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GVROC Council Meeting

Friday 22nd May 2026
In person meeting and video
hosted by Shire of Wiluna
8:30am – 1:00pm
held at the at the Shire Council Offices

Minutes

Andrew Mann	Cr Laurene Bonza
GVROC Executive Officer	GVROC Chair
31 July 2026	31 July 2026

CONTENTS

GOLDFIELDS VOLUNTARY REGIONAL ORGANISATION OF COUNCILS (GVROC)

An in person and video conference meeting of the GVROC Council was held Friday 22 May 2026 commencing at 8:30 am at the Shire of Wiluna Council Chambers.

AGENDA

1. OPENING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss business related to the activities of the Goldfields Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Pursuant to the Code of Conduct, Councillors and CEOs must declare to the Chairman any potential conflict of interest they may have in a matter before the Goldfields Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils as soon as they become aware of it. Councillors, CEOs and Deputies may be directly or indirectly associated with some recommendations of the Goldfields Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils. If you are affected by these recommendations, please excuse yourself from the meeting and do not participate in deliberations.

In relation to Item 5.1 – Presentation by the ABS
Cr Paul Wilcox, Shire of Coolgardie President declared a financial interest in the item due to his current employment relationship with the ABS for the upcoming census process.

3. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE, APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

3.1 Attendance

Cr Laurene Bonza	President, Shire of Dundas (Chair)	
Cr Sharon Warner	Councillor, Shire of Dundas	
Mr Peter Fitchat	CEO, Shire of Dundas	
Cr Paul Wilcox	President, Shire of Coolgardie	(via Zoom)
Cr Anthony Ball	Councillor, Shire of Coolgardie	(via Zoom)
Ms Sabine Taylor	A/CEO, Shire of Coolgardie	(via Zoom)
Cr Glenn Wilson	Mayor, City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder	(via Zoom)
Cr Ron Chambers	President Shire of Esperance	(via Zoom)
Cr Wes Graham	Councillor, Shire of Esperance	(via Zoom)
Mr Shane Burge	CEO, Shire of Esperance	(via Zoom)
Ms Jackie Hawkins	A/CEO, Shire of Laverton	
Cr Peter Craig	President, Shire of Leonora	
Cr Paul Warner	President, Shire of Menzies	
Cr Jill Dwyer	Councillor, Shire of Menzies	
Mr Rob Stewart	A/CEO, Shire of Menzies	
Cr Jim Quadrio	Councillor, Shire of Wiluna	
Mr Matt McIntyre	CEO, Shire of Wiluna	
Mr Andrew Mann	Executive Officer, GVROC	
Ms Niki Curtis	GVROC Regional Climate Alliance Coordinator	(via Zoom)

3.2 GVROC and Agency Apologies

GVROC

Cr Terrence Winner	Deputy Mayor, City of Kalgoorlie Boulder
Cr Wayne Johnson,	Councillor, City of Kalgoorlie Boulder
Mr Mal Osborne	A/CEO, City of Kalgoorlie Boulder
Cr Patrick Hill	President, Shire of Laverton
Mr Ty Matson	CEO, Shire of Leonora
Cr Damian McLean	President, Shire of Ngaanyatjarraku
Mr David Mosel	CEO, Shire of Ngaanyatjarraku
Cr Tim Carmody	Councillor, Shire of Wiluna

Agency

Shelby Robinson	District Emergency Management Advisor, DFES

3.3 Guest Speakers and Presenters

Guest Speakers

Hon Neil Thomson MLC Member for Mining and Pastoral Region (via Zoom)

Rick Wilson MP Federal Member for O'Connor (via Zoom)

Presenters

Rowan Keilar Australian Bureau of Statistics (via Zoom)

3.4 WALGA Representatives

Mr Ian Duncan Executive Manager Infrastructure (via Zoom)

3.5 DLGIRS Representatives

Nil

3.6 GEDC Representatives

Kris Starcevich CEO, GEDC (via Zoom)

3.7 RDAGE Representatives

Sharon Henderson Director, RDAGE (via Zoom)

3.8 DFES/DEMC Representative

Nil

3.9 Observers

Cr. Tammee Keast	Councillor, Shire of Coolgardie	(via Zoom)
Tralee Cable	CEO, Shire of Mount Magnet	(via Zoom for **Agenda Item 10.1**)

4. GUEST SPEAKERS

4.1 Hon Neil Thomson MLC - Mining and Pastoral Region

Hon Neil Thomson MLC - Mining and Pastoral Region - provided an update on the debate of the *Local Government Amendment (Rating of Certain Mining Licences) Bill 2025* in the Upper House of Parliament and opened up for discussion.

4.2 Rick Wilson MP

Rick Wilson MP, Federal Member for O'Connor provided an update on Federal Budget 2026 and regional matters from the Federal Government perspective.

5. PRESENTATIONS

5.1 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) will present and facilitate a targeted, Elected Member/CEO-focused discussion on the upcoming Australian Census.

The ABS is seeking insight on local community considerations, participation challenges, and how Census engagement can be strengthened across Western Australia.

This proposal recognises that councillors have distinct responsibilities, insights, and perspectives that extend beyond operational Census delivery.

Rowan Keilar, from ABS delivered an overview of the Census, and how areas will be enumerated, and Inclusive Strategies.

5.2 Shire of Wiluna

Matt McIntyre, CEO provided a presentation on current projects within the Shire of Wiluna.

6. AGENCY REPORTS

6.1 WALGA

WALGA verbal update report by Ian Duncan.

6.2 Goldfields Esperance Development Commission

GEDC verbal update report by Kris Starcevich.

6.3 Regional Development Australia Goldfields Esperance

RDAGE verbal update report by Sharon Henderson.

6.4 DFES/DEMC Representative

Shelby Robinson provided an email in her absence advising the Goldfields-Esperance DEMC met last week and exercised two remote hazard response scenarios across the Eyre Highway. This exercise also looked at testing Draft Remote Hazard Response Guidelines which will now progress up to the State EM Committee for endorsement. A full exercise report is in the process of being written and will be circulated with the minutes of the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the GVROC note the Agency Reports as provided.

RESOLUTION: **Moved:** ***Cr Jill Dwyer, Shire of Menzies***
Seconded: ***Cr Peter Craig, Shire of Leonora***

Carried

GVROC Chair called motion to adjourn the meeting for morning tea break at 10:25am.

Moved: ***Cr Peter Craig, Shire of Leonora***
Seconded: ***Cr Paul Warner, Shire of Menzies***

GVROC Chair called motion to resume the meeting at 10:45am.

Moved: ***Cr Paul Warner, Shire of Menzies***
Seconded: ***Cr Jill Dwyer, Shire of Menzies***

7. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

7.1 Minutes of the Goldfields Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils (GVROC) meeting held 27 March 2026

Minutes of the GVROC Council Meeting held Friday 27 March 2026 (**Attachment 1**) are presented for adoption.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Minutes of the GVROC Council Meeting held Friday 27 March 2026 be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.

RESOLUTION: **Moved:** ***Cr Sharon Warner, Shire of Dundas***
Seconded: ***Cr Jill Dwyer, Shire of Menzies***

Carried

7.2 Action Sheet Report

An update on the actions based on the resolutions from the meeting held on 27 March 2026 meeting is presented for noting (**Attachment 2**).

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Action Sheet Report as listed for noting be received.

RESOLUTION: **Moved:** ***Cr Paul Warner, Shire of Menzies***
Seconded: ***Cr Sharon Warner, Shire of Dundas***

Carried

7.3 Matters for Noting

The following matters were presented for noting.

1. **WA Government Ministerial Media Statements** of relevance to the Goldfields Esperance Zone since the last GVROC meeting is contained at **Attachment 3**.
2. **DLGIRS Local Government Alert** dated 22 April 2026 - Learn about child safeguarding in local government
3. **DLGIRS Local Government Alert** dated 22 April 2026 - MyCouncil – 2023-24 data now available
4. **DLGIRS Local Government Alert** dated 11 May 2026 - Innovative place making projects recognised for outstanding community impact
5. **DLGIRS Local Government Alert** dated 12 May 2026 - Model Financial Statements 2025-26
6. **DLGIRS Local Government Alert** dated 13 May 2026 - Local Government Adjudicators appointed
7. **RDAGE information** dated 15 May 2026 - National Cultural Policy
   The Australian Government is developing a new National Cultural Policy and LGAs are invited to share your views as part of the national consultation. The new policy will build upon the successful foundations of the current policy, *Revive:* a place for every story, a story for every place *(Revive)*.

   The new policy will address gaps, respond to emerging priorities, and provide a clear framework to support a vibrant and sustainable cultural future. It will set a clear direction for the coming years and guide how the Australian Government supports creativity, cultural expression and participation across Australia.

   Read the public consultation paper and share your views online by providing a written statement of up to 500 words or uploading your submission. Have your say by **11.59pm (AEST) on Sunday 24 May 2026.** For more information, visit www.arts.gov.au/culturalpolicy

RECOMMENDATION:

That the matters for noting as listed be received and noted.

RESOLUTION: **Moved:** ***Cr Jill Dwyer, Shire of Menzies***
Seconded: ***Cr Paul Wilcox, Shire of Coolgardie***

Carried

7.4 Correspondence for Noting

The following correspondence was sent and received since the last GVROC meeting and are all contained in **Attachment 4**

Correspondence received:

1. Email received on 25 March 2026 from the Office of Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson MLA, Minister for Energy and Decarbonisation; Manufacturing; Skills and TAFE; Pilbara in response to GVROC letter regarding fuel supply and security in the Goldfield Esperance regions.
2. Email received on 30 March 2026 from Stephen Brown, Managing Director at People Assignment outlining they are now a trusted WALGA preferred supplier of investigation and HR services to local government across Western Australia.
3. Email received on 31 March 2026 from Hon Brian Walker MLC, Parliamentary Leader of Legalise Cannabis WA, responding to the GVROC letter requesting Urgent Cross-Party Action on the Local Government Amendment (Rating of Certain Mining Licenses) Bill 2025 to protect the Sustainability of Regional Local Governments.
4. Letter received on 8 April 2026 from Jai Thomas, Deputy Director General at the Department of Energy and Economic Diversification in response to GVROC letter regarding fuel supply and security in the Goldfield Esperance regions.
5. Letter received on 8 April 2026 from the Hon Hannah Beazley MLA, Minister for Local Government responding to the GVROC letter requesting Urgent Cross-Party Action on the Local Government Amendment (Rating of Certain Mining Licenses) Bill 2025 to protect the Sustainability of Regional Local Governments.
6. Email received on 9 April 2026 from Samantha Appleton, Executive Officer of Murchison Country Zone of WALGA regarding an update on their request for support for a motion of the that the Auditor General conduct a performance audit of Recovery and Resilience management of the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements Western Australia.
7. Email received on 23 April 2026 from James Rowe JP, Senior Policy Adviser from the Office of the Hon David Michael MLA, Minister for Mines and Petroleum; Finance; Electoral Affairs; Goldfields-Esperance advising of Minister's meeting
8. Letter received on 1 May 2026 from the Hon Stephen Dawson MLC, Minister for Regional Development responding to the GVROC letter requesting Urgent Cross-Party Action on the Local Government Amendment (Rating of Certain Mining Licenses) Bill 2025 to protect the Sustainability of Regional Local Governments.

Correspondence sent:

1. Letter sent on 2 April 2026 to Shelby Robinson, District Emergency Management Adviser – Wheatbelt & Goldfields Esperance Regions notifying change to GVROC representation to the Goldfields Esperance District Emergency Management Committee.
2. Email sent on 9 April to 2026 to Samantha Appleton, Executive Officer of Murchison Country Zone of WALGA in response to email listed in correspondence received point 6 above.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the correspondence that was sent or received since the last GVROC meeting be noted.

RESOLUTION: **Moved:** ***Mayor Glenn Wilson, City of Kalgoorlie Boulder***
Seconded: ***Cr Jill Dwyer, Shire of Menzies***

Carried

7.5 GVROC CEOs Group Meetings

The GVROC CEOs held a meeting on 11 May 2026, and the Minutes of that meeting are presented at **Attachment 5** for noting by the GVROC**.**

RECOMMENDATION:

That the GVROC CEOs Group Minutes from its meeting on 11 May 2026 be noted.

RESOLUTION: **Moved:** ***Cr Ron Chambers, Shire of Esperance***
Seconded: ***Cr Jill Dwyer, Shire of Menzies***

Carried

8. GOLDFIELDS VOLUNTARY REGIONAL ORGANISATION OF COUNCILS FINANCE

8.1 Financial Statement for May 2026

Reporting Officer: Andrew Mann, GVROC Executive Officer

Disclosure of Interest: No interest to disclose

Date: May 2026

Attachments: GVROC Financial Statements and accounts payable and receivable to 22 May 2026, Full Transaction Account history to 22 May 2026 and GVROC Bank Statement Snapshot, plus Account history full transaction to date for 2025/26 financial year, 2025/26 Budget update (**Attachment 6**).

