



WALGA

Great Southern Zone of WALGA

MINUTES

of a Mini Conference
(2 voting delegates per council)

held on

Friday 25 June 2021

Venue:
Tambellup Sports Complex Pavilion
East Terrace
Tambellup

1. OPEN: 10.16am Acknowledgement of the Traditional Owners of the land.
Welcome by Cr Mark Paganoni, President, Shire of Broomehill-Tambellup

2. ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

Cr Ronnie Fleay	Zone President and Chair of the meeting
Annabel Paulley	Zone Executive Officer
City of Albany	Mayor Dennis Wellington, Cr Emma Doughty and CEO Andrew Sharpe
Broomehill / Tambellup	Cr Mark Paganoni and CEO Keith Williams
Cranbrook	Cr Robert Johnson and Acting CEO Garry Adams
Denmark	Nil
Gnowangerup	Cr Fiona Gaze (from 11.19am), Cr Keith House and CEO Bob Jarvis
Jerramungup	Cr Andrew Price and CEO Martin Cuthbert
Katanning	Cr Liz Guidera, Cr John Goodheart and CEO Julian Murphy
Kent	Cr Kate Johnston
Kojonup	Cr John Benn and CEO Rick Mitchell-Collins
Plantagenet	Cr Chris Pavlovich, Cr Jon Oldfield and CEO Cameron Woods
Woodanilling	Cr Russel Thomson and Cr Dale Douglas and CEO Stephen Gash

Total of 15 out of a possible 22 voting delegates were in attendance at the start of the meeting.

Guests

Hon John Carey, Minister for Housing and Local Government
Claire Comrie, Minister Carey's Chief of Staff
Penny Griffin, Dept of Primary Industries and Regional Development
Joanne Burges, Intergovernmental Relations and Risk Senior Advisor, WALGA
Natasha Monks, CEO, Great Southern Development Commission
Peter Rundle, MLA, State Member for Roe
Cr Paul Terry, City of Albany (observer)
Cr Kevin Gale, Shire of Kojonup (observer)
Cr Handadye, Shire of Plantagenet (observer)

Apologies

Rick Wilson, Federal Member for O'Connor
Rebecca Stephens, State Member for Albany
Bruce Manning, Great Southern Development Commission
CEO Andrew Sharpe, Cr Greg Stocks, Cr Chris Thomson and Cr Matt Benson-Lidholm, City of Albany
CEO David Schober, Cr Janine Phillips and Cr Osborne, Shire of Denmark
Cr Rob Lester, Shire of Jerramungup
Cr Michael White, Shire of Broomehill-Tambellup
Kelly McManus, WALGA
Cr Phil Horrocks, Shire of Cranbrook
Cr Scott Crosby and CEO Rick Miller, Shire of Kent

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

REMINDER: All delegates present at a Zone meeting shall vote, as per Zone Standing Order 28.1

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES – ZONE AND WALGA STATE COUNCIL

4.1 MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY ZONE MEETING – 23 April 2021

MOVED Cr John Benn

SECONDED Cr Chris Pavlovich

That the minutes of an ordinary meeting of the Great Southern Zone of the WALGA held on Friday 23 April 2021 be confirmed as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

CARRIED 15-0

4.2 MINUTES OF THE WALGA STATE COUNCIL MEETING – 5 May 2021

MOVED Cr Chris Pavlovich

SECONDED Cr Dale Douglas

That the Minutes of meeting of the State Council of WALGA held on 5 May 2021 be received.

CARRIED 15-0

5. WALGA UPDATES & REVIEW OF WALGA STATE COUNCIL AGENDA – 7 July 2021

5.1 Status Report from WALGA to the Zone – received.

5.1.1. National Redress

Cr Oldfield raised concerns that it appears that LGAs are doing the work of the Dept of Communities by training staff as Child Protection Officer (CPO) or employing a specific CPO.

Joanne Burges said the intent was that the Child Safety Officer requirements should be inherent in the role of those staff who work with children, not unlike that of the requirements a Working With Children Check.

5.2 WALGA State Council President's Report - Mayor Tracey Roberts JP

Report dated July 2021 received and taken as read.

5.3 State Council Representative's Report - Cr Ronnie Fleay

Written report to be circulated with the minutes.

Cr Guidera queried a dot point on page 45 at Item 6.8 on the 2021-22 State Budget Submission Approach in the July State Council agenda. The dot point related to funding to WALGA for a service level agreement with the DLGSC to provide capacity building support to assist Local Governments with good governance, financial management and process.

