



MINUTES

ANNUAL ELECTORS MEETING

WEDNESDAY 29TH MARCH 2017

BORDEN SPORTING PAVILION
Commencing at 7.00pm

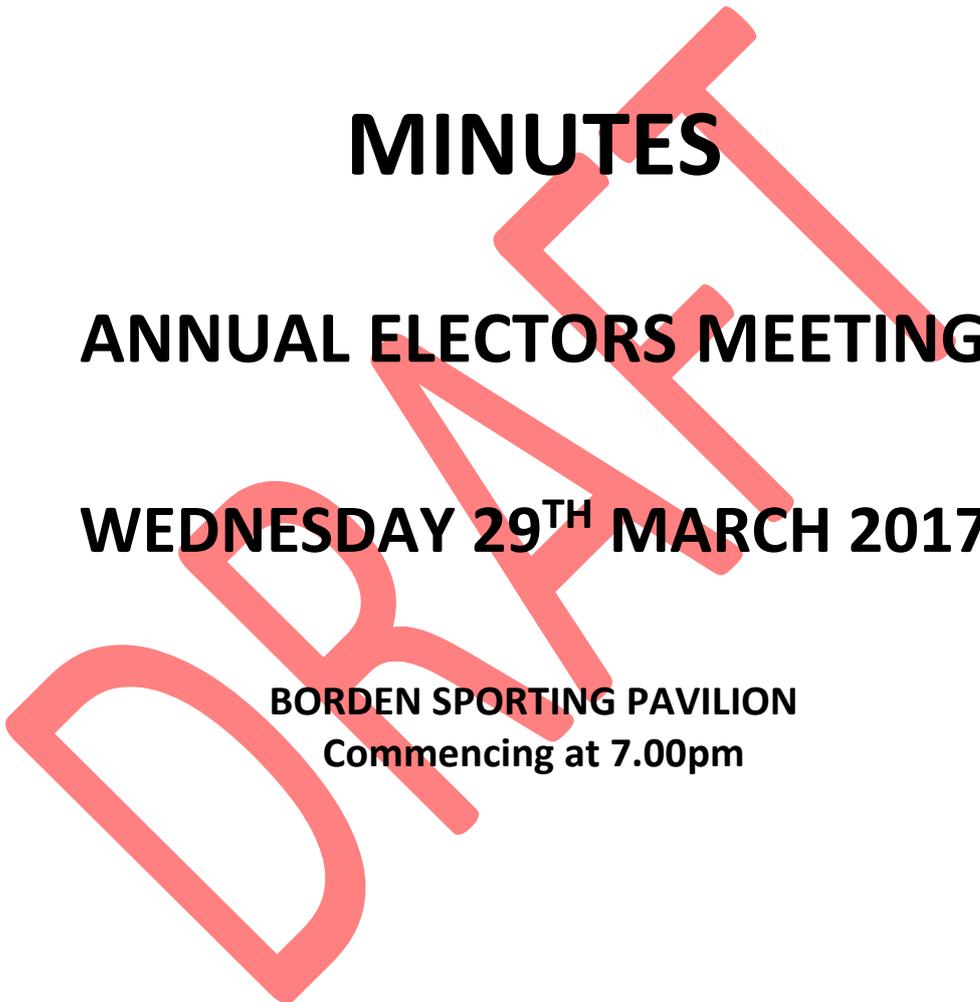


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1. OPENING

Shire President Keith House welcomed Councillors, Staff and visitors and opened the meeting at ____pm.