Background:
Presenting the financial statement position and the accounts approved for payment for the period 1 July 2025 to 22 May 2026.

Also providing a picture of the 2025/26 Budget outlook as of 22 May 2026.

Financial Statement:
The Officer provides the following comment:

Since the last GVROC meeting for the period of 28 March 2026 to 22 May 2026 new transactions included in the financial statements are:

- Payments to Mann Advisory for the Executive Officer services and travel costs
- Payments to Niki Curtis for RCA Coordinator services and travel costs.
- Payments to XERO Accounting System – Monthly subscription for accounting software
- Payment to Up-to-Date Accounting for preparation of GVROC BAS Statement and Lodgement.
- Payments to REX Airlines, Skippers Aviation, Qantas, Budget Renta car, Comfort Inn – Esperance, Shire of Wiluna for GVROC Executive Officer travel expenses to attend its meetings in the region.
- Payments to Josh Byrne and Associates for work on the Martu Bush Walk Wiluna Project as part of the Urban Greening program.
- Payment to Mantjiljarra Yulparirra Pty Ltd for Wiluna Martu Rangers time spent in consultation for the Martu Bush Walk Wiluna Project as part of the Urban Greening program.
- Interest earned on Commonwealth Saver account

Officer Comment:
The budget for 2025/26 is currently tracking according to plan.

Consultation: GVROC Chair, GVROC CEO Chair

Financial Implications: Funds for the expenditure is included in the 2025/2026 Budget

Strategic Implications: GVROC Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Objective 3

RECOMMENDATION:
That GVROC:

1. Note that the Statement of Financial Position for the period 1 July 2025 to 22 May 2026 and the accounts approved for payment for the period 28 March 2026 to 22 May 2026 totalling $52,394.95 and revenue received of $3.69.
2. Endorse the actions taken by the GVROC Executive Officer to pay for GVROC expenses and receipt of GVROC Revenue.

RESOLUTION: **Moved:** ***Cr Paul Wilcox, Shire of Coolgardie***
Seconded: ***Cr Jill Dwyer, Shire of Menzies***

Carried

8.2 Proposed 2026/2027 Budget

Reporting Officer: Andrew Mann, GVROC Executive Officer

Disclosure of Interest: No interest to disclose

Date: 22 May 2026

Attachments: GVROC Proposed Draft Budget 2026/2027 and Projected Financial Position 30 June 2026 **(Attachment 7)**

Background:
At the GVROC Council Meeting on Friday 30th May 2025 Council resolved;

RECOMMENDATION:

That the GVROC Council Adopt the Proposed Draft Budget for the year ending 30 June 2026 with each Member Council contribution to continue at $35,000 (excluding GST).

RESOLUTION: **Moved:** ***Cr Peter Craig – Shire of Leonora***
Seconded: ***Cr Laurene Bonza, Shire of Dundas***

Carried

Officer Comment:
To meet the proposed 2026/2027 Budget the GVROC will need to continue its annual subscriptions at $35,000 per LGA to cover ongoing operational and project costs. Current subscriptions total $315,000 per annum ($35,000 per LGA).

While there is expected to be a surplus of funds at the end of the financial year, these funds give the GVROC the opportunity to invest further into projects that deliver outcomes that meets its objectives related to the Regional Climate Alliance and other areas of focus particularly regarding infrastructure development in the local government areas.

In the current 2025/26 Financial Year, the GVROC's cash balances have increased significantly compared to the adopted budget due to the grants obtained towards the GVROC RCA projects, without the need to utilise our surplus funds on other projects. However, the GVROC has allocated funds towards the replacement shared equipment pool, expected to be up to $128,550 in the 2026/27 financial year. It is also expected that the Urban Greening Program will expend significantly more in 2026/27 of the grant funds received in 2025/26 financial year.

The main expenditure items for the GVROC in the proposed budget for 2026/27 are the employment and travel expenses for the GVROC Executive Officer, the RCA Coordinator employment fees and remuneration for the GVROC Chair which in 2026/27 is expected to total $248,000. There is then the other general operational expenditure to be met bringing the expected GVROC governance expenditure budget for 2026/27 to $263,250, excluding projects and grants.

This then provides a small surplus in funds ($51,760) from the LGA annual subscriptions ($315,000), that can be utilised along with the 2025/26 surplus towards agreed projects.

At the end of the 2026/27 financial year, it is estimated that the GVROC cash reserves will sit at approximately $240,000 if no further projects are invested in during the year and the budget forecast is met.

Any GVROC projects undertaken outside those that are already in the budget may require additional contributions from each LGA towards the costs of those projects as when they are endorsed by the GVROC, depending on how much of the surplus is available.

Based on the above it is proposed annual membership fees are continued at $35,000 per annum to ensure that expected operational expenditure, excluding projects costs is continued to be met by member subscriptions.

Consultation: GVROC Chair
GVROC CEOs Group

Financial Implications: Funds for expenditure are included in the 2026/2027 Budget

Strategic Implications: GVROC Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Objective 3

RECOMMENDATION:

That the GVROC Council Adopt the Proposed Draft Budget for the year ending 30 June 2027 with each Member Council contribution to continue at $35,000 (excluding GST).

RESOLUTION: **Moved:** ***Cr Paul Warner, Shire of Menzies***
Seconded: ***Cr Sharon Warner, Shire of Dundas***

Carried

9. GVROC REGIONAL CLIMATE ALLIANCE PROGRAM

9.1 GVROC Regional Climate Alliance Program Update

Reporting Officers: Andrew Mann, GVROC Executive Officer
Niki Curtis, GVROC Regional Climate Alliance Coordinator

Disclosure of Interest: Nil

Date: May 2026

Attachments: Building Flood Resilient Roads for the Goldfields Esperance Region (**Attachment 8**)

Background and Officer Comments on each project are below:
The GVROC Regional Climate Alliance (RCA) Working Group has not met since the last GVROC meeting on 27 March 2026**.**

Regarding the GVROC led RCA projects being managed by the RCA Coordinator, these are listed below in more detail.

Urban Greening Program for the Goldfields Esperance Region.
Background:

In December 2024, GVROC was notified that it has been successful in a $573,000 grant from Lotterywest to plant over 30,000 native species across the GE region.

As part of this project, each Council has agreed to sign up to the Waterwise Council program with Water Corporation, and the final application documents from Water Corporation will be distributed to each LGA in June.

Tree and shrub orders have been placed with the Esperance Native Nursery and Kalgoorlie Boulder Urban Landcare Group, and these orders may be extended once more planning has been undertaken.

Botanica Consultants have been engaged to develop a landscaping masterplan for the Karlkurla Bushland Park at Kalgoorlie and Josh Byrne and Associates had their contract extended to undertake further work with the Shire of Wiluna this year.

A summary of both the payment and reporting details for the project are outlined in the table below.

Date	Description	Payment amount	Payment requirements
19/12/2024	**Payment 1**	$165,193	PAID
30/11/2025	**Payment 2**	$342,293	PAID
30/1/2026	**Report 1 due**	Completed	
30/01/2027	**Report 2 due**		Provide this through Portal
30/01/2028	**Payment 3 (Acquittal)**	$65,910	Provide an update on progress against the Community Impact Planner and an Income and Expenditure statement that accounts for 75% of payment 2.
TOTAL		**$573,396 (ex GST)**	

Officer Comment:

- Botanica Consulting have started work on the Karlkurla Bushland Park Masterplan. The Plan will prioritise planting local species to enhance shade, biodiversity, and cultural identity in the park, which is a key recreation attraction for the City of Kalgoorlie Boulder.

- Josh Byrne and Associates have now submitted a planting proposal to TMPAC and the Shire of Wiluna for works to be undertaken by TMPAC rangers with support from the Shire of Wiluna in 2026 and 2027 for the Martu Bushwalk.

- Kim Eckert from KBULG has contacted those Shires that have expressed interest in her services to develop plans for planting programs in 2026 and 2027 (She has now visited Dundas, held a meeting with Leonora and will visit Menzies at the end of the month).

- Online training updates will be undertaken with grounds staff in June, and trees and shrubs will be distributed in late June/July.

EV Charging Stations - Leonora and Menzies

Officer Comment on EV Charging Stations:
EV Charging Systems are waiting to install the charging stations at Menzies and Leonora – we are still waiting on some electrical works to be done at Leonora and an electrician to re-quote for Menzies.

Building Flood Resilient Roads Across the Goldfields Esperance Region

Several projects have identified gaps in flood risk data for road networks in the Northern Goldfields (Wiluna, Laverton, Ngaanyatjarraku, Menzies, Leonora) in recent years. Flood disasters have also affected LGAs in the Central Goldfields (City of Kalgoorlie Boulder, Shires of Coolgardie and Dundas) and Southeastern coastal regions (Shires of Esperance and Ravensthorpe).

In response to this on-going flooding risk to roads and infrastructure, a project is being developed by GVROC that partnerships with the Goldfields Esperance Development Commission (GEDC) and Regional Development Australia (RDAGE).

The project aims to:

- Evaluate data, knowledge, and technical requirements for developing flood-resilient roads in the GE region, with emphasis on vulnerable communities and critical economic infrastructure affecting industry, community, and state outcomes.
- Map long-term flood resilience priorities for future funding or support and outline actionable steps.

Following discussions with GEDC, a Project Proposal (See **Attachment 8**) has been submitted to seek funding support ($40,000) and a submission will also be made to RDAGE next month that will seek a similar funding amount. This project also aligns to the actions arising from the GE RDRP.

Strategic Implications:
- Mitigating drought impacts and improving water security
- Sustainably managing the increased risk of bushfire threats
- Improving uptake of renewable energy and energy efficiency solutions
- Managing waste sustainably at a regional scale
- Reducing carbon emissions across the GE region to support our vision of a thriving, clean, green and economically resilient region

RECOMMENDATION:

That the GVROC notes:

1. The Urban Greening project is progressing as planned.
2. The charging stations at Menzies and Leonora are still waiting on electricians to provide services.
3. A project is being developed that focuses on flood risks to roads across the GE region. This project aims to map long term flood resilience priorities for the region and aligns to the GE RDRP.

RESOLUTION: **Moved: *Cr Peter Craig, Shire of Leonora***
Seconded: *Cr Sharon Warner, Shire of Dundas*

Carried

9.2 Goldfields Esperance Water Security Group and Regional Drought Resilience Plan (RDRP) Update

Reporting Officer: Andrew Mann, GVROC Executive Officer

Disclosure of Interest: Nil.

Date: May 2026

Attachments: Nil

Background:
The Goldfields-Esperance Regional Drought Resilience Plan (RDRP) provides a foundation to identify, inform and guide actions to achieve water security and drought resilience across the region.

Jointly funded by the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) and the Federal government's $5 billion Future Drought Fund (FDF), this RDRP builds on the region's aspiration to achieve water security through a shared vision.

The RDRP should be read in conjunction with the Drought Vulnerability Assessment (DVA) for the region, which provides an evidence base that underpins the priorities and actions identified.

The RDRP was approved and officially released on 12 November 2025.

Officer Comment:
The GEWSG held its last meeting on the 19 May 2026, and the minutes will be distributed with the minutes of this meeting as they are not yet available.

Key items of note from the GEDC in relation to the RDRP implementation include:

Work is underway on a "Water Demands Study – Regional Planning for Non-Potable Water Resources in the Goldfields-Esperance Region", with initial consultations with almost all Local Governments undertaken. Projects plans and frameworks have been completed. The consultants (Story Advisory in partnership with EMM Consulting) are consolidating information and data against the framework, with further consultations (including distribution of pre interview surveys) to be scheduled in the near future.

The consultants provided the Goldfields-Esperance Water Security Group with an update at their last meeting (19 May), including the early findings and proposed focus for each Local Government area.

The Water Demands Study aims to provide a clear evidence baseline of Local Governments' use and demands for non-potable water. The evidence will be used to identify and inform pathways to support local governments ensure a resilient water future.

Commencement of the "Wastewater treatment opportunities in small regional community settings" project has been delayed due to additional procurement requirements prior to engaging a consultant. All responses received to the Request for Quote exceeded $50,000 and as such the process has required additional steps to comply with DPIRD's procurement guidelines. A preferred respondent has been identified, and it is anticipated that onboarding will occur within 2-3 weeks.

GEDC has also committed to provide $40,000 in funding to GVROC to complete work to improve knowledge and identify actionable steps for "Building Flood Resilient Roads Across the Goldfields Esperance Region" as per the RCA report provided in Agenda Item 9.1 (see **Attachment 8**). This was identified as a priority action in the RDRP.