Jo Burges - if State Government is expecting LGAs to do the work, it needs to be resourced.

ACTION: Joanne Burges to follow up and provide further details to Cr Guidera.

Stephen Gash said compulsory training for LGAs needed to be subsidised.

Cr Guidera said the whole training aspect needed to be reviewed. Not up to date, not current and a waste of time. Not a councillor's job to write a community plan. Training does not reflect what councillors are supposed to be doing.

Cr House felt there was a role for training to make people aware of their responsibilities as councillors.

Jo Burges - WALGA has taken on board points raised by Cr Guidera. WALGA is reviewing the whole suite of training to look at what Elected Members really need on the ground. New training focus will hopefully be introduced by August 2021.

5.4 Matters for Decision – Zone consideration required

Consideration of the July 2021 WALGA State Council Agenda - Matters for Decision.

MOVED Cr Chris Pavlovich

SECONDED Cr Jon Oldfield

That the Great Southern Zone supports the recommendations for Matters for Decision Items 5.1 and 5.2 in the July 2021 WALGA State Council Agenda.

CARRIED 15-0

5.1 Reviews of the Cat Act 2011 and Dog Act 1976.

5.2 Amendments to WALGA's Constitution.

5.5 Matters for Noting – for Zone information

Noted.

5.6 State Council Status Report

Noted.

Minister John Carey, Chief of Staff Claire Comrie and Natasha Monks (GSDC) entered the meeting at 11.03am.

6. GUEST SPEAKERS

6.1 Minister for Housing and Local Government, Hon John Carey

Local Government portfolio

Key points:

- Having served on City of Vincent, he is a passionate believer in Local Government.
- Some Local Governments are doing great innovation.
- Working on a package for Local Government reform. Not his intention to do more inquiries. 5 -6 key areas are:
 1. Cutting red tape and greater standardisation. Established a working group. Believes in good governance.
 2. Greater transparency and accountability - more online reporting. Looking at a tiered approach.
 3. Looking at the CEO, Council and Mayor relationship. The number of complaints are increasing.
 4. Financial reporting and management - more standardisation.
 5. Earlier intervention, more effective regulation and more oversight. Minister doesn't want to see more inquiries. Looking at the Victorian model.
 6. Not looking at forced amalgamations but looking at shared resources and shared CEO. Ratepayers are preferring this model. This can help ratepayers and budget bottom line.

Housing portfolio

Key points:

- COVID-19 has seen people spending money on houses and people coming back to WA.
- Issues with getting tradesmen and materials.
- 25,000 Key Start building approvals over last 12 months.
- Next 6 - 12 months, there will be 10,000 new rentals coming onto the market.

Cr Fiona Gaze entered the meeting at 11.19am, making 16 voting delegates.

- Hearing issues with land supply in regional areas.
- Investing \$1 billion in public and social housing initiatives. Premier is having Skills Summit next week to assist in getting tradesmen.
- GROH housing and essential workers - sub-committee and working group to look at better forecasting over the next 4 - 8 years.
- Will need more GROH housing for extra police officers.

Q&A Session

Question: Bob Jarvis - housing issue in Gnowangerup. Large industrial businesses who want to employ people. Significant headworks charges. Charges imposed on developers by servicing agencies. \$100 - \$160,000 for residential lots. \$200 - \$400,000 for industrial sites making it hard for developers to recover costs, let alone make a profit.

Response: Minister Carey - looking at the Act for DevelopmentWA. Moving all major housing units of 20 units to DevelopmentWA. Understand that there are blockages which is why he has set up working group. Land boost programme looked to address this. It is on government agenda to get more residential and industrial supply. Ministers for Lands, Housing and Planning meet weekly about these issues.

Question: Mayor Wellington - CEOs managing 2 or 3 shires. Will Government incentivise this because there's a fair amount of resistance.

Response: Minister – there was incentive scheme under previous Labor Government but there wasn't a lot of buy in to it. Only 1 or 2 took it up last time. Shared Hub model still allows elected reps but has cost benefits. Already seeing fewer councillors and open wards. Embrace it and don't be fearful of it. Not looking at an incentive scheme at this stage but looking at removing hurdles to Shared Hub model.

Question: Keith Williams raised an issue about a legislative hurdle ?? (Keith to add details here).