2. ATTENDANCE / APOLOGIES

2.1 ATTENDANCE

Keith House	Shire President
Fiona Gaze	Deputy Shire President
Lex Martin	
Bronwyn Gaze	
Richard House	
Frank Hmeljak	
Sue Lance	
Ben Moore	
Shelley Hmeljak	

Shelley Pike	Chief Executive Officer
Vin Fordham Lamont	Deputy Chief Executive Officer
Anna Boschman	Manager of Community Service
Yvette Wheatcroft	Manager of Works
John Skinner	Asset and Waste Management Coordinator
Abbey Sergeant	Executive Assistant

Chris Thomas, Jacqui Thomas, Evelyn Eastough, Rebecca O'Meehan, Phil O'Meehan, Owen Gaze, Barry Savage, Janet Savage, Mick Creagh, Graham Jones, Tim O'Meehan, Laura Page

2.2 APOLOGIES

Graham Savage

3. CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

Moved: Cr Shelley Hmeljak

Seconded: Cr Lex Martin

3.1 ANNUAL ELECTORS MEETING HELD 10 FEBRUARY 2016

That the minutes of the Annual Electors Meeting held on 10 February 2016 be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.

CARRIED

3.2 BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

Nil.

4. CONTENTS OF THE 2015-2016 ANNUAL REPORT

Moved: Cr Fiona Gaze

Seconded: Cr Lex Martin

4.1 PRESIDENTS REPORT 2015-2016

RECOMMENDATION

That the Presidents report for 2015-2016 be received and the contents noted

CARRIED

4.2 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT 2015-2016

Moved: Cr Frank Hmeljak

Seconded: Cr Janet Savage

RECOMMENDATION

That the Chief Executive Officer's report for 2015-2016 be received and the contents noted

CARRIED

4.3 THE ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR 2015-2016

Moved: Cr Phillip O'Meehan

Seconded: Cr Frank Hmeljak

RECOMMENDATION

That the Annual Financial Statement for 2015-2016 be received

CARRIED

5. PRESENTATIONS

5.1 FINANCIAL RATIOS – DCEO VIN FORDHAM LAMONT

(Power point presentation)

5.2 ASSET MANAGEMENT – CEO SHELLEY PIKE

(Power point presentation)

6. QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE

6.1 Graham Jones

I would like to know how much money is going to North Stirling Pallinup as part of budget deliberations?

CEO Shelley Pike

Expenditure for 2016/17 to date for North Stirling Pallinup.

- Motor Vehicle Insurance \$213.57
- Vehicle Licensing \$326.92

Expenditure to building 16/17

- Property insurance \$17.70 (Debris removal only)
- Gutter cleaning \$140.00
- Emergency Services Levy \$71.00

6.2 Graham Jones

There is a potential for the Landcare group to continue however they need more money than the figures provided above to show they have support from the shire. "We need more carrots in to get more carrots out the other end".

CEO Shelley Pike

The council has reviewed the grants process and has set up a grants workshop so that people can learn how to write a grant. Lotterywest and other grant organisations will also be there to explain their processes. Shire grants are available between \$500 - \$20,000 for further information please contact Manager of Community Services Anna Boschman.

6.3 Graham Jones

So North Stirling Pallinup need to really present a strong case within the guidelines?

Shire President Keith House

Yes, last year their application was not approved as the shire does not fund staff salary.

7. GENERAL BUSINESS

7.1 Chris Thomas

Have the outcomes of the Community Perception Survey since been addressed?

CEO Shelley Pike

The Shire are about to go out to the community and review the Strategic Community Plan. As part of the consultation process we will be forming citizen panels and focus groups to addresses levels of service.

7.2 Chris Thomas

From reading the survey outcomes it is very clear that councillors need to understand that there is more than one town to consider when making decisions.

Shire President Keith House

Yes we understand where you are coming from and staff and councillors are making the effort to ensure all community members are heard and consulted.

CEO Shelley Pike

As an example, last year I made myself available to both the Borden and Ongerup communities once a month for face to face meetings so that community members could raise and address areas of concern. We would be willing to run these open format meetings again if the community registered their interest.

Shire President Keith House

The Community perception survey report was very generic and as councillors we rely heavily on staff to address the concerns and issues which were raised from the report. We are well aware of the fact that all 3 communities are moving in different directions. It is impossible to create a Strategic Community Plan and way forward without the community on board.

