEO's permanent appointment, for the purposes of transparency and record-keeping.

Comment

Mrs. Barthakur has made strong progress towards her KPIs, brought positive changes to the Shire's administration, helped build a supportive workplace culture, and delivered key outcomes. She has shown a strong commitment to the Council's goals and the growth of the organisation.

Consultation

Manisha Barthakur, Chief Executive Officer
All Councillors, Shire of Dowerin

Policy Implications

Nil

Statutory Implications

5.39A. Model standards for CEO recruitment, performance and termination

(1) Regulations must prescribe model standards for local governments in relation to the following –

- (a) the recruitment of CEOs;*
- (b) the review of the performance of CEOs;*
- (c) the termination of the employment of CEOs.*

(2) Regulations may amend the model standards.[Section 5.39A inserted: No. 16 of 2019 s. 22.]

Strategic Implications

Strategic Community Plan

Community Priority:	Our Organisation
Objective:	We are recognised as a transparent, well governed, and effectively managed Local Government
Outcome:	5.4
Reference:	5.4.2

Asset Management Plan

Nil

Long Term Financial Plan

Nil

Risk Implications

Risk Profiling Theme	Compliance, Transparency
Risk Category	Governance
Risk Description	Failure to meet statutory and community expectations
Consequence Rating	Moderate (3)
Likelihood Rating	Possible (3)
Risk Matrix Rating	Medium (9)
Key Controls (in place)	Governance Calendar
Action (Treatment)	Nil
Risk Rating (after treatment)	Adequate

Financial Implications

Nil.

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation/Resolution – 12.2

Moved: Cr Sewell

Seconded: Cr Ward

1107 That Council, by Absolute Majority, in accordance with Section 5.39A of the Local Government Act 1995:

1. Confirms that Mrs Manisha Barthakur has successfully completed her probationary period, and
2. approves her permanent appointment to the position of Chief Executive Officer, in accordance with the terms of her contract.

CARRIED 5/0

For: Cr Trepp, Cr Allsopp, Cr Hudson, Cr Sewell, Cr Ward

12.3 Development Application – 7397 Uberin Road, KOOMBERKINE

Governance & Compliance



Date:	11 April 2025
Location:	Lot 7397 Uberin Road, KOOMBERKINE
Responsible Officer:	Manisha Barthakur, Chief Executive Officer
Author:	Paul Bashall, Consultant Planner, Planwest
Legislation:	<i>Planning and Development Act 2015</i> <i>Shire of Dowerin Local Planning Scheme No 2</i>
SharePoint Reference:	Nil
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	<u>Attachment 12.3A – Development Application - THOMAS</u>

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

Summary

A Development Approval (DA) application was received on 7 March 2025 from John Thomas seeking the Council's approval to build a 13x13.5x6.2 metre open-ended rural shed on Lot 7397 Uberin Road, Koombarkine. The shed will be used as a storage facility for farming machinery and vehicles and is to be located near the southern boundary of the Lot.

The subject land is owned by John Thomas Family Trust, with the DA form being signed by John Thomas. The property, or farm, extends over several other lots as shown in the location plan in Figure 1. Lot 7397 itself has no direct road frontage however access will be via the southeast corner of the lot directly south to Uberin Road. Some of the other farm lots are in the Shire of Goomalling.