Consultation: GEDC, GEWSG

Financial Implications: N/A

Strategic Implications: Alignment with Regional Climate Alliance strategies

RECOMMENDATION:
That the GVROC:

1. Note the update from the GEWSG and the RDRP Implementation Plan for 2025-2027.

RESOLUTION: **Moved:** ***Cr Paul Warner, Shire of Menzies***
Seconded: ***Cr Sharon Warner, Shire of Dundas***

Carried

10. GOLDFIELDS VOLUNTARY REGIONAL ORGANISATION OF COUNCILS BUSINESS

10.1 Update on the Rateability of Miscellaneous and Mining Leases – Sector Support Discussion

Note: **Tralee Cable, CEO Shire of Mount Magnet will join online for this discussion.**

Reporting Officer: Andrew Mann, GVROC Executive Officer

Disclosure of Interest: Nil

Date: May 2026

Attachments: Local Government Amendment (Rating of Certain Mining Licences) Bill 2025
Legislative Council Supplementary Notice Paper 42, Issue 3 proposed amendments to Bill.

Background:
On 8 July 2025, the Supreme Court of Western Australia determined that occupied Miscellaneous Licences are rateable under section 6.26(1) of the *Local Government Act 1995*.

Despite this judicial clarification, on 1 August 2025, the Minister for Local Government announced the State Government's intention to introduce legislation to make Miscellaneous Licences non-rateable.

This proposal would override the Supreme Court's ruling and remove an established, lawful revenue stream available to Local Governments. The impact would fall most heavily on regional and remote Band 3 and 4 Local Governments, which service large mining operations but receive limited compensation for infrastructure wear, environmental health oversight, or community service impacts caused by mining activity.

The Shire of Mount Magnet CEO, Tralee Cable, submitted a motion to the 2025 WALGA Annual General Meeting opposing any amendment to the *Local Government Act 1995* that would restrict Local Governments' ability to rate Miscellaneous Licences.

The Shire of Mount Magnet also advise that it is worth noting that a Miscellaneous License was NOT exempt from rates after the 1978 Mining Act was introduced, as has been alleged by AMEC. A Miscellaneous License was in fact clearly rateable under the 1960 Local Government Act.

In addition, in 1998, post the 1995 Act implementation, an amendment was made to the Mining Act that modified the term of a Miscellaneous License from 5 years, plus two further 5-year terms to 21 years plus two further 21-year terms.

Clearly the intention was to facilitate long term investment and infrastructure requirements.

The Supreme Court judgment affirms Local Governments' role in regulating and servicing land subject to Miscellaneous Licences and acknowledges that such licences are used for permanent mining infrastructure, including:

- Roads and haulage corridors
- Accommodation camps
- Power, pipeline, and communication facilities
- Airstrips and storage depots

These activities have a direct and ongoing impact on local infrastructure and services. Removing the capacity to levy rates on such tenements would:

- Create further financial inequity between mining companies and local ratepayers;
- Increase cost-shifting from State to Local Governments; and

- Undermine the principle of user-pays in regional service delivery.

A coordinated LGA sector response is required to reinforce Mount Magnet's advocacy and demonstrate to the Minister and Parliament that the Local Government sector is united in seeking consultation and fairness

On 23 October 2025, the State Government as highlighted by the Minister for Local Government on 1 August 2025 introduced the *Local Government Amendment (Rating of Certain Mining Licences) Bill 2025* to Parliament (see attached link).

The Bill aims to give effect to the decision to legislate changes to the rating of miscellaneous licenses on Crown Land, undermining the decision of the Supreme Court of Western Australia.

WALGA has advised it has serious concerns about the proposed legislation, which, if passed, will:

- Prohibit Local Governments from rating Crown land that is the subject of a Miscellaneous Licence or a Small Prospecting Licence held under the *Mining Act 1978*. A Small Prospecting Licence is defined as a prospecting licence held in respect to land which does not exceed 10 ha. Collectively these are referred to as 'licence land'.
- Extinguish all rates imposed on licence land dating back to the 2017/2018 financial year.
- Compel Local Governments to refund any rates collected for licence land during this time period, including any additional charges, interest or costs of proceedings to recover rates.
- Require Local Governments to pay any refunds within 28 days from the day after the Amendment Act receives Royal Assent.
- Allow a ratepayer to recover the paid amount in the courts as a debt due if the Local Government does not meet the 14-day time period.

WALGA considers the proposed amendments to be unnecessarily punitive and disproportionate in their impact on any Local Government that has lawfully levied rates on occupied land under miscellaneous licences.

WALGA and the GVROC have written to the Hon Hannah Beazley MLA, Minister for Local Government; Disability Services; Volunteering; Youth; Gascoyne to express their strong concerns and to urge the Cook Government to reconsider both the scope and timing of the proposed changes.

WALGA and GVROC maintains that Local Governments should retain the right to rate miscellaneous licences, as determined by the Supreme Court.

However, if the Government proceeds with the exemption, WALGA and the GVROC are advocating for it to take effect from the 2026/27 financial year, with a prohibition on reassessing rate records for miscellaneous or prospecting licences. This would prevent future levying while allowing communities to retain rates already collected lawfully.

Officer Comment:
Since the GVROC meeting on 27 March 2026, the Bill will be reintroduced for debate on 7 May 2026 and it is expected that the debate will continue into June 2026. The Labor Government has made it clear that they would like the Bill passed this financial year.

Following the resolution of the GVROC at its meeting on 27 March 2026 regarding developing a media campaign on the impact the amendment bill could have on GVROC LGAs, only the Shires of Dundas and Menzies have provided back information on potential future impacts should the LGAs start to rate miscellaneous licenses, noting that no LGAs currently rate any miscellaneous licenses in the areas.

Unchanged the Amendment Bill opens up the potential for Mining Companies (and some have already commenced this action) to claim refunds of rates on not only Miscellaneous Licenses, but also on the exploration or underlying tenements that also lay over that portion of land. It will also affect the pastoral rates.

Recently, Shire of Upper Gascoyne was presented with an application for a Miscellaneous License of 60,000 ha in size simply to search for groundwater – not to even use the land. If granted, this entire area will be deemed not rateable by any holder, and potentially liable for refund of any rates paid back as far as 2017 under the current proposed amendment bill.

Based on the above, while none of the GVROC LGAs currently rate miscellaneous licenses, there is the potential impact on existing rateable exploration or mining tenements, that could impact the LGAs should mining companies look to hide these behind a miscellaneous license and then claim a refund back on previous rates paid.

Thus, it is important that each LGA review any of these types of rateable areas that they may already charge and include this as a potential future impact so it can be compiled into a media campaign.

When the debate recommenced on 7 May 2026 in respect to the Bill, the Hon Neil Thompson MLC (Liberal Party) and Hon Julie Freeman MLC (National Party) spoke very strongly on the matter. This was despite previous media that had mentioned that the National Party were going to withdraw their proposed amendment to the Bill that allows for compensation from the Royalties for Region Fund.

Hon Brad Petit MLC (Greens) also commenced his remarks on 7 May 2026, and he introduced Justice Solomons decision into the debate, including the consequential rateability of the underlying tenements. The Hon Brad Petit MLC (Greens) speech will continue in the next sitting, likely to be June (9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 23, 24 and 25). If not finalised in the June sitting, the next will be August.

The recording for the first speeches by Hon Rob Horstman MLC and Hon Neil Thompson MLC can be found here from 5.21pm (you can scroll to 4 hour 20 minutes in the video) https://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/watch/video/5ddbb35226db4742a4a71abc44027ad0.

The recording for the speeches by Hon Neil Thompson MLC, Hon Julie Freeman MLC and Hon Brad Petit MLC. can be found here from 2.51 pm (57 minutes in) https://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/watch/video/53b605e725784854824f236998f7c787.

It is worth noting the debate is starting to touch on the wider funding issues faced by Local Governments, particularly regional local governments, and the clear breakdown of relations between the State Government and the Local Government sector as a whole on this matter.

The Shire of Mount Magnet CEO, Tralee Cable, advised that she is of the understanding that the Greens will be moving to have the Amendment Bill referred to a Committee for further investigation into financial consequences and legislative implications for Local Governments.

Consultation: GVROC CEOs Group/WALGA/Shire of Mt Magnet

Financial Implications: Loss of rateability would remove a potential or existing source of revenue from mining infrastructure occupying Crown land within Local Government districts.

Strategic Implications: The issue directly relates to the financial sustainability of local governments and regional fairness, particularly for remote, resource-based communities.

Policy Implications: Supports WALGA's advocacy for financial autonomy and procedural fairness for Local Governments.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the GVROC:

1. Note the update on the *Local Government Amendment (Rating of Certain Mining Licences) Bill 2025.*
2. All LGAs that have not yet provided the GVROC Executive Officer information on future impacts of the Bill on lost revenue potential from rating miscellaneous licenses and as a percentage of LGA yearly revenue that can be used in a potential media campaign, to urgently provide this information before the Bill is reintroduced for debate.

RESOLUTION: **Moved:** ***Cr Paul Warner, Shire of Menzies***
Seconded: ***Cr Peter Craig, Shire of Leonora***

Carried

10.2 GVROC Shared Regional Event Equipment Pool - Update

Reporting Officers: Andrew Mann, GVROC Executive Officer

Disclosure of Interest: Nil

Date: May 2026

Attachments: Nil

Background:
Back in 2012, the GVROC through funding received by each GVROC LGA under the then Country Local Government Fund, entered a joint agreement to acquire event equipment (crowd control barriers and fences, BBQ Trailer and ablution facilities (16 pan toilet block)) that could be hired by community groups and also used by LGAs in the GVROC when holding regional events. The City of Kalgoorlie took on the responsibility of storing and managing the hiring of these assets on behalf of the GVROC.

The City of Kalgoorlie Boulder (CoKB) have advised that the current ablution block asset is now at the end of life and the GVROC has been working with the City to look at replacement of the asset.

At the GVROC meeting held on 31 January 2025 the GVROC resolved the following:

RECOMMENDATION:
That the GVROC:

1. Notes the quotations received by the COKB for a new replacement 16 pan Toilet Facilities costed at $91,700 exc GST and a new 6-cubicle unisex shower block costed at approx. $83,000 exc GST.
2. Request the GVROC Executive Officer and COKB investigate possible grant funding towards purchasing these new facilities and the costs for a disabled toilet trailer.
3. Subject to the advice being received regarding possible grant funding options, will make a decision on whether to proceed with a funding allocation towards this within its current budget.
4. If a replacement is sourced, the GVROC Executive Officer to work with the City of Kalgoorlie Boulder to arrange the sale of the existing toilet block, with any surplus funds returned back to the GVROC, less selling costs involved.

RESOLUTION: **Moved:** ***Mayor Glenn Wilson, City of Kalgoorlie Boulder***
Seconded: ***Cr Paul Warner, Shire of Menzies***

Carried

Following the resolution, the GVROC Executive Officer in consultation with the CoKB submitted an application to Lotterywest on 25 June 2025 based on the project proposal for the GVROC Shared Community Potable Event Equipment Replacement. The grant requested was to be for the new equipment (6-cubicle unisex shower block and a universally accessible mobile toilet) estimated at $104,000 and not the replacement of the existing 16 pan Toilet Facilities costed at $92,000, which the GVROC would fund as its contribution to the overall replacement project.

Officer Comment:
The City is still on track to go for quotations for procurement of all items post 1 July 2026, noting that Lotterywest requires the funding to be acquitted by 30 August 2026.

An opportunity has also arisen to apply for further grant funding towards the procurement to offset the GVROC contributions through the Regional Development Australia Goldfields Esperance and its Project Support and Regional Investment Readiness Funding. An application form has been submitted requesting $20,000 grant for consideration by the RDAGE Board at its next meeting on 13 July 2026.

If successful, this reduces the GVROC contribution from $129,000 to $109,000 for the project.

The City will keep the GVROC updated on the procurement process as it progresses.

Consultation: GVROC Chair
CoKB
RDAGE

Financial Implications: up to $129,000 contribution

Strategic Implications: Liveability, social and community wellbeing.

RECOMMENDATION:
That the GVROC notes the update on the GVROC Shared Community Potable Event Equipment Replacement project.

RESOLUTION: **Moved:** ***Mayor Glenn Wilson, City of Kalgoorlie Boulder***
Seconded: ***Cr Jill Dwyer, Shire of Menzies***

Carried

10.3 GVROC Housing and Land Update

Reporting Officers: Andrew Mann, GVROC Executive Officer

Disclosure of Interest: Nil

Date: May 2026

Attachments: Nil

Background:
In March 2023, the GVROC finalised a GVROC LGA Housing and Land Audit and Action Plan. This followed a GVROC Housing Strategy which was completed in April 2022.

Since then, the GVROC has continued to advocate and support progress towards housing and land opportunities in the region.