Response: Minister - more contentious hurdle. Has not come to a decision on the broader reform package yet. **ACTION: Minister Carey to meet with Keith Williams to discuss this issue.**

Cr Fleay commented that she thought that Local Governments had matured a lot since last incentives programme and she felt the Minister should not totally disregard it.

Minister Carey said it would be good to have more leadership training for CEOs.

Question: Cr House - Great Southern Treasures is an example of a group of LGAs are working together. This is an unmet need. Don't have a tourism package. Tourism provides employment.

Response: **ACTION: Minister Carey is happy to meet with LGAs about tourism funding.**

Question: Cr Guidera - reform is not amalgamation. Incentives to share would be welcome, not just CEOs but finance and all the other LGA services.

Response: Minister - skills shortage is the number one issue facing WA. Difficulty getting people to work anywhere, let alone regional areas and housing is linked to this. Government is trying to be creative and look at options.

Question: Rick Mitchell-Collins – would like to have a Minister which represents Local Government. Communities have a sense of entitlement and expectation. What is the definition of 'sustainability' for Local Government in regional areas? Minister requested to have a look at the service provision of Local Government.

Response: Minister - respectfully, there are some LGAs doing a great job but there are some which are highly dysfunctional. Looking to see if there's a better system for LGA reporting. Reporting for smaller councils is too onerous according to Auditor General - how can we make it easier for smaller LGAs.

Question: Cr Pavlovich - happy to hear the Minister's views on resource sharing. This has been going on in VROCs over a few years now. Software providers won't provide a software licence to several different organisations to facilitate staff resource sharing. Would the Minister look at a body to employ shared staff?

Response: Minister - looking at changing this part of the Act to allow LGAs to employ the same shared staff. Minister cannot control the software issue. Mandate that all LGAs use the same financial software system so the Department can provide support.

Question: Cr Terry - Spencer Park housing issue. Department of Communities has been knocking down houses and not replacing them. Hoping that money would come after State Election but none. Would like money allocated to housing in Spencer Park.

Response: Minister – Albany MP Rebecca Stephens is advocating for Spencer Park.

Question: Stephen Gash – request to lobby for Roads to Recovery. Struggling with inflexibility. Office of the Auditor General couldn't deliver the audit and Shire of Woody lost money. While this is not within the Minister's portfolio, Mr Gash would like the Minister to advocate on this issue.

Response: **ACTION: Minister to advocate on this issue and liaise with WALGA this week.**

Question: Mayor Wellington - will there be an increase in funds to increase the staff in Dept of Local Government?

Response: Minister is looking at improvements, potentially a new oversight body. Realigning the DLGSC to be a better advisory body and boost its advisory capacity.

Question: Bob Jarvis - communities need a doctor. Hoping the tender process does not lead to losing Gnowangerup doctor but told we must go through the tender process.

Response: Minister - looking at Local Laws (reviewed every 8 years) in terms of cutting red tape. Could extend the review timeframe for Local Laws.

Question: Rick Mitchell-Collins - Workplace Health and Safety. Have safety systems and LGIS. Would be nice for LGAs to work with the Department to develop these templates.

Response: Minister - will make it clear to the Department that if we are delivering reforms, we need to issue guidance, hence standardisation focus. Minister is putting in a substantial amount of work on early intervention and oversight.

Question: Stephen Gash - effective intervention sorted out Kojonup's problems early on.

Response: Minister - no enforcement powers in early intervention. Looking at stronger penalties.

Question: Cr Guidera - can we work on having influence if rogue councillors are unfit to stand on council?

Response: Minister - need to deal with minor stuff quickly. Yes, we need to consider this as part of the reforms.

ACTION: Minister will provide written responses to questions in 2 - 4 weeks' time.

Session with Minister Carey finished at 12.06pm when the meeting broke for lunch.

The meeting re-convened at 12.45pm

Cr Guidera, Cr Goodheart, CEO Julian Murphy and Cr Keith House left the meeting at 12.45pm leaving 13 voting delegates. Natasha Monks also left the meeting.

6.2 Penny Griffin, Project Manager Regional Telecommunications Dept of Primary Industries and Regional Development

Mobile coverage in the Great Southern, upcoming funding opportunities and emerging technologies.

Refer to attached powerpoint presentation.

