Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes
The heart and soul of the South West

Notice of a Special Meeting of Council

Dear Council Member

The next Ordinary Meeting of Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes will be held on **Thursday, 29 October 2026** in Council Chambers, commencing at 5:30 PM

AGENDA

Special Council Meeting

Thursday, 29 October 2026

Garry Adams

Chief Executive Officer
Date: 23 October 2026

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SHIRE OF BRIDGETOWN GREENBUSHES

ITEM 1 OPENING OF MEETING

Meeting to be opened by the Presiding Member.

ITEM 2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the cultural custodians of the land on which we gather, the Pibulmun-Wadandi people. We acknowledge and support their continuing connection to the land, waterways and community. We pay our respects to members of the Aboriginal communities and their culture; and to Elders past and present, their descendants still with us today, and those who will follow in their footsteps.

ITEM 3 ATTENDANCE, APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Councillors

Councillor S Carstairs	President
Councillor R Redman	Deputy President
Councillor J Boyle	
Councillor M Fletcher	
Councillor L Pearce	
Councillor T Pratico	
Councillor K Gillies	
Councillor A McRae	

Council Officers

Chief Executive Officer, G Adams
Director Corporate, Economic and Community Development, C Radford
Director Projects & Environment, M Gillham
Manager, Executive Services Unit, M Morrell
Executive Assistant, K Durbin

Observers/Visitor

Nil

Apologies

Nil

Leave of Absence Previously Granted

Nil

ITEM 4 ATTENDANCE OF GALLERY

ITEM 5 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

ITEM 6 PETITIONS/DEPUTATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

ITEM 7 COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS BY PARTIES WITH AN INTEREST

ITEM 8 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE PRESIDING MEMBER WITHOUT DISCUSSION

ITEM 9 NOTIFICATION OF DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Part 5, Division 6 of the *Local Government Act 1995* requires a member who has an interest in any matter to be discussed at the meeting to disclose the interest and the nature of the interest in writing before the meeting, or immediately before the matter is discussed.

ITEM 10 QUESTIONS ON AGENDA ITEMS BY ELECTED MEMBERS

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Reports of Officers have been divided into Departments as follows:

- CEO's Office
- Corporate, Economic and Community Development
- Executive Services Unit
- Project Management and Environment

ITEM 11 EXECUTIVE SERVICES UNIT

11.1 Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes Extraordinary Election

File Ref	
Responsible Officer	Garry Adams, Chief Executive Officer
Reporting Officer	Merridith Morrell, Manager of Executive Services Unit
Attachments	1. Shire of BG Election date and Cost Estimate for LGX2027 Letter 2. Written Agreement Letter BridgetownGreenbushes
Voting Requirements	Absolute Majority
Disclosure of Interest	Reporting Officer: Nil Responsible Officer: Nil

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OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. **Declare, in accordance with section 4.20(4) of the *Local Government Act 1995*, the Electoral Commissioner to be responsible for the conduct of the 2027 extraordinary election, together with any other elections or polls which may be required; and**

2. **Decide, in accordance with section 4.61(2) of the *Local Government Act 1995* that the method of conducting the election will be as a postal election.**

IN BRIEF

- Cr Simon Robinson resigned from Council effective 6 October 2026. The office he held has a term ending at the October 2029 ordinary elections.
- The vacancy cannot be filled under the backfilling provisions, so an extraordinary election is required.
- The Shire asked the Electoral Commissioner to approve holding the election with the ordinary elections on 16 October 2027. The Commissioner did not approve this request. Instead, he advised that the earliest date the WAEC can conduct the election, and its preferred date, is Thursday 18 March 2027, and gave his approval under section 4.9(2) for that date to be fixed (Attachment 2).

- On 21 October 2026 the Electoral Commissioner gave his written agreement to be responsible for the conduct of the extraordinary election, subject to Council passing two prescribed motions by absolute majority.
- Council must fix the election day at a meeting held within one month of the vacancy, which is by 6 November 2026. This Special Council Meeting on 29 October 2026 meets that deadline.
- The WAEC estimates the cost of a postal election at approximately $32,000 (ex GST) (Attachment 2). This expenditure is not in the 2026/27 budget.

MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION

Council is asked to:

- fix the day for the extraordinary election;
- declare the Electoral Commissioner responsible for conducting it;
- decide that it will be a postal election; and

BACKGROUND

Nine councillors were elected or continuing after the October 2025 ordinary elections. In February 2026, Cr Stephen Butler and Cr Tracy Lansdell resigned. Both vacancies were filled under Schedule 4.1A of the Act by the next placed candidates from the 2025 election, Simon Robinson and Andrew McRae, who were sworn in on 12 February 2026. Cr Robinson came to Council as the backfill candidate for the vacancy created by Cr Butler's resignation.

On 6 October 2026 the CEO received Cr Robinson's signed notice of resignation, effective immediately. Council is now operating with 8 of its 9 offices filled. Quorum and an absolute majority both remain at 5 members.

On 7 October 2026 the CEO wrote to the Electoral Commissioner (Attachment 1). The letter:

- advised the vacancy and why it cannot be filled under Schedule 4.1A;
- asked the Commissioner to approve, under section 4.9(2), an election day of 16 October 2027, so the vacancy is filled with the ordinary elections; and
- as a fallback, asked for a cost estimate, the Commissioner's written agreement to conduct the election, and a proposed timetable.

The WA Electoral Commission (WAEC) advised on 12 October 2026 that it was seeking advice on the best dates on which it could run an election for the Shire in 2027. On 15 October 2026 the Electoral Commissioner responded (Attachment 2). His letter did not approve the requested election day of 16 October 2027. It:

- noted that under section 4.9(1) Council has one month from the vacancy to fix the election day, and that the election may be conducted either by the WAEC or in-house by the Shire with the CEO as Returning Officer;
- advised that the earliest date the WAEC can conduct the extraordinary election, and its preferred date, is **Thursday 18 March 2027**;
- gave the Commissioner's approval under section 4.9(2) for that date to be fixed, as it is more than four months after the vacancy;

- estimated the cost of the election at approximately $32,000 (ex GST); and
- asked the Shire to confirm in writing that it would take the cost estimate to Council, after which the Commissioner would provide his written agreement.

The WAEC's cost estimate is based on a postal election for one vacancy, 4,250 electors, a response rate of approximately 40%, a local Returning Officer appointed by the WAEC, the Shire providing all other electoral officers, and the count being conducted at the Shire office using CountWA.

On 21 October 2026 the Shire confirmed it would take the cost estimate to Council, and the Electoral Commissioner provided his written agreement under section 4.20(4) to be responsible for the conduct of the election. The Written Agreement letter:

- sets out the two motions Council must pass for a postal election (Recommendations 4 and 5);
- requires that the motions be presented to Council as drafted and not be amended in any way;
- requires that both the Cost Estimate letter and the Written Agreement letter be attached to the item for Council's consideration; and
- requires that the motions be passed by an absolute majority.

The matter was originally to be considered at the Ordinary Council Meeting on 22 October 2026. Because the Written Agreement letter was not received in time for that agenda, it is presented to this Special Council Meeting on 29 October 2026, which is still within the statutory deadline of 6 November 2026.

The Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety was also advised of the vacancy on 7 October 2026.

STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT

Local Government Act 1995

Local Government (Elections) Regulations 1997

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Nil

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The WAEC's cost estimate for conducting the extraordinary election as a postal election is approximately $32,000 (ex GST). The estimate assumes one vacancy, 4,250 electors, a 40% response rate, a local Returning Officer, the Shire providing all other electoral officers, and the count at the Shire office using CountWA.

The WAEC has noted that costs may increase if, for example, Australia Post Priority Service is used to lodge election packages, casual staff are needed to issue replacement election packages or to assist the Returning Officer on election day or with the count, or suppliers increase their prices. The Commissioner has also noted that the situation in the Middle East may affect the estimate, and the WAEC will confirm the estimate closer to the election.