Officer Comment:
Since the last GVROC meeting on 27 March 2026 the following related regional housing announcements have been made by the State Government through the Minister for Housing and Works:

- Historic boost to grow community housing sector
- Karratha community to benefit as land becomes available in Madigan
- New housing for people at risk of homelessness in Albany
- State Budget to support 111 new lots in Broome North
- Grant to refurbish 55 social housing units in Broome
- Hundreds of regional houses to be built under Seven Cities vision
- Seven Cities to deliver new homes for Karratha and Port Hedland
- Seven Cities to deliver new homes for Kalgoorlie-Boulder
- Seven Cities to deliver new homes for Broome
- Seven Cities to deliver new homes for Geraldton
- Seven Cities to deliver new homes for Albany
- Joint media statement - Landmark $2 billion joint investment to deliver thousands of homes for first home buyers
- More than $75m for new South Hedland residential development
- Budget boost for historic affordable and social housing program
- Budget focused on ensuring every Western Australian has a home
- New pattern book to accelerate housing delivery and boost supply
- State Labor Government delivers 4,000 social homes
- More government land unlocked for regional housing

Of these announcements, directly related to the Goldfields Esperance region is the major regional housing initiative under its “Seven Cities” vision, targeting key regional centres including Kalgoorlie-Boulder within the Goldfields-Esperance region.

Overview of the “Seven Cities” Initiative

Key Points
- 500+ new homes to be delivered across seven regional cities by 2030 to support Government Regional Officer Housing (GROH) demand.
- $692 million total regional housing package, including $419 million specifically for GROH and government worker accommodation.
- Additional ~$170 million contribution from mining sector partners (Rio Tinto, BHP, Hancock) to support delivery.
- Targeted at frontline workers (health, police, education) to improve workforce attraction and retention.
- Includes supporting measures:
  - Expanded Build-to-Lease incentives
  - Updated Home Ownership Subsidy Scheme (shared equity) to encourage local ownership

Goldfields-Esperance / GVROC Context

- Kalgoorlie-Boulder allocation: ~113 homes (largest allocation in the region).
- Reinforces Kalgoorlie-Boulder as a regional hub servicing surrounding communities, consistent with the broader economic strategy.

Implications for GVROC and Remote GVROC LGAs

- **Positive:**
  - Supports workforce housing in regional hubs
  - May improve service delivery (health, policing, education) across regions
- **Limitations / Risks:**
  - Investment is concentrated in major regional centres, not smaller or remote LGs
  - Likely to increase centralisation of workforce into hub cities
  - Does not directly address housing shortages in smaller communities (e.g. Coolgardie, Menzies, Leonora, Laverton, Norseman, Eucla, Wiluna)
  - May increase regional disparity between hubs and remote towns
- The State's "Seven Cities" housing initiative is heavily focused on major regional centres, with funding and delivery concentrated in hub locations such as Kalgoorlie-Boulder.

As a result, it appears that smaller and remote communities across the Goldfields-Esperance and broader Goldfields Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils region are largely overlooked, with limited direct benefit.

The likely outcome is that these communities will miss out on new housing investment, further widening the gap between regional hubs and remote towns, and reinforcing the need for continued local government-led housing solutions and targeted advocacy.

Strategic Observation
This initiative is fundamentally a "hub-and-spoke" model, strengthening major regional cities to service surrounding areas. For the GVROC benefits will likely be indirect rather than localised. The risk remains that smaller LGs will need to continue self-delivering housing solutions to support local workforce and services.

It was also noted that Esperance was not included in the initiative along with other Regional Capital Cities, with all those chosen to be included currently within Labor held seats. While not trying to infer political bias, some of the other major regional capital cities/towns in the State also have very pressing demands for Government Regional Officer Housing.

At the GVROC CEOs meeting on 11 May 2026, the CEOs also recommended that we invite Andrew Sutton from DoHW - GROH Division to come to a future GVROC meeting to outline how the seven cities GROH housing will be implemented not only in Kalgoorlie but also across the other towns in the region.

Communications with the Department of Housing and Works Regional Housing Director – South
Also since the last GVROC meeting the GVROC Executive Officer has continued to liaise with the Department of Housing and Works Regional Housing Director – South, Damian Cunnane to discuss obtaining an updates for each Goldfields Esperance LGAs on the current status of existing social and GROH stock for each LGA area, its plans for repairs, maintenance or upgrade of this existing stock, and any future plans for new construction of social housing or GROH within the region.

Following these discussions Damian has emailed each of the GVROC LGA CEOs in late April to reach out to them to discuss directly each LGAs concerns regarding housing within their respective areas and advised he is endeavouring to travel to the Goldfields on a bi-monthly basis and would be keen to catch up should schedules allow. He is also happy For the GVROC to contact him via email (damian.cunnane@dohw.wa.gov.au) or phone (0432 831 230) at your convenience should you have any queries or concerns you would like to discuss regarding government housing in the region.

Consultation: GVROC CEOs Group

Financial Implications: TBD

Strategic Implications: Improved Liveability, social and community wellbeing.

RECOMMENDATION:
That the GVROC:

1. Note the update on housing and land and in particular the State Government announcement regarding Seven Cities and the implications for GVROC and Remote GVROC LGAs.
2. Recognises the need for continued advocacy for:
   a. direct housing investment in smaller and remote communities
   b. funding models that reflect non-rateable land constraints and service population realities across the Goldfields-Esperance region.
3. Request the GVROC Executive Officer as part of the Housing update at the GVROC meeting on 31 July 2026 in Menzies, invite DoHW's Andrew Sutton, to outline how GROH housing will be implemented not only in Kalgoorlie as part of the seven cities project but also across the other towns in the region.
4. Request the GVROC Executive Officer as part of the Housing update at the GVROC meeting on 31 July 2026 in Menzies, also invite the DoHW, Regional Housing Director – South, Damian Cunnane, to further discuss the housing issues with the GVROC and its LGAs.

RESOLUTION: **Moved:** ***Cr Peter Craig, Shire of Leonora***
Seconded: ***Cr Paul Warner, Shire of Menzies***

Carried

10.4 Addressing inappropriate use of parking bays by trucks and haulage companies - Update

Reporting Officers: Andrew Mann, GVROC Executive Officer

Disclosure of Interest: Nil

Date: May 2026

Attachments: Nil

Background:
Increases in truck haulage traffic across the GVROC region and a resulting influx of companies without a local base of operations to complete servicing and park equipment has resulted in a noticeable deterioration of the cleanliness and general upkeep of roadside parking bays and LG-owned assets such as truck rest areas.

Outside of enforcement of local laws (often with minimal fines) and patrols by rangers, LGs are limited in what actions can be taken to reduce such undesirable activity in particular the federal and state road corridors. Main Roads WA has made it clear in the attached media commentary that they do not have enforcement powers over their rest bays and hence cannot issue infringements for any activities that might take place in them. It is not clear what responsibility or powers police have over this matter, however if no specific laws are being broken then their ability to act as a deterrent is also diminished.

DWER has legislative responsibility to follow up reports of environmental damage and illegal dumping of rubbish and issue infringements as needed, however once such activities have occurred it is often challenging identify, locate and prosecute individuals and companies responsible.

At the GVROC meeting held on 27 March in Esperance the GVROC resolved the following in respect to this issue:

RECOMMENDATION:

That GVROC:

1. Request the CEO working group to investigate the capacity of the region to develop a case study on the actions to date, proposed local improvements/financial implications, and impacts of inappropriate use of parking bays by haulage vehicles, and haulage companies in the Goldfields Esperance Region.
2. Write to Ali Kent – Member for Kalgoorlie – requesting that the imminent concerns of the GVROC be taken to the state parliament outlining the above advocacy position.
3. Engage with WALGA to seek advice on the potential of support through advocacy, from State Council and member regions throughout Western Australia.
4. Engage
   - Hon Rita Saffioti MLA – Deputy Premier; Treasurer; Minister for Transport; Sport and Recreation,
   - Hon Steven Dawson - Minister for Regional Development,
   - Hon David Michael – Minister for Mines and Petroleum; Finance; Electoral Affairs: Goldfields Esperance,
   - Hon John Carey MLA – Minister for Planning and Lands; Housing and Works; Health Infrastructure,
   - Alistair Jones – Director General, Department of Water and Environmental Regulations,
   - Doug Morgan – Main Roads, Acting Managing Director,

   Outlining the GVROC imminent concerns and advocacy position above, inviting them to participate in solution focused discussions and outcomes.

RESOLUTION: **Moved:** ***Cr Rob Wedge, Shire of Laverton***
Seconded: ***Cr Paul Warner, Shire of Menzies***

Carried

Officers Comment:
The GVROC CEOs Group met on 11 May 2026 and briefly discussed this item and agreed that each LGA would go back and look at their own LGA areas and provide some input into developing up a scope of works for a business case study to be delivered.

The GVROC Executive Officer will also discuss with Main Roads WA's Regional Manager Shane Power to look at what actions or data they may have compiled, or potential studies undertaken that would assist in alleviating this issue.

It was also agreed by the GVROC CEOs that until this investigative component of the agreed resolution is completed and information and data is available; the advocacy and engagement actions should not progress as we need this information to have a potential solution before engaging with Ministers and local MPs.

The GVROC Executive Officer has also been in discussions with the Director or RDAGE and is compiling a brief funding application looking at getting some funding through the Regional Development Australia Goldfields Esperance and its Project Support and Regional Investment Readiness Funding Program towards undertaking the development of the case study once the scope of works is clearly defined.

Consultation: GVROC CEOs Group

Financial Implications: Nil

Strategic Implications: Nil

RECOMMENDATION:

That GVROC:

1. Note the update on the discussion held at the GVROC CEOs Group meeting on 11 May 2026 and the potential to receive some grant funding from the RDAGE towards undertaking the development of the case study once a clear scope of works is defined.

RESOLUTION: **Moved:** ***Cr Jill Dwyer, Shire of Menzies***
Seconded: ***Cr Paul Warner, Shire of Menzies***

Carried

10.5 State Government Budget 2026/27 Summary for Goldfields Esperance

Reporting Officers: Andrew Mann, GVROC Executive Officer

Date: May 2026

Attachments: https://www.ourstatebudget.wa.gov.au
Cook Labor Government delivering for Goldfields-Esperance
State Budget 2026-27 | WALGA

In Brief:

- Budget delivers real cost-of-living relief and housing in the Goldfields-Esperance region
- Cook Labor Government to invest $9.5 billion in infrastructure throughout regional Western Australia over the next four years
- More than $4 billion delivered through Royalties for Regions Program
- Investments to support Kalgoorlie drive future economic opportunities
- Budget includes $150 million investment in local vanadium battery for Kalgoorlie
- Cook Labor Government's committed to delivering jobs, health, education, creating safe and inclusive communities, and protecting and restoring WA's environment

Background:
On 7 May 2026 the State Government released its Budget for 2026/27. A summary of the budget as it relates to the Goldfields Esperance region is as follows:

A focus of the 2026/27 Budget is Housing and the following initiatives will help unlock and deliver more land supply, build new homes, and assist first home buyers get into the market in Kalgoorlie and throughout the Goldfields:

- $1.6 billion for the construction and refurbishment of more than 1,800 social and affordable dwellings, 500 homes for first home buyers, land acquisition, and maintenance;
- participation in the Commonwealth's 100,000 Homes for First Home Buyers program, supporting the delivery of 11,000 dwellings over eight years reserved exclusively for first home buyers;
- the delivery of 113 homes for regional frontline workers in Kalgoorlie-Boulder, in partnership with Western Australia's resources industry as part of its Seven Cities vision for regional WA;
- $250 million Keystart Pre-sale Guarantee and $250 million First Home Buyer Commercial Financing Facility to help developers meet pre-sale thresholds and support more apartment and affordable homes project for first home buyers to get off the ground sooner;
- $297 million tax package to support first home buyers and boost housing supply, including first homeowner duty concessions, increased first homeowner grant cap, and an extension of the off-the-plan transfer duty concession;
- $127 million top-up to the Remote Communities Fund to deliver additional housing investment, undertake municipal works, and support essential infrastructure and services in remote Aboriginal communities;
- $50 million top-up to the Regional Housing Support Fund, increasing the fund's value to $75 million. The fund provides grants to support local housing and residential subdivision projects in regional WA;
- $48 million to boost modular housing and apartment construction capacity via investment in advanced manufacturing facilities in Kwinana and Neerabup. The facilities are expected to provide prefabricated housing and infrastructure to regional WA; and
- $6.2 million to roll out the Housing First Support Service in Kalgoorlie.

The other main focus of the Budget is cost-of-living relief, which will be delivered to Western Australians living in the Goldfields-Esperance region through a range of initiatives that provide financial support for households, with the government committing $198 million for a $100 Fuel Support Payment available to those with a valid driver's licence.

A further $89.5 million will be invested to deliver a third round of the Western Australian Student Assistance Payment, which will provide $150 for each primary and kindergarten student and $250 for each secondary school student - including for the families of around 10,300 students in the Goldfields-Esperance region.