Key points:

- \$40 million communications programme which ended in 2014 - State programme to establish base station infrastructure where there is failure in the network. Very expensive to deploy mobile services in rural areas with low population numbers.
- In regional areas, mobile services have a lot more utilities. Greater reliance on mobile communications in rural areas.
- Only one third of WA has coverage.
- Prioritisation process to show where to invest in mobile services.
- 2018 - telecommunications prioritisation study. Coverage gaps were identified. This led to Black Spot funding programme.
- 150 key sites identified in WA. Looked for elevated locations. Proximity to power and fibre. This effects cost.
- Looked at population data, areas of public safety risk, disadvantaged communities, etc.
- 53 base stations have been funded in the Great Southern.
- Future funding opportunities - refer to powerpoint presentation.
- nbnco has \$300 million regional co-investment initiative. Applications close in February 2022.
- Telstra has \$200 million available for regional co-investment.
- Regional Telecommunications Review 2021. Report due December 2021. To be tabled in Parliament and Government must respond within 90 days.
- Superloop Fixed Wireless Projects target farmers.
- New technologies such as SpaceX.
- Expect to have coverage in 8-10 years for mobile devices.
- Telstra will switch off 3G in 2024. All 3G towers will be upgraded to 4G.
- nbnco is looking at fixed wireless projects.
- New generation of Wi-Fi standards.

ACTION: Executive Officer to source information from Superloop for August meeting.

Peter Rundle asked if there was any leverage to make telcos ensure towers work before they get funding for the next tower.

Penny Griffin said telcos needed to value-add. Telcos don't get payment from the companies which use their networks eg. Netflix. Black Spot funding only funds new infrastructure, not existing infrastructure. There is funding which will fund improvements to existing infrastructure.

A count was taken and there were 13 voting delegates present.

7. ACTION REGISTER

7.1 **Action Register** - attached.

8. KEY STRATEGIC ZONE ISSUES FOR 2021

8.1 **Key Strategic Zone Issues Register** - attached.

GUEST SPEAKERS AT 2021 MEETINGS - LINKED TO KEY STRATEGIC ZONE ISSUES

Councils to decide which Ministers, Politicians, Directors General and other speakers they wish to attend Zone meetings in 2021.

Zone meeting dates	Guest Speakers
Friday 20 August 2021	<p>Telstra - Boyd Brown – confirmed</p> <p>NBN Co - Katina Bowie – confirmed. \$300 million Regional Co-Investment Fund</p> <p>Rick Wilson MP – to be confirmed</p> <p>ACTION: Executive Officer to ask for one-page status report from Superloop to be circulated prior to August meeting.</p> <p>Dr Lenore Lyons has offered to give a short presentation to update Zone Councils on Outdoors Great Southern (formerly GSCORE) - not for August meeting.</p> <p>Dept of Premier and Cabinet - Native Title Settlement presentation.</p>
Monday 25 October 2021 (Joint meeting with Great Southern Regional Road Group)	<p>Minister Rita Saffioti Ian Clarke, CEO, Albany Youth Support Association.</p> <p>Note: WA Government Cabinet meetings are always held on Mondays, so it is doubtful the Minister will be available. Suggest changing to a Friday meeting.</p>

Outstanding or suggested speakers

- Invite State Government Ministers and Directors General after March 2021 State Election.
- Ben Headlam, Palmerston Services Great Southern – drug and alcohol issues in the region and COVID-19 impact. Also, lack of rehabilitation centre in the region. **Look at presentation in 2022.**
- Forest Industries Federation WA - briefing on the timber industry in WA and particularly regarding the South West Timber Hub, noting that forestry is a significant industry in the Great Southern. **Look at presentation in 2022.**
- Presentation by Office of the Auditor General.
Subject: Update on local government auditing so far and look at a few of OAG's recent Local Government financial and performance audits. Include issues raised by CEO Julian Murphy and Cr Rob Lester.

9. ZONE BUSINESS

Nil.

10. EMERGING ISSUES FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

City of Albany

- Storm on 20 and 21 June 2021 caused about \$1.5 million worth of damage. Can claim natural disaster funding beyond \$240,000.
- Changing street lights over to LED in joint project with other councils. Will be paid off in 6 years and guaranteed for 20 years.

Shire of Broomehill-Tambellup

- Drought funding projects have taken a while to source contractors but can get extension to projects.
- CEO Keith Williams is moving to take up a new position in Broome.

Shire of Cranbrook - Nothing to report.

Shire of Denmark - Not present to report.