CEO Shelley Pike

The Shire is bringing in world famous Bank of I.D.E.A.S (BOI) lead consultant Peter Kenyon to work with all 3 communities and will look specifically at how to develop a vision and direction to move forward. A significant cost saving to the shire will be staff collating the data and writing the report in house.

7.3 Eve Eastough

What is the purpose of the Citizens Panel? What will this structured group format bring to the Strategic Planning process on top of having councillors advocate on our behalf?

CEO Shelley Pike

Councillors will be on the working party however all councillors will be invited to attend the workshops as observers. These workshops are purely to get community comment. We will then ask people at the focus groups if they would like to form part of the citizen's panel which will be made up of community members from all 3 towns.

Following the consultation process the information will be presented to council for their input.

7.4 Graham Jones**Does the old swimming pool have any proposed purpose?****Shire President Keith House**

No not as yet, we are hoping to address that as part of the upcoming Strategic Community Plan consultation process.

CEO Shelley Pike

As part of the Strategic Community Plan process we have provided the community with the opportunity to provide council with 2-3 ideas which they would like the Shire to focus on in the future.

7.5 Phil O'Meehan**In the July Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes the Operation Surplus Ratio dropped from 0.10% in 2014/14 to 0.41% in 2015/16. The figures aren't consistent with the figures in the 15/16 Annual Report?****Vin Fordham Lamont**

Thank you for your question, I don't have access to the minutes at the moment and will need to take this question on notice.

Answer to question taken on notice

There were two reasons for this decrease:

1. *An increase in depreciation expense due to the revaluation of assets;
and*
2. *A reduction in operating revenue due to a decrease in the amount of operating grants.*

These two items affect the ratio because the formula to obtain the ratio is:

*Operating revenue (includes operating grants) minus operating expenses
(includes depreciation)*

Own source operating revenue

Page 105 of the 2015/16 Annual Report (s. 31 Grant Revenue) reflects the decrease in operating grants:

2014/15 - \$2,249,730

2015/16 - \$924,977

A substantial part of this decrease resulted from a decrease in the General Purpose and Roads components of the Financial Assistance Grants (FAGs) from the WA Local Government Grants Commission:

- *Roads component decreased from \$969,043 to \$340,586*
- *General Purpose component decreased from \$935,802 to \$276,629.*

I think your query stemmed from the fact that on page 33 of the Long Term Financial Plan included in the 22 June 2016 Council Minutes, the General Purpose grant was listed as:

2014/15 - \$646,056

2015/16 - \$645,974

Similarly, on page 34 of the Long Term Financial Plan included in the 22 June 2016 Council Minutes, the Roads grant was listed as:

2014/15 - \$609,892

2015/16 - \$609,892

The reason that the actual figures in the Annual Report had changed from those in the Long Term Financial Plan is that we suddenly received part of the 2015/16 grant funds between the date of the Council meeting and 30 June 2016. We were not expecting that to happen so hence the inconsistency.

7.6 Rebecca O'Meehan

As outlined in your Asset presentation to maintain the current building assets over the course of a 5 year period will cost us \$1.1 million. Are we putting enough aside each year to renew these?

CEO Shelley Pike

No, we budget primarily for maintenance, The Department of Local Government require us each year to put money away for renewal of assets and we are gradually addressing this however the Shire is not in a financial position to put aside renewal funds for all our facilities which is one of the reasons we are asking the community to assist us in identifying essential assets.

7.7 Chris Thomas

When you say residual life does that take into account the decrease in value and increase in maintaining cost as at some point these two axis's will cross paths, is this taken into consideration in the data you have provided us?

CEO Shelley Pike

No, however as part of your feedback and when considering these options please by all means incorporate that into your response. If we can better utilise, repurpose and come up with innovative ideas to maintain/keep these buildings it will benefit the whole community.