Other cost-of-living relief measures funded as part of this Budget include:

- $36.4 million for to provide free public transport for school students, including for Transregional services in Kalgoorlie and Esperance;
- $35 million for a 10 per cent uplift in the value of the Energy Assistance Payment, Dependent Child Rebate, and Air Conditioning Allowance;
- $16 million to extend Energy Ahead, helping Western Australians who are experiencing financial stress to improve their energy efficiency and save on their power bills;
- $14.5 million to establish a new Foster and Grand Carer Gold Card, offering concessions to carers providing a stable home and support to children and young people in out-of-home care arrangements;
- $13.5 million to extend the WA Rent Relief Program; and
- ongoing support for the Regional Airfare Zone Cap Scheme to keep airfares capped and affordable for eligible regional residents amid increasing fuel costs.

The Cook Labor Government's vision is to diversify WA's nation-leading economy so that it remains the strongest in the nation will be secured in the Goldfields-Esperance region through the following investments as part of the 2026-27 State Budget.

Improved power reliability will be delivered through a $150 million investment in the Vanadium Battery Energy Storage System, which will also support the region's burgeoning vanadium industry.

Other investments include:

- $973 million for Western Power to respond to demand growth, expand the network, and increase electricity capacity infrastructure for industrial and residential customers;
- more than $150 million in loans to manufacturers to improve energy efficiency and invest in advanced manufacturing equipment as part of the Made in WA Energy Affordability Investment Program;
- $124 million for lower fee and fee-free TAFE in 2027, including at the Kalgoorlie campus;
- $113.5 million for road maintenance across WA;
- $33.1 million contribution to the nationally co-ordinated Fuel Excise Relief Program, and a further $4.5 million for the deferral of heavy vehicle fee increases, supporting industry in the Goldfields-Esperance region;
- $30 million to top-up the Investment Attraction Fund for a second round of grants through the New Energies Industries Funding Stream;
- $18 million to deliver Aboriginal tourism initiatives under the Jina: Western Australian Aboriginal Tourism Action Plan 2026-2030;
- $15 million in loans to support WA's nickel mining industry; and
- $1.4 million to deliver a second round of the Small Business Growth Grants program.

The 2026-27 State Budget will ensure all regional Western Australians can access the healthcare they need, when they need it, through the following investments:

- $294 million additional investment in regional health infrastructure;
- $214 million for an uplift to WA Health's State-wide maintenance programs;
- $143 million for additional investment in medical equipment and imaging replacement program throughout WA;
- $68.6 million for the WA Country Health Service for regional palliative care, renal care, cancer and eye services, and continued support programs;

- $49.8 million for the State's investment in the Child Development Services System Reform Program;
- $43.8 million for a funding uplift for existing community mental health and alcohol and other drug services;
- $29.7 million for and expand suicide prevention initiatives;
- $27.1 million for the free flu vaccine, FluMist, and RSV immunisation programs; and
- $4.1 million to expand the Enhanced Access Community Pharmacy Pilot project.

Quality infrastructure and services will also be supported through the Budget with the following investments to bolster schools throughout the Goldfields-Esperance region:

- $310 million uplift in funding to support students with disability at public schools;
- $219 million boost to school maintenance, benefiting schools in the Goldfields-Esperance region;
- more than $100 million for targeted maintenance and minor works projects across WA, which includes work on roofs, hardcourts, and toilets, as well as additional investment in the Schools Clean Energy Technology Fund and works at Kalgoorlie Primary School;
- $41.1 million to fully fund the commitment of 61 minor upgrade projectsincluding at Kambalda West District High School and Norseman District High School;
- $45.8 million to fully fund our commitment to Cool the Schools through air-conditioning upgrades, which includes Kalgoorlie Primary School and Leonora District High School; and
- $15.7 million to expand access to training and support for staff working with students with disability.

The Cook Labor Government will continue building safe and inclusive communities so that all Western Australians feel secure at home and at work through the following investments:

- $421 million for child protection services, in addition to $52.4 million extra support for foster carers and grandcarers;
- $361 million for Foundational Supports - Thriving Kids services over the next five years, to provide support for children aged 8 and under with developmental delays or autism;
- $61.4 million for the Target 120 early intervention program, including in Kalgoorlie;
- $60.7 million for road safety awareness and education programs across WA;
- $44.6 million uplift in operational funding for family and domestic violence refuges and safe houses across WA, including in the Goldfields-Esperance region;
- $37.7 million for State-wide rollout of Aboriginal Representative Organisations;
- $31.2 million towards the fire and emergency fleet replacement throughout WA;
- $29.5 million uplift in resourcing for the Home Stretch WA service supporting young people as they age out of the child protection system, including in the Goldfields-Esperance region;
- $24.2 million for WA Police for Operation Regional Shield in regional WA;
- $20.3 million funding uplift for at-risk youth services around the State;
- $10.1 million to support Closing the Gap Implementation Plan initiatives; and
- $1.5 million to support continuation of the safeSPACE program in Kalgoorlie, Kununurra, and Roebourne.

Protecting and restoring WA's environment so future generations can continue enjoying its economic and lifestyle benefits will be secured with the following investments:

- $52.9 million to establish a Regional Water Source Fund for water source planning and investigation in regional Western Australia;
- $24.7 million for biosecurity and animal disease preparedness activities;
- a further $8.5 million towards the Fisheries Support Package, including funding for an enhanced science program and upgrades to the FishCatchWA app; and

- $16 million for the Minerals Research Institute of WA to implement clean energy and emissions research.

For more specific Goldfields Esperance budget information, visit Cook Labor Government delivering for Goldfields-Esperance | Western Australian Government.

For the WALGA Analysis in relation to budget impacts for local governments visit State Budget 2026-27 | WALGA

Officer Comment:
For the GVROC to note the various funding and budget items as related to the Goldfields Esperance region.

Consultation: GVROC

Financial Implications: TBD

Strategic Implications: Improved Liveability, social and community wellbeing.

RECOMMENDATION:
That the GVROC note the State Government Budget 2026/27 Summary for Goldfields Esperance

RESOLUTION: **Moved:** ***Mayor Glenn Wilson, City of Kalgoorlie Boulder***
Seconded: ***Cr Jill Dwyer, Shire of Menzies***

Carried

10.6 Federal Government Budget 2026/27 Summary for Local Governments

Reporting Officers: Andrew Mann, GVROC Executive Officer

Date: May 2026

Attachments: Federal Budget documents | Budget 2026–27
Federal Budget 2026-27 | WALGA
ALGA analysis of 2026-27 Federal Budget – ALGA

In Brief:

- The 2026-27 Federal Budget seeks to address structural and longstanding challenges, including productivity, intergenerational equity and home ownership. This Budget is delivered in a context of substantial economic and energy disruptions, global increases in inflation, lower global growth, and increased uncertainty and volatility.
- The Budget is $44.9 billion stronger over the forward estimates than the mid-year update and more than a quarter of a trillion dollars better than over the eight years to 2029-30 than the earlier estimate.
- Gross debt peaks 1.2 percentage points lower than the mid-year update and is $173 billion lower in 2026-27 than the estimate at the 2022 Pre-Election Fiscal Outlook.
- The Government is saving more than it is spending in the Budget, with net decisions positive for the second consecutive update.

Background:
On 12 May 20264 the Federal Government released its Budget for 2026/27.

Key Measures
The 2026-27 Federal Budget has 5 key focuses:

- **Responding to the global oil shock**: by introducing a $14.8 billion Strengthening Australia's Fuel Resilience package to enable Australians to respond to market disruptions and invest in future resilience. This includes:
    - $7.5 billion Fuel and Fertiliser Security Facility to secure more fuel from international partners
    - $3.2 billion Australian Fuel Security Reserve to build long-term fuel resilience
    - $1 billion in interest-free loans to help manufacturing and logistics businesses
    - Reserving 20 per cent of gas exports for Australians.
- **Taking pressure off Australians**: including:
    - $2 billion for local housing infrastructure to support up to 65,000 new homes
    - $2.9 billion to more than halve the fuel excise and reduce the heavy vehicle road user charge to zero for three months
    - $5.9 billion to cut the cost of life-saving medicines
    - $250 Working Australians Tax Offset and a $1,000 instant tax deduction on top of three legislated rounds of tax cuts.
- **Making the economy more productive:** by
    - Cutting regulatory burden by $10.2 billion per year
    - Faster environmental and low-risk foreign investment approvals to accelerate new projects
    - Building a Single National Market, increasing long-run annual GDP by around $13 billion
    - Investing $1.5 billion in research and scientific institutions.
- **Delivering tax reforms for workers, businesses and future generations**:
    - Cutting taxes for more than 13 million Australian workers
    - Helping more Australians achieve home ownership through reforms to support an additional 75,000 homeowners
    - Over $3.5 billion in new measures that lower taxes for businesses and start-ups, including loss refundability and a permanent $20,000 instant asset write-off
    - A simpler and more sustainable tax system, with combined annual compliance savings of over $500 million for workers and businesses
- **Responsible savings**: including by returning the NDIS to its original intent, further reducing public service spending on external labour and in-wage expenses, aligning private health insurance rebate entitlements across age groups, and returning uncommitted funding across discretionary programs.

WALGA Summary and Analysis
Outside of the economic plan, the Budget contained a range of announcements related to strengthening care through health, aged care and mental health.

Housing was also a priority area. For Local Governments, a key announcement was the $2 billion investment in the Housing Support Program – Local Infrastructure Fund. This will provide funding via states and territories to support Local Governments and state utility providers to expedite the delivery of housing enabling infrastructure. This funding is, however, contingent on the states committing to reforms to improve productivity in the housing sector, including faster and simpler approvals, releasing more land and delivering a national construction code.

Importantly for Local Governments, the Budget also retained its commitment to a number of key funding programs for the sector including Financial Assistance Grants, Roads to Recovery and the Black Spot Program.

Other important announcements for Local Governments included:
- $17 million in 2026–27 to continue delivery of the Government's circular economy policy, program and legislative functions.
- $14.4 million will be provided to WA over the next three years to fund active transport infrastructure including bicycle and walking infrastructure.
- $24.7 million over three years from 2025–26 to deliver a national pilot for recycling solar panels and establish up to 100 pilot collection sites nationwide to reduce waste and reuse valuable minerals to support the energy transition.
- $11.2 million in 2026–27 to maintain critical preparedness against High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza (HPAI H5) incursions.
- Additional funding of $500,000 over 2026-27 and 2027-28 for the Regional Roads Australia Mobile Program – Pilot Program.

While these announcements are welcome, other key initiatives identified in WALGA's 2026-27 Federal Budget Submission were not funded. WALGA will continue to seek ongoing investment in critical areas such as community infrastructure, coastal management, emergency management, regional health, the regional road safety program (local roads) and telecommunications.

Financial Assistance Grants
The 2026-27 Budget maintains the system of payments to support local government, through Financial Assistance Grants.

In 2026-27 the Australian Government will provide $3.62b in Financial Assistance Grants funding (which includes $2.9 billion brought forward from 2026-27 and paid in 2025-26 in recognition of the workforce, supply chain and cashflow pressures that local government face).

The Financial Assistance Grants as a proportion of Commonwealth Tax Revenue in 2026-27 is therefore estimated to be **0.49%.** This is a **decrease** from 0.51% in the 2025-26 Budget.

Of the remaining $724 million that will be paid in 2026-27, WA is set to receive $89.5 million. The Federal Government has indicated that it will continue to work with States in relation to the financial support of the Local Government sector, including advancing funding earlier than would usually occur.

WALGA has requested that the Australian Local Government Association seek further information from Treasury on the scale and timing of Financial Assistance Grants payments to assist Local Governments to set their budgets.

Financial Assistance Grants continue to comprise two components: general purpose assistance grants; and untied local roads grants.

Table 1: Total Financial Assistance Grants to local government 2026-27 to 2029-30 ($m)					
	2025-26	2026-27*	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
General Purpose Component	3213.1	501.7	2602.2	2703.9	2809.9
Local Road Component	1425.8	222.6	1154.7	1199.8	1246.8
Total financial assistance grants	**4638.9**	**724.4**	**3756.8**	**3903.7**	**4056.8**

* Funding of $2.9 billion was brought forward from 2026-27 and paid in 2025-26 in recognition of the workforce, supply chain and cashflow pressures that local government face.

Table 2: Financial Assistance Grants by jurisdiction 2026-27 ($m)									
	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT	TOTAL
General Purpose Component	156.0	128.7	103.1	55.5	34.5	10.4	8.8	4.8	501.7
Local Road Component	64.6	45.9	41.7	34.0	12.2	11.8	7.1	5.2	222.6
TOTAL	**220.6**	**174.6**	**144.8**	**89.5**	**46.7**	**22.2**	**15.9**	**10.0**	**724.4**

Roads and Transport

The Australian Government provides funding to the states, territories and local governments for road and rail infrastructure through the Infrastructure Investment Program under the Federation Funding Agreement Schedule on Land Transport Infrastructure Projects. The Australian Government has a ten-year funding allocation for this program.

