



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF ELECTORS

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MINUTES

For the Annual General Meeting of Electors held in the Council Chambers on Thursday, 2 February 2023 commencing at 5.30pm.

Opening of Meeting

The Presiding Member opened the meeting at 5.30pm

Acknowledgment 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.

Attendance, Apologies and Leave of Absence

Presiding Member	- Cr S Mahoney*
Councillors	- J Boyle
	- E Browne
	- M Christensen
	- T Lansdell
	- S Mahoney
	- A Pratico
	- P Quinby
	- A Rose
Officers	- T Clynch, Chief Executive Officer
	- P St John, Director Development, Community & Infrastructure
	- M Larkworthy, Director Corporate Services
	- E Matthews, Executive Assistant
Apologies	- Cr J Mountford

<p>*In the absence of Cr Mountford, Cr Mahoney assumed the role of Presiding Member in accordance with s 5.30(2) of the <i>Local Government Act 1995</i>.</p>

Attendance of Electors

J. Moore, B. Moore, J. Nicholas, L. Roberts, D. Barrett, J. Barrett, B. Bebbington, T. Dittrich, N. Bellugue.

Confirmation of Minutes

Attachment 1 Minutes of the AGM of Electors held 24 February 2022

A Motion is required to confirm the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Electors held 24 February 2022.

Moved **Cr Quinby, Seconded Cr Rose**
That the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Electors held 24 February 2022 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

Carried

After the motion was carried it was pointed out by a member of the gallery that Cr Quinby in reading out the motion had inadvertently used the words “That Council confirm the minutes...” Rather than revoke the motion and commence a new motion the decision was made, on the basis that the error was of a minor scale, that the mover and seconder agreed to amend the wording and this change was accepted by a show of hands from those at the meeting that originally voted to accept this motion.

Annual Report & Annual Financial Report

Attachment 2 Annual Report and Annual Financial Report for the year ended
30 June 2022

A Motion is required to receive the Annual Report and Annual Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2022, as presented.

Moved **Cr Quinby, Seconded Cr Browne**
That the Annual Report & Annual Financial Statements for the 2021/22 year be received as presented.

Carried

General Business Regarding the Financial Statements – Nil

General Business

B. Moore

Question

At the 2022 AGM of Electors, I proposed a motion dealing with the parking in town and seeking a review of the situation. The motion was ratified at the March 2022 Council Meeting. I thank the Councillors for accepting this motion. It makes you wonder if there is any point in coming here to try and improve our town when you look at the progress on this motion over the past 11 months. The last progress report as shown in the rolling action sheet for January shows that in October 2022, the Shire Executive were determining whether the review should be handled internally or by an external consultant. It appears that no decision came from this executive determination. Can you explain why it has taken so long to achieve virtually nothing?

CEO Response – Mr Moore that motion was in three parts. One being a review of CBD parking, the second was about ranger services conducting parking patrols and thirdly investigating the provision of a disabled parking bay out the front of the Westpac building. The issue of parking checks being conducted will be addressed in the Workforce Plan which is currently being drafted. The disabled parking bay plans have been approved by Main Roads WA and we are now seeking quotes from a contractor. The review of the parking situation, I acknowledge that this has not occurred and the only reason I can provide is that there have been other

matters that have been prioritised. The issue of parking has been discussed by Councillors at concept forums and included discussion on how we can achieve more parking options in the CBD. There are a lot of different issues being addressed at the moment with this particular one not being progressed as quickly as we would like.

Question

Are you familiar with 'Shire Connect'?

Presiding Member Response – I am remotely familiar with Shire Connect.

Question

It is a newsletter contained on the Shire website that (according to the website) will be available every second week of the month, including key outcomes from the most recent council meeting. The last newsletter was published in December 2021 and does not indicate it is the last edition or where information can be obtained in the future. What has happened to this newsletter, as I thought it replaced the costly printed newsletter distributed by the Shire?

CEO Response – Although it wasn't a formal decision of Council, Council did request that the Communications Plan be reviewed and as part of that process a lot of the existing communications modes were put on hold. The Communications Plan is currently being prepared and is due to be presented to Council in the next month or so. The status of Shire Connect is a component of that. It probably wasn't communicated very well that the newsletter was to be put in abeyance whilst the Communications Plan was being reviewed which was an error on our part. The Communications Plan will address the most effective and appropriate formats of communication.

Question

Do you have any idea when the public might know?