Shire President Keith House

What we are doing is not a new process and is really an extension of the Fair value process the shire and council have implemented over the past 3 years. At the end of the day we need to make a decision so constructive feedback is essential for council to make a good decision. If community members decide that all buildings within their community are essential this is not constructive. People can be as innovative as they like, we can keep all the buildings in the shire if the community take on the responsibilities of these buildings. For example renewals don't have to be done with rate payer's money and it's up to the community. We need to make the sums add up at the end of the day.

7.8 Eve Eastough

Once you receive the feedback will this be collated and available to the public?

CEO Shelley Pike

Yes, the raw data will be available with comments.

7.9 Tim O'Meehan

How is this being distributed and promoted?

CEO Shelley Pike

We have packages available for you to take home tonight. We will be placing an advert in the 3 local Newsletters, on facebook and the shire website. All packages will have a reply paid stamp and envelopes.

7.10 Phil O'Meehan

What type of rate increase are we looking at?

Shire President Keith House

Yes it's very clear in our 10 year financial plan at current it sits at 6% and this comes back to the asset renewal.

7.11 Phil O'Meehan

A 6% rates increase for farmers or rural property owners is significant in compared to residential owners?

CEO Shelley Pike

The only way we can reduce rates is to trade off on other services. The Strategic Community Plan process will allow people to debate what services we reduce or trade off.

7.12 Phil O'Meehan

I think the GRV to UV ratio is unfair and I think farmers pay for their fair share. I think these ratios need to be adjusted to bring them back to an acceptable rate. I also agree with the services trade off.

DCEO Officer Vin Fordham Lamont

The Shire has undertaken a rates review and rigorous rates audit in the last 6 months to make sure we are rating fairly across the shire and how UV and GRV rates are calculated. The audit didn't result in any great changes and was completed by external auditors.

Shire President Keith House

Our ability to raise rates out of residential property is basically nil. The ratio you highlighted is our own source revenue. Our fees and charges come to nothing and this issue will continue to cause the officers a great amount of stress as we have no capacity to raise other revenue.

7.13 Phil O'Meehan

Will the 6% rates increase continue?

Shire President Keith House

Yes big ticket items such as waste, roads and assets will continue to keep the increase at 6%. However the community do need to work out levels of service and it may be that we reduce maintenance on roads that are not as highly trafficked. Waste over the last 12 months has been very productive however we are incredibly vulnerable with regular reviews from the DER and ERA. Another aspect of a rates increase is when other agencies tell us we are required to do A, B and C at our cost.

We continue to have other agencies come back to us and tell us to provide services at our cost. An example of this is Main Roads and the RAV implementation which left us quite exposed as a shire.

CEO Shelley Pike

A more recent decision of the State Government regarding Stamp Duty on vehicle licensing is going to cost the Shire of Gnowangerup \$31,000 or 1% of rates. This is another example of cost shifting which council has not budgeted for and will need to find the funds elsewhere in the budget.

Shire President Keith House

We are very aware at an organisational level and we hope that within a 10 year time frame to bring this down. For example to save costs on loan repayments we didn't borrow the money for the pool development.

7.14 Phil O'Meehan

I understand the pressure councillors and staff are under.

Shire President Keith House

Believe me, not one councillor will feel comfortable with a rates increase. Officers are working to keep costs down however as a council we are accountable for the delivery of services. The way we have set it up we know we have a strong council with capacity to fulfil services as status quo. If the community is willing to reduce services and or the standard in which they are delivered then that is something we can look at.

7.15 Phil O'Meehan

I agree everyone has a right to a say however not everyone puts their hand in their pocket. The heavy lifting is being done by the farming community.

Shire President Keith House

Many community members are putting a lot of money into the community.

7.16 Phil O'Meehan

Residential rate payers are receiving a lot of services for their rates.

CEO Shelley Pike

This is the purpose of the focus groups to make decisions of how your rates are spent.