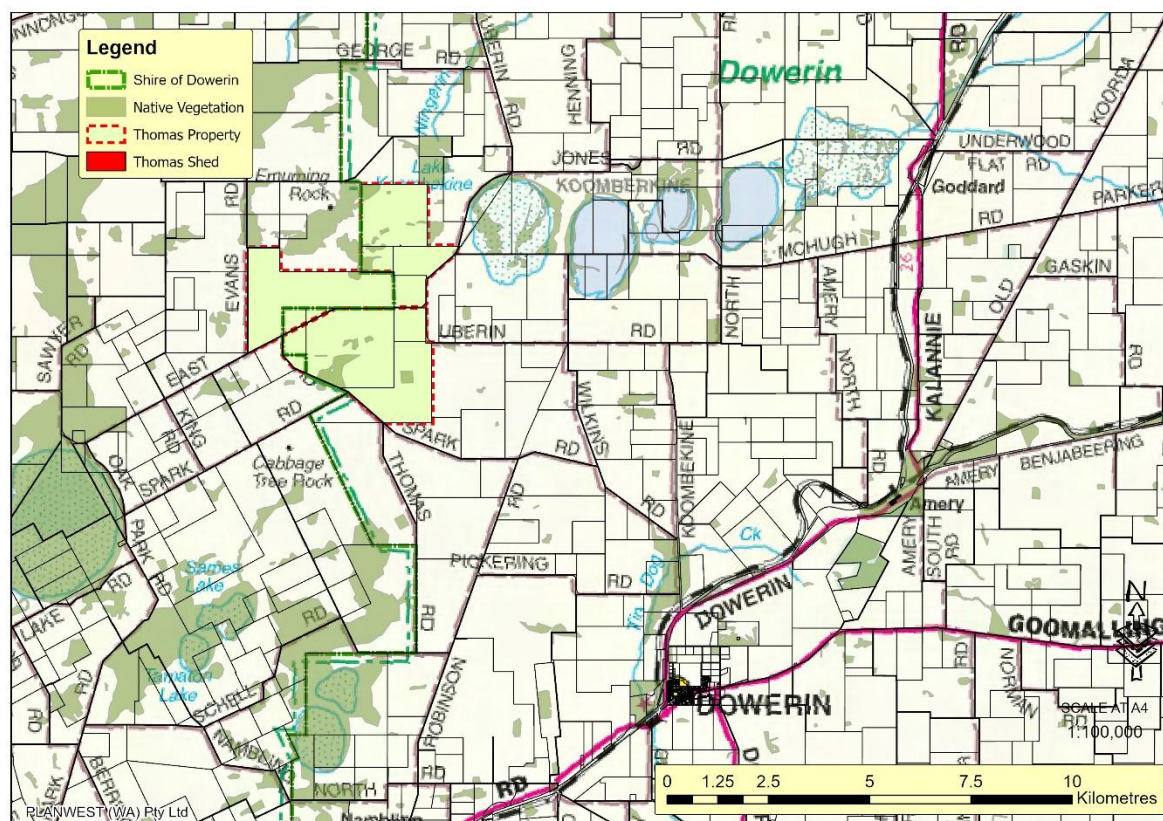
Under the provisions of the Scheme, nearly all development requires the Council's approval. The exceptions include a single house (that complies with the R-Codes), some internal works etc.

Background

The subject lot measures about 248 hectares and is almost all used for agricultural purposes. It is located on the Shire's western boundary shared with Goomalling Shire. The site is located about 13 kilometre north north-east of Dowerin townsite. These features are shown in the location plan in **Figure 1**.