CEO Response – I would expect the draft Communications Plan to be presented to Council no later than the March ordinary meeting.

B. Bebbington

Question

Following the February 2022 bushfire, Boyd Brown from Telstra announced that he would meet with the Bridgetown community in relation to the telecommunications issues during the fire and loss of mobile phone communications during the fire. In March of 2022 the Federal Government announced funding to upgrade the Bridgetown mobile tower for Telstra. Do you know if that upgrade has been completed and has there been any meeting arranged with Telstra as committed to by Boyd Brown?

CEO Response - I am not aware of the progress of the upgrade, I would assume it hasn't been done yet as Telstra would normally send us a notification letter when the works are complete. I can certainly check this. With regard to the community meetings, we have had 2 meetings with Mr Boyd Brown and others from Telstra since that resolution. There was one not long after last year's AGM with former Shire President Cr Bookless, and then there was a meeting in December with

current Shire President Cr Mountford. At both of those meetings we asked Mr Brown whether he would hold a community meeting and both times he declined the invitation on the basis that Telstra was going to provide information to the community via other channels.

J. Nicholas

Question

What is the current and estimated annual cost to ratepayers of Council's decision to manage the Visitor Centre (VC)?

Presiding Member Response – That question will be taken on notice.

Question

Is it true that in July of 2022, Council approved a restructure of parts of the Council including the VC and that total cost was appearing in your minutes as representing \$199,746. How much of this is being allocated to the VC?

Presiding Member Response – That question will be taken on notice.

Mr Nicholas commented on the need for ratepayers to understand the rate increase and how much of it is being allocated to the VC.

Question

In June 2022, Shire President Cr Mountford in a radio interview on ABC defended the Council's decision to continue managing the VC and made issues of the following; there appeared to be not enough space dedicated to visitor servicing (within the CRC plan), and Council wanted to see a vibrant, energetic and attractive style of visitor servicing. My recent visit to the VC indicated to me that those lofty ambitions are still a long way off being achieved. It is still a drab, unattractive building with the inside looking dark and dingy, with a significant amount of space being taken up by the Jigsaw Gallery. The signage is still non-existent. When are those lofty ambitions that Council had back in June likely to be achieved?

Presiding Member Response – Mr Nicholas I cannot possibly put a timeframe on the comments made by Cr Mountford in that radio interview and I cannot put a timeframe on what you describe as the lofty ambitions.

Question

How much of the estimated \$300,000 which was to be spent on bringing the building to a structurally sound status has actually been spent?

Presiding Member Response – as far as I know, none.

CEO Response - A very minimal amount, if any. Council is reviewing the scope of that work. In response to your first question about reviewing the operations of the VC and how that might be delivered, this will affect the fit out and appearance of the VC. Those discussions have been happening with Councillors, yet to be formally presented to Council for a decision. There have been discussions about the operations of the VC, hence we haven't progressed the building works at this stage.

Question

Does that mean Council is having second thoughts on managing the VC?

Presiding Member Response – No.

Question

Was it Council's aim during all of this time to just make sure the CRC couldn't manage the VC and allow for an expansion of the Jigsaw Gallery?

Presiding Member Response – I refute that comment. No, that was not Council's intention.

Question

Why is it that Council believe that the CRC plan had not enough space for visitor servicing, yet today there is less space for visitor servicing that was ever in the CRC plan.

Presiding Member Response - I don't have the plans of the space you are referring to in front of me and cannot comment.

CEO Response - The expansion of the Jigsaw Gallery into the old museum room has only been approved on a temporary basis whilst there is no other immediate use for that space. If Council want to expand the VC into that space we would have discussions with the Jigsaw Gallery about vacating that space. That is part of discussions now about requirements within the visitor servicing area.

B. Bebbington

Question

In relation to my previous question regarding the mobile phone tower upgrade in Bridgetown, on 5 January 2023 I received correspondence from the Minister of Communications' office confirming that the upgrade is to proceed by 30 June 2023. However, the Telstra website lists the upgrades and there is no mention of the Bridgetown upgrade plan. There is however an upgrade scheduled for the Winnejump tower. Perhaps it would be appropriate for the Shire to approach Telstra to find out whether Bridgetown is going to receive the 12 hour battery upgrade that has been funded by the Federal Government. Will the Shire contact Telstra to find out whether we are getting an upgrade to the Bridgetown mobile tower?