7.17 Rebecca O'Meehan

I would like to congratulate the Shire on being 1 of 7 shires to be successful in the Great Southern Housing initiative, it mentions 4 houses. How much funding is the Shire putting into that and where are they being located?

CEO Shelley Pike

With the new government we have received communication that unsigned grants may not be honoured. The Shire looked at borrowing \$ 1.41 Million as well as utilising funds from the Land Development Reserve.

The configuration was going to consist of:

- 1 – 3 x 2 in Ongerup
- 2 – 2 x 2 Gnowangerup
- 6 Well Aged Housing.

The Ongerup Community Development also applied for a 4 x 2 in Ongerup.

7.18 Rebecca O'Meehan

So no housing option is proposed for Borden? Borden has been leeching people for years. I understand Gnowangerup has increased employment which is marvellous. However where does Borden sit in the Economic Development Plan? Why can't the shire promote business and families travel the 30km down the road to live and set up business? The reality is we are not going to live in Gnowangerup and farm where we farm. An Economic Plan to promote and include all 3 towns. Yes some responsibility should be left with us to encourage agricultural business to set up a location in our town.

The First Business Forum wasn't for farmers.

CEO Shelley Pike

For the last 3 years the shire has run the business forum and all sorts of people address the forum. No one from Borden or Ongerup have ever attended. This year we have Peter Kenyon presenting.

Shire President Keith House

Housing is an issue across all facets of the community. Trying to empower the community and businesses to recognise the needs, take on the responsibility and build in their community. The Ongerup Community Development have taken the opportunity themselves.

From a Shire perspective we are needing to be strategic about our decisions. This project will result in an immediate rate increase, however the project will be replacing old housing stock which would have otherwise needed maintenance and by selling them to offset the costs of the new houses. As nice as it looks it is really a strategic decision.

The house proposed for Ongerup was identified as a need to assist in retaining staff and we as a shire understand that being a rural community it is hard to attract staff without having sufficient housing stock.

7.19 Rebecca O'Meehan

Don't get me wrong the Ongerup Community Development have done a great job.

Shire President Keith House

The Shire is in full support of the Ongerup Community Development.

Deputy Chief Executive Officer Fiona Gaze

Currently we have businesses in town paying employees to drive up from Albany each day as Gnowangerup does not have enough housing stock to accommodate them.

7.20 Phil O'Meehan

Why is there an Indigenous BBQ?

Manager of Community Services Anna Boschman

This is 1 of the 8 workshops as part of the Strategic Community Plan process and is designed to provide the opportunity for our indigenous community to have input into the process.

7.21 Phil O'Meehan

That's great however I don't believe we should be approaching people in isolation. It is just an observation.

Deputy Shire President Fiona Gaze

We want all community members contributing to the Strategic Community Plan process. All workshops are open to all community members however some of the workshops are targeted to ensure we are encouraging participation.

Councillor Lex Martin

The Shire is working closely with the School and Noongar community to ensure the Ag School and management is kept within the community. The existing relationships are already there.

CEO Shelley Pike

In terms of feedback is there anything you would like us as a shire to do differently at our next Annual Electors meeting?

7.22 Jan Savage

No this information you have provided is very helpful.

DRAFT

8. CLOSURE

Shire President Keith House, thanked councillors, staff and community members and closed the meeting at 8:29pm.

FOOTNOTES**Voting:**

- *Each elector present at the meeting is entitled to one vote on each matter to be Decided, but does not have to vote.*
- *All decisions are to be made by a simple majority vote.*
- *Voting is to be conducted so that no voter's vote is secret.*

Definition of the Elector

An elector is defined in the Local Government Act 1995. An elector is a person who is eligible to vote in an election of the Shire of Gnowangerup. For the purpose of meeting of electors, the definition of an elector is to include ratepayers.

Procedures at Electors Meetings

The procedure to be followed at a general or special meeting of electors is to be determined by the person presiding at the meeting.