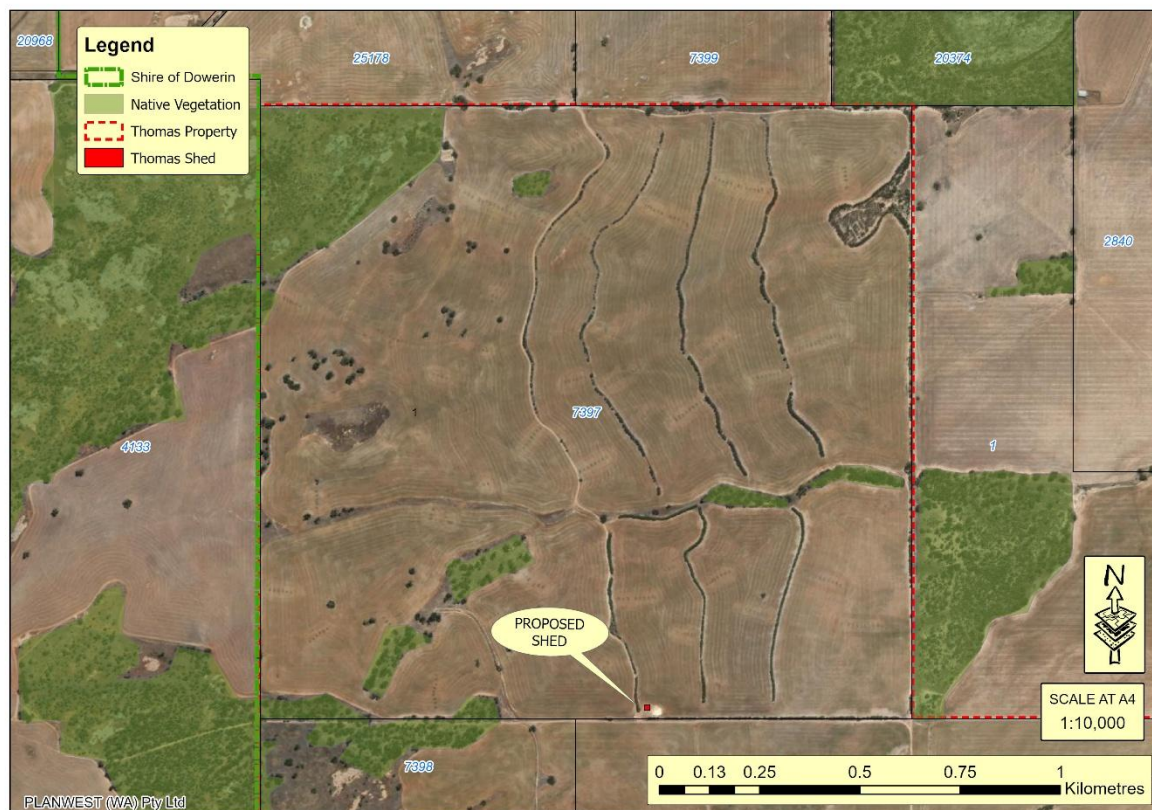
The aerial photograph shown in **Figure 2** demonstrates the amount of the property used for agricultural purposes and the location of the native vegetation.

FIGURE 1 - LOCATION PLAN



Source: Landgate, Travellers Atlas, Planwest

FIGURE 2 - AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH OF SUBJECT LAND



Source: Landgate, ESRI, Planwest

Figure 3 shows an enlargement of the area where the shed is proposed. This Figure also shows how the proposed development avoids any area designated as Native Vegetation.

The location of the shed is proposed between an existing dam and a windrow, but setback from the lot boundary by at least 20 metres as shown in the **Figure** below.

FIGURE 3 - ENLARGEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT AREA



Comment

The proposed shed, although over 6.2 metres in height, is unlikely to be noticeable from outside the property. The open-ended shed is considered to be a legitimate agricultural storage shed required for rural purposes.

The lot slopes downhill from the western boundary to the eastern boundary by about 40 metres over 1.6 kilometres. This is not considered a significant slope. There are no other structures on the property.

Access to the site will be via the southeast corner of the lot directly south to Uberin Road. There should be no need for a new crossover and no increase in traffic is anticipated.