Presiding Member Response – Yes.

Question

At the recent Sunnyside Bush Fire Brigade AGM, information passed on by the Shire's Community Emergency Services Manager, was that people who hadn't completed specific courses were not to attend fires as they would not receive any insurance cover. I also understand that there was an injury at the 2022 Bridgetown fire for which there has been an issue as to whether the person is or isn't covered by the insurance policy. Is it correct that if you are a registered member of a bush fire brigade you are covered by insurance?

CEO Response – there is a lot of movement in this space at the moment which is all linked to the new WHS legislation. Volunteers are now classified the same as

an employee. Through our discussions with our insurer there has been a lot of discussion about the impact on volunteers, in particular bush fire volunteers and at this stage the position is that if you are a brigade member you are covered as you would have completed the necessary training. If you are a member of the public responding to a fire and are not a member of a bush fire brigade you are covered if you are under the direction of a brigade, fire control officer or captain under the structure. However if you are a member of the public who chose to fight a fire without being under direction, you are not covered by insurance. At this stage if you are a brigade member you are covered, if this was to change the Shire would do something about it. It would be totally unacceptable for bush fire brigade members to be uninsured. If you are a bush fire brigade member you are covered. There may be requirements to review training of members moving forward.

Question

You mention the expectation that if you were a bush fire brigade member you would have done some training, that is actually not a requirement. For example, both my wife and I joined our local brigade in 2000 and she has not received any training. She is still a member of the brigade. If I am in town and I phone my wife and ask her to bring my gear to a fire site, will she be covered by insurance?

CEO Response – There is the issue of what an active member who fights fires is and what a support member is. I would say that most active members have done some form of training over the years. I think you will find that the Bush Fire Advisory Committee will be recommending to Council shortly that there be a requirement for active members to undergo training, including a classification of the types of members. If a member is expected to respond to fires then there will be a requirement for training. It is fairly basic training, but someone who is a support member and it is clear that they don't fight fires, then there wouldn't be a requirement for them to do the firefighting training as they wouldn't need those skills. This is an issue currently being addressed by the committee and will come to Council in due course with all brigades being briefed following this.

Question

The last two days have been total fire bans in the Shire, I don't know if there have been harvest bans as well. One of the things it says quite clearly on the Shire's website is that during office hours any total fire bans and harvest bans will be put on the Shire's Facebook page. Why has there been no mention of the last two fire bans and any harvest bans (if there has been one).

Presiding Member Response – that question will be taken on notice.

Question

The Shire's website still says that you can click on a link to access the downloadable version of the 2021/22 mitigation works program, should this say 2022/23 program?

Presiding Member Response – that question will be taken on notice.

Question

Also on bush fire mitigation, there are 19 sites on the current program and only one has been completed. There are 11 mechanical functions, why have we not achieved any of these functions. When is it proposed that we will start doing that?

CEO Response - You wouldn't normally be performing mechanical works in weather like we have been experiencing. We do schedule those works for autumn when the weather is more favourable. I am aware that we have engaged a contractor to do the mechanical works, however you certainly wouldn't be sending anyone out in vegetated areas in high temperatures. We aim to achieve the mitigation works by the end of June every year. Although one might only be completed, that doesn't mean we haven't started work on the others. There may be components that have been completed and are waiting on milder weather conditions to finalise the treatment. If weather doesn't play its part and we have a late summer extending into autumn, there are times that you can't get the works done and we would negotiate with the funding agency to carry the works forward. The intent is that we do mitigation all year round but in summer it is influenced by the weather conditions.

Question

At the last Council meeting I attended in November, I raised the issue of not having received a response to correspondence I sent to the Shire in April. The reply from the CEO noted that it was expected that I would receive a response within two weeks. Is there any reason why the Shire or Council considers it is appropriate that members of the public should have to wait 10 months for a response?

Presiding Member Response – I would imagine that Shire administration employee numbers would impact on the ability to answer correspondence and whilst 10 months would seem to be far too long, there may be mitigating circumstances.

CEO Response – I do know that there were various communications back and forth and it appears that Mr Bebbington is seeking a final response to the questions he submitted 10 months ago. There have been communications during that time. I am happy to look into this and provide a response to Mr Bebbington.

J. Nicholas

Question

The Shire carpark has been remarked with the bays contained within the parking plan. Is there any intention as part of that plan to make it better known that Civic Lane is actually a roadway and marked accordingly? It is very dangerous to try and get into that laneway in the morning where you find people leaving the carpark on the wrong side of the road and equally at night it is difficult to leave, with people turning in to the roadway on the wrong side of the road.