The Infrastructure Investment Program includes several components that involve payments to the states, territories and local governments. Of particular relevance to local governments:

Roads to Recovery

- $843.0 million has been allocated to the Roads to Recovery program in 2026-27.
- The Australian Government has delivered on its promise to increase Roads to Recovery funding to $1 billion per year (expected to hit this target in 2027-28).
- WA's share of total Roads to Recovery funding over the five year period is 11.%.
- The program remains an allocation over a five-year period, allowing Local Governments some flexibility to move funding between years within the program.

$m	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
WA allocation	125.5	126.3	163	161.2	146.2
Total	734.0	843.0	1175.9	1162.0	999.0

Black Spot Program

- Nationally, funding for the Black Spot Program, which funds safety improvement works in places where there have been serious crashes or where serious crashes are likely to occur, has slightly increased from $150 million in 2025-26 to $157.4 million per annum in this budget and each of the forward estimate years.
- The indicative allocation for WA increases from $16.8 million in 2025-26 to $17.7 million in 2026-27, representing 11.25% of the national allocation between 2025-26 and 2029-30.

$m	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
WA allocation	16.8	17.7	17.7	17.7	17.7
Total	150.0	157.4	157.4	157.4	157.4

Safer Local Roads and Infrastructure

- The Australian Government continues to support the Program, which is open to both State and Local Governments, and focusses on improving road safety outcomes and addressing emerging road safety priorities.
- $330.0 million has been allocated to the Safer Local Roads and Infrastructure program in 2026 27. This is up from the previous year's allocation of $201.5 million.
- WA's share of the total program is $139.9 million between 2025-26 and 2029-30, representing 11.% of the overall funding.

$m	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
WA allocation	35.3	33.4	24.5	22.1	24.7
Total	201.5	330.0	230.0	230.0	230.0

Active Transport Fund

- $500.0 million over ten years from 2026–27 to continue the Active Transport Fund.
- $90.2 million has been allocated to the Active Transport Fund in 2026-27.
- This is up from the previous year's allocation of $15.6 million.
- This funding is for the upgrade and construction of new bicycle and walking paths, to improve safety for vulnerable road users (such as cyclists and pedestrians), to support reduced emissions and improve productivity, health and community liveability.

Total road funding allocation for local governments, by State/Territory in 2026-27 is set out in the table below:

State/Territory	Roads to Recovery ($m)	Safer local roads ($m)	Black Spots ($m)	Active Transport Fund ($m)	TOTAL ($m)
New South Wales	234.7	112.9	45.1	11.2	**403.9**
Victoria	164.3	69.9	42.9	8.6	**285.7**
Queensland	169.6	70.9	30.4	7.0	**277.9**
Western Australia	126.3	33.4	17.7	6.1	**183.5**
South Australia*	74.1	20.4	11.5	2.3	**108.3**
Tasmania	26.1	16.8	4.3	0.9	**48.1**
Australian Capital Territory	21.5	1.6	2.4	3.4	**28.9**
Northern Territory	26.4	4.1	3.1	0.8	**34.4**
Total:	**843.0**	**330.0**	**157.4**	**90.2**	**1420.6**

Regional Roads Australia Mobile Program– Pilot Program

An additional $500,000 is provided to WA over 2026-27 and 2027-28 for the Regional Road Australia Mobile Program– Pilot Program. This program aims to improve mobile phone coverage on regional highways and major roads. This follows an initial investment of $3.5 million in 2025-26. WA's share represents 12.9% of the total program funding.

Housing

The 2026-27 Federal Budget aims to address the housing market's challenges and provide relief for homeowners and renters.

The headline announcement was changes to negative gearing and capital gains tax (CGT) arrangements aimed at improving the fairness of the tax system and supporting home ownership.

Specifically:

- **Capital Gains** - From 1 July 2027, the 50% CGT discount will be replaced by a system that indexes the cost base and applies a minimum 30% tax on net capital gains for assets held over 12 months. This will apply broadly to assets held by individuals, trusts and partnerships, but only to gains made after that date, with existing gains still eligible for current rules. Pre-1985 assets will remain exempt for gains before July 2027. Investors in new housing can choose between the old discount or the new system, and income support recipients will be exempt from the minimum tax.
- **Negative Gearing** - From 1 July 2027, negative gearing for residential property will be limited to new builds. Losses from existing properties will no longer be offset against other income and can only be used against rental income or future capital gains from property. Any unused losses can be carried forward. New-build investments are exempt, so tax benefits are targeted at increasing housing supply.

Outside of changes to the tax system, new funding has also been allocated for a range of initiatives aimed at addressing housing shortages.

Importantly for Local Governments, $2 billion has been provided over four years from 2026–27 for the Housing Support Program – Local Infrastructure Fund. This will provide funding through the states and territories to support Local Governments and state utility providers to expedite the delivery of housing enabling infrastructure.

This funding is contingent on states committing to reforms to improve productivity in the housing sector, including faster and simpler approvals, releasing more land ready to build homes, and delivering a genuinely national construction code.

Other programs to support increased housing supply and research include:

- $56.4 million over four years from 2025–26 to support the oversight and delivery of key programs under the Government's Homes for Australia plan and for a public campaign to inform taxpayers of the changes to the tax system
- $2.1 million in 2026–27 to extend Commonwealth funding to support the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute.
- As part of the closing the gap initiative, $6.3 million over three years from 2026–27 for a national First Nations housing peak body to represent the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing sector and support better housing outcomes for First Nations people and communities.
- $59.4 million over four years from 2026–27 to provide states and territories with funding for community housing providers to supplement rental income for social housing for over 4,000 eligible young people, aged 16-24, who are in receipt of the Away from Home rate of Youth Allowance or ABSTUDY and who are at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness.

Fuel Security

Disruptions to the global production and shipping of fuel due to the conflict in the Middle East has significantly impacted fuel prices, with the national average diesel price up 70 cents per litre at the end of April 2026. The fuel increases are expected to add to inflationary pressures across the economy and dampen consumption.

Fuel Excise and Heavy Vehicle Road User Charge

The Government implemented a temporary reduction of fuel excise 32 cents per litre for petrol and diesel (excluding GST) and removal of the road user charge for heavy vehicles on 1 April 2026. The Budget confirms that this will end as planned on 30 June 2026. The net cost to the Budget of these measures is forecast to be $2.5 billion.

Fuel Security and Resilience

The Government will provide up to $11.9 billion over five years from 2025-26 to improve Fuel Security and Resilience through the National Fuel Security Plan.

The fuel security funding includes:

- up to $7.5 billion in financial support for the establishment of a Fuel and Fertiliser Security Facility to increase additional supply and storage of fuel and fertiliser.
- the establishment of a $3.2 billion Australian Fuel Security Reserve to increase long term fuel supply and storage in combination with an increase to the Minimum Stockholding Obligation (MSO), to increase Australia's fuel reserves to 50 days.
- $1 billion in the Economic Resilience Program from 2025-26 through the National Reconstruction Fund Corporation to support freight, fuel, fertiliser and other critical supply chains affected by global market disruptions.
- $55 million in 2026-27 to deliver the Transport Resilience and Capacity Kickstart pilot program to incentivise increased freight volumes by rail and maritime transport.
- $54.7 million over five years to support ongoing management of Australia's fuel security framework.

Other announcements of interest to Local Governments include:

- Additional $17 million in 2026–27 to continue delivery of the Government’s circular economy policy, program and legislative functions.
- Funding to implement significant reforms to the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, including:
  - $36.9 million over two years from 2026–27 for the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) and the Clean Energy Regulator to continue administering the Nature Repair Market and develop additional methods to increase investment in nature and facilitate delivery of environmental offsets.
  - $13.2 million over two years from 2026–27 to establish the Restoration Contributions Holder to deliver environmental offsets on behalf of proponents.
  - Ongoing funding to establish the new National Environmental Protection Agency as a statutory agency from 1 July 2026.
- $24.7 million over three years from 2025–26 to deliver a national pilot for recycling solar panels and establish up to 100 pilot collection sites nationwide to reduce waste and reuse valuable minerals to support the energy transition.
- Additional $110.8 million over two years from 2026–27 to continue activities to protect native species and Australia’s biodiversity. This includes:
  - $99.6 million over two years from 2026–27 to support conservation and planning activities, including actions to slow the rate of environmental and native species decline, and aid recovery of Australia’s native species and special landscapes.
  - $11.2 million in 2026–27 to maintain critical preparedness against High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza (HPAI H5) incursions.
- Funding to accelerate and streamline approval processes including:
  - $105.9 million over four years from 2026–27 for the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) and the National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA) to modernise environmental information, data and digital systems to improve user experience and enable simpler, faster environmental approvals.
  - $47.6 million over four years from 2026–27 to progress bilateral agreements with states and territories, to enable states to conduct assessments and approvals on the Commonwealth’s behalf.
  - $26.4 million over four years from 2026–27 for DCCEEW and NEPA to work with states and territories to develop new bioregional plans and strategic assessments.
  - funding to support states and territories to implement bioregional plans and strategic assessments in priority areas.
- The Government will amend the *Telecommunications Act 1997* and the *National Broadband Network Companies Act 2011* to streamline approvals for telecommunications infrastructure, support the removal of redundant facilities, improve the National Broadband Network and strengthen consumer safeguards.
- $793.7 million over five years from 2025–26 (and $176.1 million ongoing) to achieve better outcomes for First Nations people under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.
- $220.3 billion over five years from 2026–27 to the states and territories for public hospital services and the implementation of the 2026–2031 Addendum to the National Health Reform Agreement (NHRA).
- Funding to improve Australia’s resilience to natural hazards and preparedness to respond to disasters, including:

    - $6 million in 2026–27 to the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to continue engagement with the states and territories on a national high-speed and high-capacity mobile broadband emergency response capability.
    - funding to implement the new national cell broadcast messaging system to improve emergency warning communications.
    - funding to bolster the national aerial firefighting fleet and increase national surge capability during the higher–risk weather season.
- $1.7 million in 2026–27 for additional funding to continue the Remote Air Services Subsidy Scheme to subsidise the carriage of passengers and essential goods to communities in remote and isolated areas of Australia.

To read more about what the Federal Budget means for Local Governments visit the Federal Budget 2026-27 | WALGA summary or the ALGA analysis of 2026-27 Federal Budget – ALGA.

Officer Comment:

For the GVROC to note the various Federal Government funding and budget items as summarised and analysed by ALGA and WALGA.

Consultation: WALGA, GVROC

Financial Implications: TBD

Strategic Implications: Improved Liveability, social and community wellbeing.

RECOMMENDATION:
That the GVROC note the Federal Government Budget 2026/27 and WALGA and ALGA Summary and analysis.

RESOLUTION: **Moved:** ***Cr Paul Wilcox, Shire of Coolgardie***
Seconded: ***Cr Peter Craig, Shire of Leonora***

Carried

10.7 Tourism & Accommodation Impacts from the Global Economy

Reporting Officer: Andrew Mann, GVROC Executive Officer

Date: May 2026

Attachments: Nil

Background:
At the GVROC CEOs meeting on 11 May 2026 an item was discussed regarding the current impacts to Tourism being felt in the regions due to the current global economic shocks and impacts occurring in the world which is increasing cost of living expenses, fuel costs and interest rates and also decreasing superannuation savings of retirees.

It was also discussed that these global economic shocks are having a direct and material impact on tourism and accommodation businesses across regional and remote Australia, with flow-on effects now evident in reduced visitation, declining bookings, and operational stress.

Key Impacts on Tourism & Accommodation

1. Decline in visitation (especially road-based tourism / grey nomads)

- Travellers are:
  - cancelling, delaying or shortening trips
  - avoiding long-distance travel into remote areas
- Grey nomads (a key regional market) are:
  - changing routes, staying closer to home, or not travelling at all
- Evidence shows:
  - bookings in regional areas down up to ~40% in some locations
  - Caravan parks in remote areas are experiencing low occupancy and cancellations

Direct impact: reduced occupancy rates for accommodation providers

2. Increased operating costs for businesses

- Tourism operators face:
  - higher fuel for transport (tours, transfers, logistics)
  - higher freight costs (food, supplies, cleaning, maintenance)
- Some operators report:
  - fuel cost increases of over 100% in short periods

Result:

- reduced profitability
- pressure on small and seasonal operators

3. Businesses forced to adapt or reduce services

- Operators are:
  - introducing fuel surcharges to customers
  - cutting services, reducing hours, or consolidating operations
- Some tourism activities only run if minimum numbers are achieved

Risk:

- reduced tourism offering → further reduces visitation

4. Flow-on economic impacts to regional communities

- Tourism decline impacts:
  - local retail (IGA, fuel stations, hospitality)
  - employment (casual and seasonal staff reduced)
- Remote areas (e.g. Esperance and similar regions) already reporting:
  - fewer bookings and quieter forward outlook

Grey Nomad / Caravan Market (Critical for Regions)

- Fuel price sensitivity is high:
  - ~60% of travellers will change plans if fuel exceeds thresholds (~$3/L)
- Costs of long trips have:
  - increased 45–60% in recent years

Key takeaway:

- This cohort underpins outback and remote tourism economies
- When they reduce travel → regional economies feel it immediately

Support / Advocacy Context (State, Federal, Industry)
Current situation:

- Industry bodies are actively calling for:
  - fuel rebates or subsidies
  - waiving government fees/charges
  - targeted regional tourism support packages

Federal / State response:

- Limited direct intervention to date
- Past measures include:
  - temporary fuel excise reductions (short-term relief)
- Current approach:
  - monitoring + general economic measures
  - no specific regional tourism package (at this stage)

Key Observation

- Regional tourism is highly fuel-dependent, unlike metro tourism
- Remote areas (e.g. GVROC region) are:
  - most exposed to fuel cost volatility
  - first to see declines and last to recover

This is creating a structural disadvantage for remote tourism economies.