Consultation

Paul Bashall, Consultant Planner, Planwest

Policy Implications

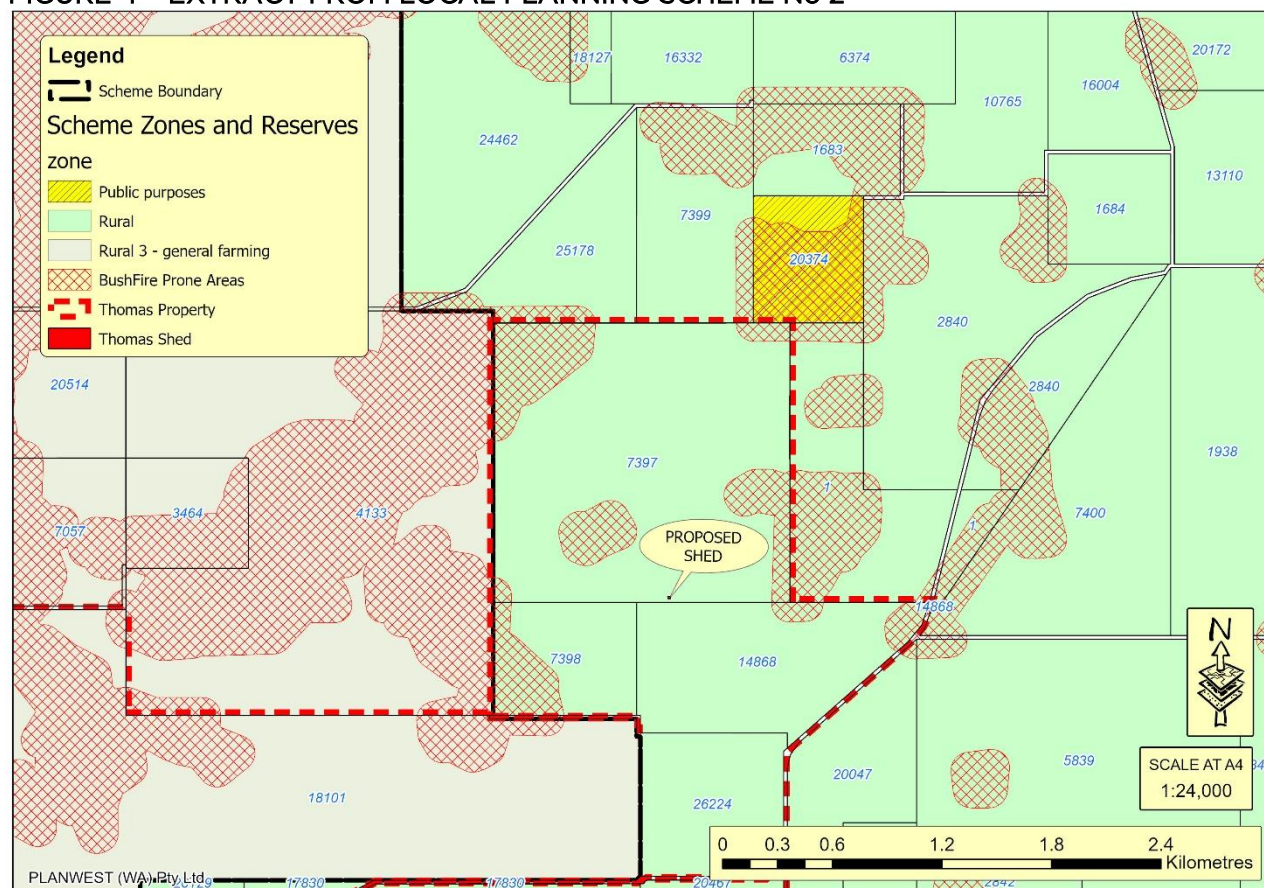
There are no local policies or Local Planning Policies (LPP) that impact the proposed development.

Statutory Implications

Shire of Dowerin Local Planning Scheme 2 (the Scheme)

Figure 4 provides an extract from the Scheme mapping showing the subject land and the surrounding designations that are mostly zoned Rural. The figure also shows the Bushfire Prone mapping.

FIGURE 4 - EXTRACT FROM LOCAL PLANNING SCHEME No 2



Source: Landgate, DPLH, DFES, Planwest

State Planning Policy 3.7 (SPP3.7)- Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas

Parts of the subject land are included in the Bushfire Prone mapping prepared by the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) as shown in Figure 4.

The intent of the SPP3.7 is “to implement effective, risk-based land use planning and development to preserve life and reduce the impact of bushfire on property and infrastructure”. The focus of the bushfire provisions relates to minimising risk to life and property damage. The proposed infrastructure does not appear to increase the risk to either of these factors.

While the proposed shed is on a lot affected by bushfire-prone mapping, the development does not result in an increase of residents or employees, nor does it increase the bushfire threat. In reality, the shed may reduce the risk of a bushfire as any such activities can be carried out within the shed and separated from sensitive vegetation that could ignite.