CEO Response – Yes it has been looked at a number of times with various ideas put forward. Historically there was a yellow line across the edge which proved ineffective and the decision was made not to renew. A speed bump was looked into, however approval for Main Roads WA would be required so that hasn't progressed. There was discussion about hatch marking, however you wouldn't normally hatch mark a road. We are still looking at what options are available. The problem is that people back out and don't have visual clearance and back into traffic along Civic Lane. We have had discussions with Arc Infrastructure about vehicles parking along the railway and trying to stop them and their response was to build a fence to deter parking. We are still looking at options.

Question

My concern is more about the entry and egress off Steere Street, whether some marking could be made to indicate that it is a roadway with lines both sides and a line in the middle so people stay on the correct side of the road. Could we relook at the entrance and egress issues?

CEO Response – We have looked at this, the biggest issue being the width of the entrance. You can fit two vehicles however it is a tight fit. What you normally get is the vehicle turning into Civic Lane waiting for the vehicle to exit before turning in. We have considered a one way entry and exit but you can't really have a two way road ending at a single way intersection. There is a Telstra pit right next to the lane's entrance which means that we can't really widen the entrance. This is something that we will continue to look at as it is a very tight squeeze.

B. Bebbington

Question

Following on from that matter, at last year's AGM a motion was moved regarding the potential to readvertise the Shire's changes to Steere Street, Civic Lane and Stewart Street which Council subsequently resolved not to readvertise. The Shire has already put to Council the changes to Civic Lane which include extending an island out of Civic Lane to improve visibility when exiting. If this has already been approved by Council why is it still being considered? Can we get clarification that the modifications to Civic Lane are consistent with what was agreed upon by Council?

CEO Response – The project is in the budget and has commenced with the line marking of the carpark. The rest of the project is intended to be finished in this financial year. Historically, we prioritise our works program to complete the grant funded works first so the funding can be acquitted, meaning the rest of the works will commence towards the end of the construction season around April.

Question

The previous question from Mr Nicholas related to the ingress and egress at Civic Lane where you said that Council are still working it out. But the plan has already been put to Council and approved. The Shire has already gone through the process of assessing the best options for ingress and egress and it has been endorsed by Council. Do we or do we not have an answer for the ingress and egress concerns of Civic Lane or should it be redirected back to Council?

CEO Response – It is my understanding that the plans approved by Council did not widen the area where the footpath connects to the carpark. It is still a very narrow entrance which is an issue. The plan that was approved by Council is an improvement and does not necessarily address the issue of two vehicles entering and exiting simultaneously. Two vehicles can fit but what tends to happen is that drivers are reluctant and choose to wait until the intersection is clear.

D. Barrett

Question

I've been following the modification of the railway station and I'm looking forward to it being open. Can you give any indication of what purpose the building might be used for? I've heard rumours of several different uses and I'd like to know if there are any

plans at all. I would like to see a constructive community building that we can all enjoy.

CEO Response – Council initially looked at using the space as a gallery, however advice from the local artistic community was that another gallery wasn't really needed. We then called for expressions of interest (EOIs) from the community to see if there were any commercial operators interested in activating the space. Unfortunately we didn't get any interest as it is not really designed for a commercial undertaking as the size of the building and the heritage constraints limit the options. Following no EOIs being received, Council resolved to consider what other uses could go there which is currently underway. The completion date for the railway is currently the end of March so Council need to have an idea of what is going to go in there by then. We hope to have more information within the next month.

Mr Barrett noted that he would like to see a community based space and not another commercial enterprise.

Closure

The Presiding Member closed the meeting at 6.26pm.

List of Attachments

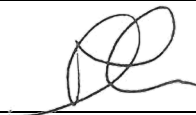
Attachment	Details
1	Minutes of the AGM of Electors held 24 February 2022
2	Annual Report & Annual Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2022

Minute Papers prepared and recommended by E Matthews, Executive Assistant



17 February 2023

Minute Papers authorised by T Clynch, CEO



17 February 2023

CERTIFICATION OF MINUTES

As Presiding Member, I certify that the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Electors held 2 February 2023 were confirmed as a true and correct record of the proceedings of that meeting at the Annual Meeting of Electors held on 20.....

.....(Date).....