The WAEC operates on full cost recovery, so the Shire will be invoiced for the actual cost. The Shire will also incur its own costs for advertising, public notices and staff time.

The 2026/27 Annual Budget does not include provision for an extraordinary election. It is proposed that budget authorisation for this expenditure be sought through the 2026/27 Mid-Year Budget Review.

COUNCIL PLAN

10 Proactive, visionary leadership and effective governance.

11 A well-informed and engaged community.

Filling the vacancy returns Council to its full complement of nine members through a transparent, statutory process. The election gives electors the opportunity to choose their representative, and the Shire will promote enrolment and nominations so the community is well informed.

LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

The cost of the extraordinary election is a one-off expense with no ongoing impact. It does not affect provision for the October 2027 ordinary elections.

ASSET MANAGEMENT PLANS

Nil

WORKFORCE PLAN

With the WAEC conducting the election, the Shire's role is limited to preparing the owners and occupiers roll, publishing candidate information on the website, placing public notices and answering enquiries. The WAEC's cost estimate also assumes that the Shire will provide all electoral officers other than the Returning Officer, and that the count will be conducted at the Shire office on election night. These staff will need to be identified and rostered for Thursday 18 March 2027. Preparation of the roll will begin in early 2027 and will be planned around staff leave over the Christmas and New Year period.

An in-person election conducted by the Shire would have a significant workforce impact. The CEO would act as returning officer, and staff would be needed for polling places, postal vote applications and the count.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Rating	Treatment
Compliance: the election day is not fixed by 6 November 2026	High	Council fixes the day at this Special Council Meeting on 29 October 2026
Compliance: the WAEC motions are amended or not passed by absolute majority, so the Written Agreement cannot be finalised	High	Recommendations are reproduced exactly as drafted by the Electoral Commissioner; Council is advised they cannot be amended
Low participation in a stand-alone extraordinary election	Moderate	Postal election; community information campaign; date is the WAEC's preferred date
Shire staff are not available to act as electoral officers or assist with the count on 18 March 2027	Moderate	Identify and roster staff early in 2027 in consultation with the WAEC

No nominations are received, requiring a further election	Moderate	Promote the vacancy and nominations early; offer candidate information
Cost exceeds the estimate, for example through casual staffing, priority postage or supplier price increases	Moderate	Expenditure authorised up to a set limit with contingency; WAEC will confirm the estimate closer to the election and invoices actual cost
Community concern about the cost of an election so close to the 2027 ordinary elections	Moderate	Explain the statutory requirement and the Shire's request to defer

COMMENT

An extraordinary election is required because the vacancy cannot be filled under Schedule 4.1A, and the provisions that would allow it to be held over to the ordinary elections apply only to vacancies arising after 17 October 2026, 11 days later. The Shire asked the Electoral Commissioner to approve an election day of 16 October 2027. The Commissioner did not approve that date. He has approved Thursday 18 March 2027, the earliest date the WAEC can conduct the election, and has given his written agreement to conduct it as a postal election.

ITEM 12 ELECTED MEMBERS QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE

ITEM 13 MATTERS BEHIND CLOSED DOORS (CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS)

The Meeting will be closed by Council Resolution to the public under Part 5 Division 2 Section 5.23(2)(h) of the Local Government Act 1995 as the Items relates to : -

(h) Tendered price or tendered pricing methodology in a contract tender

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OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council close the meeting to the public at Type time here pm to consider the confidential reports listed below in accordance with Section 5.23(2) of the Local Government Act 1995:

13.1 Award of Tender RFT01-2627 Place Planning

13.2 CONFIDENTIAL

The above mentioned report/s were provided to Elected Members under separate cover. The report/s are not for publication.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That the meeting be open to members of the public at Type time here pm.

Public Reading of Resolution

Should there be any members of the public in attendance at the re-opened Meeting, the Shire President is to read aloud the decisions made by Council while the Meeting was closed to the public.

ITEM 14 CLOSURE

The Presiding Member to close the meeting.