Normal local government fire break rules automatically apply to rural properties – usually relating to boundaries.

Strategic Implications

Local Planning Strategy

The Council's Strategy was endorsed by the WA Planning Commission on 11th June 2013. The Strategy does not address details such as agricultural sheds as it represents broader considerations.

Asset Management Plan

Nil

Long Term Financial Plan

Nil

Risk Implications

Risk Profiling Theme	Failure to fulfil statutory regulations or compliance requirements
Risk Category	Compliance
Risk Description	Some temporary non compliances
Consequence Rating	Minor (2)
Likelihood Rating	Unlikely (2)
Risk Matrix Rating	Low (4)
Key Controls (in place)	Compliance with Local Planning Scheme and Planning Regulations.
Action (Treatment)	Ongoing monitoring of compliance.
Risk Rating (after treatment)	Adequate

Financial Implications

There are no further financial implications other than income generated from fees and charges

Conclusion

The proposed shed:

- Is considered an integral part of an agricultural operation.
- Is located so that it is barely visible outside the property.
- Does not increase employment, use or traffic.
- Is not considered to increase any Bushfire risk. and
- Does not affect any native vegetation.

In conclusion, no issues are raised for the approval of the proposed shed.

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation/Resolution - 12.3

Moved: Cr Hudson

Seconded: Cr Ward

1108 That the Council Approves the Development Approval application received on 7 March 2025 subject to the following conditions:

1. That the proposed shed be located at least 20 metres from the southern boundary of Lot 7397.
2. Drainage to be designed and constructed to the satisfaction of the local government.

Advice Notes

1. If the development, the subject of this approval, is not substantially commenced within a period of 24 months from the date of the approval, the approval will lapse and be of no further effect. For the purposes of this advice, the term "substantially commenced" has the meaning given to it in the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015* as amended from time to time.
2. The applicant is advised that this Development Approval does not replace the need to comply with the other local government requirements for building.
3. The applicant is advised of the obligations of the owner to comply with annual fire break notice issued under s33 of the *Bush Fires Act 1954*.
4. If an applicant or owner is aggrieved by this determination, there is a right of review by the State Administrative Tribunal in accordance with the *Planning and Development Act 2005* Part 14. An application must be made within 28 days of the determination.

CARRIED 5/0

For: Cr Trepp, Cr Allsopp, Cr Hudson, Cr Sewell, Cr Ward

13. OFFICER'S REPORTS – WORKS AND ASSETS

Nil

14. Urgent Business Approved by the Person Presiding or by Decision

14.1 Goomalling Medical Surgery Contribution

Corporate and Community Services



Date:	29 April 2025
Location:	Not Applicable
Responsible Officer:	Manisha Barthakur, Chief Executive Officer
Author:	Manisha Barthakur, Chief Executive Officer
Legislation:	<i>Local Government Act 1995</i>
SharePoint Reference:	
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Nil

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

Summary

This Item outlines the consideration for the financial contribution towards Shire of Goomalling for the medical centre operations.

Background

The Shire of Goomalling has formally requested that the Shire of Dowerin double its annual contribution to the Goomalling Medical Surgery from \$25,000 to \$50,000. This request follows a transition, effective February 2025, where the medical surgery will be operated by an independent business rather than the Shire of Goomalling. As a result, the Goomalling management estimates significant financial loss due to a lack of income under the new model.

As advised to the Shire of Dowerin, currently, 421 Dowerin residents are using the medical services at the Goomalling Medical Surgery, a number that has been steadily increasing with the return of patients now that a permanent doctor is in place.

The Shire of Dowerin CEO has presented the request to the council in February council workshop, who subsequently requested a detailed cost breakdown of the new business model. The Shire of Goomalling has been unable to provide this information, citing financial privacy concerns. However, Goomalling Shire management has provided an estimated financial loss of over \$171,600 by the end of 2025 due to a lack of income under the new business model.