Contribution / Advocacy Points for CEO Group
The CEO Group may wish to raise:

1. **Cost of Living and Fuel cost as a regional economic risk**
   - Recognition that cost of living and fuel prices directly impact:
     - tourism viability
     - accommodation occupancy
     - regional economic activity
2. **Targeted regional tourism support**
   - Consider:
     - fuel rebates for tourism operators
     - regional travel incentives
     - reinstatement of COVID-style support mechanisms
3. **Grey nomad / road tourism strategy**
   - Importance of:
     - sustaining long-distance travel confidence
     - supporting caravan and touring markets
4. **Regional equity argument**
   - Remote areas disproportionately impacted due to:
     - distance
     - lack of transport alternatives
     - reliance on road-based tourism

As an example of the current impacts on tourism in the region, Shire of Esperance CEO - Shane Burge, advised that at Easter holiday time this year its overflow caravan/camping facilities were only half used, compared to the previous year when they were completely full.

Shire of Menzies A/CEO advised that visitor numbers appear to be down around 45-50% compared with April last year and that we are advised that Kalgoorlie Visitor Centre and Laverton Great Beyond are down 60% and 57 % respectively in visitations.

These reductions in visitations will have a significant flow-on impact into the local economies.

Also discussed at the GVROC CEOs meeting on 11 May 2026 was what actions could be worked on around this item and it was suggested if examples, like those listed above, could be shown on the current impacts/decline on tourism from now to last year, then this could be provided back to the Minister for Tourism and also through the Federal Fuel Supply Taskforce Coordinator and a Fuel Security State Controller with a request they provide this up through the Federal and State Government Departments and Ministers requesting a type of support package for the Tourism industry until the global situation resolves and steadies back to normality.

RECOMMENDATION

That the GVROC:

1. Notes that the current global economic impacts including increases in cost of living, rising fuel costs, interest rate increases and reduced superannuation balances are:
    a. reducing visitor numbers;
    b. increasing business costs; and
    c. forcing service reductions.
2. Notes this has resulted in a decline in tourism activity across regional and remote areas, with early evidence showing reduced bookings, quieter seasons, and growing financial pressure on operators.
3. Request the GVROC Executive Officer to work with the GVROC CEOs to build a case of examples of the impact on tourism in the region that can then be presented to relevant State and Federal Ministers, heads of Departments to argue for a type of support package for the Tourism industry until the global situation resolves and steadies back to normality.

RESOLUTION: **Moved:** ***Cr Peter Craig, Shire of Leonora***
Seconded: ***Cr Jill Dwyer, Shire of Menzies***

Carried

10.8 Road Transport Contractual Chain Order – Fuel Cost Recovery 2026 – Regional Impacts

Reporting Officer: Peter Fitchat, CEO Shire of Dundas

Date: 22 April 2026

Attachments: FWC Decision [2026] FWCFB 95 (**Attachment 9**)
Road Transport Contractual Chain Order – Fuel Cost Recovery – 2026 (**Attachment 10**)
Fact Sheet – RTCCO 2026 (**Attachment 11**)

Background:
The Fair Work Commission has issued the **Road Transport Contractual Chain Order – Fuel Cost Recovery – 2026**, effective from 21 April 2026, following a rapid escalation in global fuel prices caused by conflict in the Middle East and disruption to oil supply chains.

The Order was made under new emergency provisions of the Fair Work Act, allowing expedited implementation where there is a **significant national impact on the road transport industry**.

The purpose of the Order is to ensure that **road transport operators, including owner-drivers and small fleet businesses, are able to recover increased fuel costs**, rather than absorbing these costs themselves.

The Order applies across the entire freight supply chain and requires:

- **Fortnightly rate adjustments** to reflect fuel price increases
- Use of mechanisms such as **fuel levies, rate increases or reimbursements**
- Obligations on both **primary parties (e.g. mining companies, retailers, government)** and **secondary parties (transport operators)**

This represents a structural shift in the freight industry whereby **fuel cost risk is transferred up the contractual chain** to those procuring transport services.

Officer Comment:
This Order has significant implications for **regional communities and Local Governments**, particularly across the Goldfields-Esperance region.

Key Implications:

1. **Increased Cost of Living**
   Freight cost increases will flow directly into:
   - Food and groceries
   - Fuel
   - Essential goods

Remote communities will experience a **disproportionate impact** due to reliance on long-distance freight.

2. **Increased Local Government Costs**
   The Order will directly impact Council operations through:
   - Road construction and maintenance costs
   - Transport of gravel, bitumen and materials
   - Waste and supply logistics

As contractors are now **legally required to pass on fuel increases**, Councils will no longer be able to absorb or negotiate fixed-rate transport contracts.

3. **Infrastructure Delivery Pressure**
   Higher freight costs will:
   - Increase capital works costs
   - Impact delivery of projects such as roads, housing and community infrastructure
   - Strengthen the need for **external funding support**

This is particularly relevant to projects such as **Hyden–Norseman Road**, where haulage costs are a major component.

4. **Supply Chain Stability (Positive Impact)**
   The Order will:
   - Reduce risk of transport operators ceasing operations
   - Improve freight reliability into remote areas

This supports continuity of essential services and supply.

5. **Economic Redistribution**
   The Order shifts cost burden:
   - From small operators (truck drivers)
   - To large clients and ultimately consumers

While this improves industry fairness, it will contribute to **inflationary pressure across regional economies**.

6. **Impact on Local Businesses**
   Regional businesses will face:
   - Higher freight input costs
   - Reduced margins
   - Increased pricing pressure

This may affect economic sustainability in small communities.

7. **Administrative and Contractual Complexity**
   The requirement for **fortnightly rate reviews and fuel tracking** introduces:
   - Increased contract management complexity
   - Additional administrative burden for Councils and contractors

Consultation:
- GVROC
- Fair Work Commission (public consultation process)
- Transport Workers' Union (TWU)
- Australian Road Transport Industrial Organisation (ARTIO)
- Industry stakeholders (transport operators, logistics providers)

Financial Implications:
- Increased operational expenditure for all member Councils
- Escalation in capital works costs (roads, infrastructure)
- Potential need for budget adjustments or reprioritisation
- Increased reliance on external funding programs

Strategic Implications:
- Supports industry sustainability and freight reliability
- Introduces structural cost increases across regional economies
- Strengthens case for **regional freight and infrastructure funding reform**
- Aligns with advocacy priorities around **cost shifting to Local Government**

Voting Requirement: Simple majority

RECOMMENDATION:

That GVROC:

1. Notes the implementation of the Road Transport Contractual Chain Order – Fuel Cost Recovery – 2026.
2. Acknowledges the significant financial and operational impacts on regional Local Governments and communities.
3. Advocates to State and Federal Governments for:
    - Increased infrastructure and freight funding support for regional areas; and
    - Recognition of legislated freight cost escalation in funding models.
4. Requests that member Councils incorporate the impacts of the Order into future financial planning and project costing.
5. All GVROC LGA CEOs to provide to the GVROC Executive Officer any aspects of the Order that are not working for them in the manner intended so these can be compiled and provided to WALGA for its advocacy work on this matter.

RESOLUTION: **Moved:** ***Cr Paul Warner, Shire of Menzies***
Seconded: ***Cr Peter Craig, Shire of Leonora***

Carried

10.9 Child safeguarding in local government

Reporting Officers: Andrew Mann, GVROC Executive Officer

Date: May 2026

Attachments: Letter from the Ombudsman Western Australia to the CEO at Shire of Dundas 8 May 2026 **(Attachment 12)**

Background:
In October 2025, the state government announced the WA Ombudsman would be the Independent Oversight Body for organisations engaged in child-related work.

The Shire of Dundas CEO advised that he had received a letter from the WA Ombudsman (see **Attachment 12**) and assumes that this was sent to all local government CEOs.

It advises that the WA Ombudsman Office is presently developing legislation to establish a clear and enforceable framework for child safety across all sectors, including local government. The outcome will be a significant strengthening of child safety protections statewide.

Local governments play a key role in the lives of children and young people, and the WA Ombudsman recognises current efforts to enhance child safe practices, via youth advisory councils and the formulation of child safe policies. These efforts provide a solid foundation for meeting upcoming regulatory requirements, and the WA Ombudsman encourages local governments to continue building on this work as they prepare for independent oversight.

The letter also highlights his understanding that there will be practical and operational challenges in meeting new regulatory requirements and that his office will commit to sharing information as opportunities arise. Relevant information is available at: https://www.dlgsc.wa.gov.au/local-government/child-safeguarding-in-local-government .

The WA Ombudsman looks forward to working with local governments to strengthen child safety for children and young people across WA. If you have specific queries, we are asked to please contact his office at independentoversightproject@ombudsman.wa.gov.au .

Officer Comment:
The Shire of Dundas CEO, Peter Fitchat, has requested this be raised with the GVROC LGAs as what was previously brought up through WALGA and State Council as an optional policy work, it is now moving toward independent oversight and enforceable compliance for local governments as highlighted through the letter from the WA Ombudsman.

The DLGIRS have developed a tool to assist local governments to understand the association between their level of involvement with children and young people and their obligations under child safe reforms - Local Government Child Safety Self-assessment | LGIRS.

The DLGIRS also have created a Child Safe Awareness Policy template for Local Governments to utilise and adapt in response to recommendation 6.12 from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The template is focused on the role of local governments in WA in building and maintaining child safety awareness and knowledge by providing information for the organisations and individuals that operate in their communities.

The template includes instructions for how it can be adapted to each local government and contains sections which can be edited and sections that should not be changed. The template is a minimum requirement to meet Recommendation 6.12 and local governments are encouraged to expand on the policy principles and functions if they have capacity to do so.

Resources have been developed to support local governments in adopting the template and implementing their child safe awareness policies. The resources can be downloaded and adapted as required to suit each local government and the community they serve.

The Local Government Child Safeguarding Project team can be contacted by email csproject@lgirs.wa.gov.au to help local governments adopt the template and implement their policy.

In using the template Local Governments should adapt it to meet their services that involve children e.g.: pool, library, youth programs, events, rangers, CRC/visitor centre, community facilities, and any school/community partnerships. This will allow LGAs to Map all child-facing roles and activities including direct and incidental contact: youth activities; library; pool; events; rangers; elected members; volunteers; contractors; and clubs using Shire facilities; and staff in small-community roles.

There is also a real risk of cost shifting by the State and Federal Governments in this matter. While the safety of children is paramount, the letter confirms new regulatory requirements are coming but does not identify funding for remote councils to assist in meeting the new regulatory requirements.

The Shire of Dundas CEO is seeking support from the GVROC to advocate for State-funded templates, training, legal guidance, regional safeguarding officers, and funding support for Band 3 and 4 councils to meet these new requirements.

Consultation: GVROC Chair, Shire of Dundas CEO

Financial Implications: TBD

Strategic Implications: Improved Liveability, social and community wellbeing.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the GVROC:

1. Note the current update and letter from the WA Ombudsman advising that the State Government is developing legislation to establish a clear and enforceable framework for child safety across all sectors, including local government.
2. Note that this legislation will enforce new regulatory requirements on local governments, but it currently does not identify funding for remote councils to assist in meeting the new regulatory requirements.
3. Support / Not Support the recommendation from the Shire of Dundas CEO, to advocate for State-funded templates, training, legal guidance, regional safeguarding officers, and funding support for Band 3 and 4 councils to meet these new requirements.

RESOLUTION: **Moved:** ***Cr Paul Wilcox, Shire of Coolgardie***
Seconded: ***Cr Anthony Ball, Shire of Coolgardie***

Carried

10.10 Publishing of GVROC Minutes on our Website

Reporting Officers: Andrew Mann, GVROC Executive Officer

Date: May 2026

Attachments: www.gvroc.com

Background:
The Shire President of Coolgardie, Cr Paul Wilcox, advised that he recently caught up with Tegan Guthrie from the Kalgoorlie Miner and in the discussions, she asked whether the GVROC minutes of meetings are publicly available as they are not contained on our website.

Currently our website is maintained in-house by Niki Curtis, so the costs involved are minimized to just the annual hosting charge and Niki's time to maintain an update.

All of our WALGA State Council Goldfields Zone meeting minutes are published and contained on the WALGA website see Zones | WALGA.