Shire of Gnowangerup

- Housing issues.
- Drought funding almost finalised. No issues with contractors.
- Roads which are impassable after last weekend's storm.

Shire of Jerramungup

- Storm event will crack the damage threshold for making a claim. Some roads are still closed.
- Still without a doctor since January 2020. Locum service is not ideal.

Shire of Katanning - Not present to report.

Shire of Kent

- Crops are looking good.
- A few projects are delayed due to contractors or delays in delivery of materials.

Shire of Kojonup

- Some carryovers of projects.
- Dam is half full.
- Change of CEO to Grant Thompson. Thank you to Rick Mitchell-Collins for 8 years' service as CEO.

Shire of Plantagenet

- Storm damage, mainly in east of shire, is being assessed. Still haven't been paid for last storm event in 2019.
- Housing and rental issues.
- Labour shortages particularly in primary production.
- Number of projects which can't make timeframe of 30 June.
- Residential land development - preliminary work on shire-owned land.
- Former school site has been privately bought - planning to use for agricultural training.

Shire of Woodanilling

- Problems getting contractors.

11. FINANCIAL REPORT

11.1 Financial Report for the period 1 April to 31 May 2021 - attached.

Opening balance as at 1 April 2021	\$6,056.38
Total debits	(\$2,156.41)
Total credits	0
Closing balance as at 31 May 2021	\$3,899.97

MOVED Cr John Benn

SECONDED Cr Russel Thomson

That the financial statements for the periods 1 April to 31 May 2021 be accepted as true and accurate records of the Zone's finances.

CARRIED 13-0

12. REPORTS

No	Organisation / Delegates	Updates / Info
12.1	Local Government Agricultural Freight Group (LGAFG) Delegate: Cr Russel Thomson (Shire of Woodanilling) Proxy: Cr Scott Crosby (Shire of Kent)	Next meeting due on 9 July 2021. <i>Ongoing issue - Movement of Agricultural Machinery.</i>
12.2	Great Southern District Leadership Group (formerly Great Southern Human Services Forum)	Stephen Gash registered his interested in representing Local Government on this group. EO emailed Neila Williams again on 16 June. No response. ACTION: Stephen Gash will contact the group.
12.3	Great Southern District Emergency Management Committee (DEMC) – CEO Keith Williams	Various operational support group meetings for Albany due to storm event. Will need to elect a new DEMC rep after August 2021 meeting as Keith Williams will be leaving.
12.4	South Coast Natural Resource Management (SCNRM) Delegate: CEO Keith Williams Proxy: Cr Jon Oldfield (Plantagenet)	SCNRM has community meetings but no formal meetings.
12.5	Great Southern Development Commission – Natasha Monks	Not present to report.
12.6	Great Southern RoadWise	WALGA is currently trying to recruit a new Road Safety Advisor for the Great Southern. Invite to August and/or October meeting.
12.7	Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries	Director General Duncan Ord's reports are emailed direct to councils.
12.8	Executive Officer	Nothing to report.
12.9	Outdoors Great Southern	Report attached.
12.10	Peter Rundle MLA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minister Carey is engaged and understands the issues, having been in Local Government. Pushing for review of School Bus Policy. Minister for Transport is willing to review it and keen to have Peter Rundle on review committee. Parliament is challenging with limited number of National Party MPs. Mr Rundle's portfolios are education, sport & recreation, and racing & gaming. With only a few Liberal and National MPs in State Parliament, he's concerned about democracy and some of the legislation which is coming through. Mr Rundle offered assistance to Zone councils in arranging meetings with Ministers to advocate on various issues. Water issues. Concerned about electoral reform in terms of representation in the regions. The mandate is to create equality. Meeting on 16 July about Perth to Albany train. Puppy farming legislation will have implications for Local Governments. LGAs will administer it but without extra resources. It appears that there will be some exemptions for working dogs. Councils encouraged to provide info to Peter. Animal welfare trespass legislation will be challenging. Interested in DWER and clearing roadside vegetation issue.

Cr Fleay moved a vote of thanks to outgoing Shire of Kojonup CEO Rick Mitchell-Collins.

13. Remaining Zone meetings for 2021

Friday 20 August

Shire of Cranbrook

Friday 29 October
Date to be confirmed

Shire of Plantagenet (Mt Barker)
Joint meeting with Regional Road Group
AGM and ordinary meeting

Close: 2.34pm.