In March council meeting an agenda item has been put forward for recommendation and the recommendation was altered with a motion to defer the item until the Shire of Dowerin's Council and Chief Executive Officer has engaged in direct consultation with the Shire of Goomalling's Councillors and Chief Executive Officer.

A meeting was held on 10 April at 5:30 PM, attended by Samuel Bryce (CEO of the Shire of Goomalling) and Julie Chester (Shire President of Goomalling), along with Dowerin councillors. During this meeting, Dowerin reiterated the need for a cost breakdown to support any decision-making. It was also acknowledged that, due to the operational model now being independent, the Shire of Goomalling no longer has direct control over the GP service's business activities. Consequently, the existing Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was deemed **null and void**. Any financial contributions from the Shire of Dowerin going forward would therefore be to support the Shire of Goomalling in maintaining the availability of medical services for the region, rather than as a formal operational partnership.

On 16 April, we received the cost breakdown from the Goomalling shire, however, some of the budgeted cost mentioned in the spreadsheet such as IT cost and rental costs seem to have increased significantly compared to the previous profit and loss statement provided with the invoices.

Comment

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the Shires of Dowerin and Goomalling over a decade ago is no longer active, following the recent shift in the operational model of the Goomalling Medical Surgery. While it is important that neighbouring shires support each other in times of need, particularly in the area of healthcare services, the Shire of Dowerin is currently not in a financial position to double its existing contribution.

That said, acknowledging the value of continued access to medical services for our residents, it may be reasonable to consider maintaining the current contribution or offering a lesser amount as a gesture of goodwill and regional support.

Consultation

Manisha Barthakur, Chief Executive Officer
Robert Trepp, President Shire
Samual Bryce, CEO Shire of Goomalling
Julie Chester, President, Shire of Goomalling
Solomon Mwale, Manager of Corporate Services

Policy Implications

The Shire of Dowerin has a comprehensive suite of financial management policies. Finances have been managed in accordance with these policies. Payments are made under delegated authority.

Strategic Implications

Strategic Community Plan

Community Priority:	Our Organisation
Objective:	<i>We are recognised as a transparent, well governed, and effectively managed Local Government</i>
Outcome:	5.3
Reference:	5.3.2

Asset Management Plan

Nil

Long Term Financial Plan

Nil

Statutory Implications

Regulation 22 of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996 outlines the requirements for expenditure in relation to the budget and financial management for local governments.

Risk Implications

Risk Profiling Theme	Failure to fulfil statutory regulations or compliance requirements
Risk Category	Compliance
Risk Description	No noticeable regulatory or statutory impact
Consequence Rating	Insignificant (1)
Likelihood Rating	Rare (1)
Risk Matrix Rating	Low (1)
Key Controls (in place)	Financial Management Framework and Legislation
Action (Treatment)	Nil
Risk Rating (after treatment)	Adequate

Financial Implications

To be considered in the Annual Budget for FY2025/26

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation/Resolution - 14.1

Moved: ~~Cr~~

Seconded: ~~Cr~~

~~That Council, by Absolute Majority, pursuant to Section 6.2(2) and Section 6.2(2) of the Local Government Act 1995 and Regulation 22 of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996:~~

- ~~1. Approve an annual contribution of \$15,000 to the Shire of Goomalling towards the operation of its medical surgery, for a period of three years, concluding at the end of the 2027/2028 financial year;~~
- ~~2. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer, under delegated authority, to make appropriate budget provisions in the 2025/2026 financial year and the two subsequent financial years to accommodate this contribution; and~~
- ~~3. Direct the Chief Executive Officer to seek and report regular updates from the Shire of Goomalling to ensure that residents of the Shire of Dowerin continue to receive equitable access and priority in medical services provided.~~

~~CARRIED /~~

For:

MOTION FAILS FOR LACK OF A MOVER

15.	Elected Members' Motions
	Nil
16.	Matters Behind Closed Doors
	Nil
17.	Closure

The President thanked those in attendance and declared the meeting closed at 4:33pm.