Our In person GVROC meeting minutes we have not previously published online. As an unincorporated association we are not obliged to publish these, but in saying that there is nothing in the minutes apart from some occasional contractual items and details of contractual payments made in the GVROC Financial report that may need to remain confidential.

Officer Comment:
Apart from the potential contractual confidentiality concerns, Cr Paul Wilcox believes making these publicly available could be helpful and aid in conversations we have in our respective LGAs as a way of demonstrating that we also have a strategic focus for the region.

Advice from Niki Curtis is that we can easily upload and publish the minutes on our existing website at no additional hosting charges or extra storage required to be purchased. Only cost to GVROC is Niki's time to upload these and manage on the website.

It is also suggested:
- that only the minutes are uploaded, not the full agendas with large amounts of attachments included as these would increase the need for additional online storage to be acquired;
- to overcome any confidentiality concerns around contractual items and contract payments that the list of payments normally contained in the GVROC Financial update agenda item for each meeting be made as an agenda attachment rather than inserted in the agenda and minutes. This then stops individual contractual payments being seen in the minutes to be uploaded.
- We only upload the previous year, 2025, and the current 2026 minutes as a starting point to minimise the work involved in uploading these initially and for these minutes we remove the payment table lists contained in the GVROC Financial sections.

Based on the above suggestions, if agreed by the GVROC, it is recommended that previous minutes from 2025 onwards be uploaded to the GVROC website and that these be continued to be uploaded after each subsequent meeting.

Consultation: GVROC Chair, Shire of Coolgardie President

Financial Implications: Minimal

Strategic Implications: Improved Accountability and Transparency

RECOMMENDATION:

That the GVROC:

4. Note the request to make the GVROC minutes of our in-person meetings publicly available on our GVROC website.
5. Endorse based on the suggestions from the GVROC Executive Officer listed above those previous minutes from 2025 onwards be uploaded to the GVROC website and that these be continued to be uploaded after each subsequent meeting.

RESOLUTION: **Moved:** ***Cr Jill Dwyer, Shire of Menzies***
Seconded: ***Cr Paul Wilcox, Shire of Coolgardie***

Carried

10.11 GVROC Strategic Plan

Reporting Officer: Andrew Mann, GVROC Executive Officer

Date: May 2026

Attachments: GVROC Strategic Plan 2022 - 2026

Background:
The GVROC last developed a Strategic Plan back in 2022 that was endorsed by the GVROC at its 27 May 2022 meeting, for the period 2022 through to 2026.

Officers Comment:
Given the current Strategic Plan's time frame is coming to an end it is recommended that a new Strategic Plan is developed and endorsed by the GVROC for the next five-year period 2026 – 2030.

To start this process, the GVROC CEOs Group discussed the process for it to be developed at its meeting on 11 May 2026.

It was resolved by the GVROC CEOs at that meeting as follows:

That the CEOs Group:
1. Note the current draft GVROC Strategic Plan 2022 – 2026 as presented.
2. Agree that each CEO coordinate their LGA's input and comments on the existing plan back to the GVROC Executive Officer by 19 June 2026 and if required have a workshop of the GVROC CEOs Group to be organised to provide review and input into preparation of a new draft of the plan for 2026-2030 as part of its next meeting on 17 July 2026.
3. Request the GVROC Executive Officer to finalise a draft Strategic Plan for 2026-2030 and present back to the GVROC for consideration and endorsement at its meeting on 31 July 2026.

RESOLUTION: **Moved: Jackie Hawkins, Shire of Laverton**
Seconded: Rob Stewart, Shire of Menzies

Carried

The GVROC Executive Officer will also undertake a review of the previous strategic plan (see attached link) and any relevant documents, policies, strategies, papers that the GVROC has endorsed since the last plan was endorsed.

Using this information and that returned by each of the GVROC CEOs, a draft Strategic Plan 2026 – 2030 will be developed for review and to start the conversation with all member councils of GVROC.

Consultation: GVROC Chair
GVROC CEOs

Financial Implications: TBD

Strategic Implications: Improved regional outcomes and operations of the GVROC.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the GVROC:
1. Note the current GVROC Strategic Plan 2022 – 2026 is close to expiring.
2. Note that each GVROC CEO is coordinating their LGA's input and comments on the existing plan back to the GVROC Executive Officer by 19 June 2026 and all CEOs will workshop this input and feedback to develop a draft plan for 2026-2030 as part of its next meeting on 17 July 2026.
3. Note the GVROC Executive Officer will then finalise a draft Strategic Plan for 2026-2030 and present this to the GVROC for consideration and endorsement at its meeting on 31 July 2026.

RESOLUTION: **Moved:** ***Cr Paul Warner, Shire of Menzies***
Seconded: ***Cr Jill Dwyer, Shire of Menzies***

Carried

11. LATE ITEMS as notified, introduced by decision of the Meeting

11.1 ARIC's way forward with engagement of LGiQ's Michele Bennetts

Reporting Officer: Andrew Mann, GVROC Executive Officer

Date: May 2026

Attachments: ARIC Workplan Example **(Attachment 13)**

Background
Following on from the discussion held at the GVROC CEOs meeting on 11 May 2026 the GVROC Executive Officer has had a discussion with Michele Bennetts, Managing Director at LGiQ to discuss the coordination and scheduling of ARIC meetings across the eight LGAs that have or are in the process of engaging Michelle to undertake the Independent Presiding Member Chair role for their ARICs.

Michele has suggested that given the process for ARICs under the new legislation and regulations commences from 1 July 2026, each of the LGAs need to think about the following in relation to their set up and operations:

1. Finalising terms of reference of their ARIC - given other councils in WA have gone through this we should find some examples that could be utilised. Can be reviewed at initial ARIC meetings for recommendation to council to approve.
2. Determine a preferred meeting schedule for next twelve months (next financial year 1/7/2026 - 30/06/2027), then we can try and co-ordinate for Michele to get to some of the meetings in person over a couple of week block periods.
3. Determine a workplan. Michele has provided a South Australian workplan which is based on AICD which can be adjusted to WA legislation and councils' specific terms of reference.
4. Ensuring elected Council members are fully aware of the Terms of Reference of the ARIC, their roles and responsibilities and that of the independent chair.

Michele also advised that she will be attending training at WALGA in July 2026 and is also looking to meet with representatives of the Auditor General's Office, DLGIRS and WALGA while here in Perth.

She was also looking at a possible travel in the region during August/September if this fits once the meeting schedule for ARICs is set.

Officers Comment
Based on the above, discussion it is recommended that each GVROC LGA CEO look at the four areas suggested by Michele above and action within their Councils.

Also recommended for the GVROC LGA CEOs to send their preferred meeting schedule for the 12 months 1/7/2026 to 30/6/2027 to the GVROC Executive Officer so that this can be compiled into one document and provided to Michele to coordinate her travel plans to the region.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the GVROC:
1. Note the advice from Michele Bennetts, Managing Director at LGiQ regarding the set-up of each LGAs ARIC and planning for its operation and meeting schedules.
2. Request each of the eight LGAs CEOs utilising Michele's services as the Independent Presiding Member Chair role, take this information back to their Councils and action as required.
3. Request each of the eight LGA CEOs to send their preferred ARIC meeting schedule for the 12 months 1/7/2026 to 30/6/2027 to the GVROC Executive Officer so that this can be compiled into one document and provided to Michele to coordinate her travel plans to the region.

RESOLUTION: **Moved:** ***Cr Paul Wilcox, Shire of Coolgardie***
Seconded: ***Cr Jim Quadrio, Shire of Wiluna***

Carried

GVROC Chair called motion to accept the following Late Items.

Moved: ***Cr Sharon Warner, Shire of Dundas***
Seconded: ***Cr Paul Warner, Shire of Menzies***

11.2 Cost Shifting to Local Government – Great Southern Zone Advocacy

Officer: Andrew Mann, GVROC Executive Officer

Date: May 2026

Attachments: Letter to GVROC Chair from Great Southern Country Zone dated 20 May 2026 **(Attachment 14)**

Background:
The WALGA Great Southern Country Zone has written to the GVROC Chair seeking the GVROC's support regarding their position on the increasing and unsustainable impacts of cost shifting onto Local Governments (refer to letter at **Attachment 14** emailed out to all members on 21 May 2026).

RECOMMENDATION:

That the GVROC:
1. Support the Great Southern Country Zone advocacy position around cost shifting onto Local Governments by State and Federal Governments.
2. Request the GVROC Chair and GVROC Executive Officer to write back to the Great Southern Country Zone Chair advising of the GVROC's support on this matter.

RESOLUTION: **Moved:** ***Cr Jill Dwyer, Shire of Menzies***
Seconded: ***Cr Paul Warner, Shire of Menzies***

Carried

11.3 Nitrates in Drinking Water

Officer: Matt McIntyre, CEO Shire of Wiluna

Date: May 2026

Background:
On or about the 4 November 2025 the Shire of Wiluna received an unpublished report from the Water Corporation indicating that:

- continued Nitrate monitoring had indicated that Nitrate levels in Wiluna town's potable water supply system was consistently below 50mg/Litre
- The World Health Organization organisation recommended maximum limit for infants, pregnant women or others with health issues is 50mg/litre
- The inference in the email received on or about this date was that the embargo on water supply pricing and the need to supply bottled water for babies less than 3 months of age would be lifted.

On the 10th April 2026 the CEO Shire of Wiluna received notice from the Water Corporation reinforcing that naturally high Nitrate levels in Kutkabubba (30kms north) were above the recommended levels of the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines being 100mg/litre.

The town of Wiluna has the same geotechnical and hydro-geology system as Kutkabubba.

The CEO has had back and forward exchange talks and emails with the Water Corporation. Only one test point is used for water quality testing in Wiluna.

Concerns lay around the shortcoming of a single Potable Water Quality test point with such a significant issue related to delivering a healthy water supply. The process used does not meet the Before-After-Control-Impact approach to water testing where variation by competing influences.

Officer Comment:
The Shire of Wiluna is interested if any other GVROC LGAs have had issues with the Water Corporation around town supply drinking water quality, noting that both Laverton and Leonora have had similar issues with nitrates in their water.

GVROC Comment:
The GVROC noted the Shire of Wiluna concerns and also that this should be something that can be raised within the Goldfields Esperance Water Security Group, which also has membership from the Water Corporation and DWER and is chaired by the GEDC CEO, Kris Starcevich.

11.4 Call for Donations to the Isolated Children's Parents' Association (ICPA)

Cr Jim Quadrio, Shire of Wiluna requested if GVROC LGAs in preparation of their next Council Budgets could consider giving a donation to the ICPA, which is a voluntary, non-profit, apolitical organization advocating for equitable education access for geographically isolated children in Australia.

The ICPA was established in 1971 to ensure that children living in rural and remote areas are not disadvantaged in their educational opportunities due to geographic isolation. It represents over 2,500 families nationwide, including primary producers, small business owners, schools, and individuals committed to educational equity.

The association emphasizes that geographically isolated students face unique challenges, such as long distances to schools, limited access to teachers, and higher out-of-pocket costs for education

ICPA supports students through initiatives like distance education, boarding school assistance, and mini schools, which provide face-to-face learning and social interaction for children who are otherwise isolated. The association also highlights the financial and logistical challenges families face, such as arranging accommodation for mini schools when on-campus facilities are unavailable. National programs like the Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) provide some financial support, but families often cover additional costs themselves.

ICPA actively lobbies for policy changes and resources to improve educational outcomes for rural and remote students. This includes advocating for the viability of rural schools, equitable access to distance education, and support for boarding students. The association emphasizes that addressing educational inequities requires understanding broader social and economic factors affecting rural communities.

Supporters can join ICPA, participate in branch activities, attend state conferences, and contribute through donations or fundraising. For more information, visit the official ICPA website at www.icpa.com.au.

GVROC Comment:
The GVROC members noted the request from Cr Jim Quadrio and advised they will consider a donation within their own LGAs.

12. FUTURE GVROC COUNCIL MEETINGS/FUNCTIONS

Next Meetings

The following suggested dates in 2026 have been set for the GVROC meetings.

- **31 July 2026** in Menzies (to be hosted by Shire of Menzies)
- **11 September 2026** in Norseman (to be hosted by Shire of Dundas)
- **16-18 September 2026** (WALGA LGA Convention and AGM in Perth)
- **13 November 2026** in Leonora (to be hosted by Shire of Leonora)

The following are the WALGA State Council meeting dates for 2026 with suggested GVROC Zoom video conference meeting dates prior to these to inform the GVROC's representatives attending the meetings with relevant input for State Council Agenda Items:

- 1 July 2026 WALGA State Council Meeting - GVROC meeting on **19 June 2026**
- 4 September 2026 WALGA State Council Meeting - GVROC meeting on **21 August 2026**
- 2 December 2026 WALGA State Council Meeting - GVROC meeting on **23 November 2026**

13. CLOSURE OF MEETING

There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 11:55am.