

WEROC Inc. Board Meeting MINUTES

Wednesday 13 August 2025

Kellerberrin Recreation & Leisure Centre



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WEROC Inc.

Wheatbelt East Regional Organisation of Councils Inc.

Shires of Bruce Rock, Cunderdin, Kellerberrin, Merredin, Tammin, Westonia, Yilgarn

MINUTES

Minutes of the Board Meeting held in Kellerberrin on Wednesday 13 August 2025.

1. OPENING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Lisa O'Neill as Chair of WEROC Inc. welcomed Members of the Board and opened the meeting at 9.35am.

2. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

2.1 Attendance

Mr. Mark Crees

Mr. Wayne Della Bosca

Mr. Mark Furr

Mr. Raymond Griffiths

Ms. Alison Harris

Mr. Stuart Hobley

Mr. Andrew Malone

Ms. Lisa O'Neill (Chair)

Mr. Bill Price

Ms. Emily Ryan

Mr. Nic Warren

Mr. Craig Watts

Ms. Rebekah Burges, Executive Officer

2.2 Apologies

Ms. Charmaine Thomson (Deputy Chair)

Mr. Ramesh Rajagopalan

2.3 Guests

Ms. Janine Eriksson, Principal Planner, JE Planning (joined via videoconference at 9.35am and left at 10.15am)

Mr. Grant Arthur, Director Regional Development, Wheatbelt Development Commission (joined via videoconference at 9.35am and left at 10.15am)

Mr. Max Simmons, UWA Graduate Student assisting the Wheatbelt Development Commission (joined via videoconference at 9.35am and left at 10.15am)

Mr. Jordan Reid, Regional Services Manager, LGISWA (joined the meeting at 10.20am and left at 11.07am)

Mr. James Sheridan, Chief Executive Officer, LGISWA (joined the meeting at 10.20am and left at 11.07am)

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Nil

4. PRESENTATIONS

4.1 Janine Eriksson, Principal Planner, JE Planning, 9.45am

Ms. Janine Eriksson will join the meeting via videoconference to provide an overview of the WEROC Workforce Housing Investigation Report.

Comments from the meeting:

- Ms. Eriksson was joined by Mr. Grant Arthur and Mr. Max Simmons from the Wheatbelt Development Commission.
- Ms. Eriksson provided a summary of the key findings of the WEROC Workforce Housing Investigation. It was noted that:
 - Approximately 54% of businesses in the area reported a gap in their workforce.
 - It is estimated that the WEROC subregion needs an additional 333 workers to meet current needs.
 - The estimated demand for housing the workforce ranges between 234 and 370 dwellings by 2031. That equates to between 33 and 53 additional worker accommodation units per annum.
 - Sufficient zoned residential land exists to meet housing needs; however, a lack of servicing on some lots means developable land could be a limiting factor.
- Mr. Arthur indicated that the Wheatbelt Development Commission are close to identifying the sites for feasibility testing. They will come back to the Local Governments with their recommendations before proceeding.
- Mr. Stuart Hobley commented that delays from Western Power are a significant barrier to development and questioned whether this had been factored into site suitability assessments. Mr. Arthur responded to say that the issues with Western Power are well known but are a separate matter. It was suggested that any grant funding applications resulting from this work, should include allowances for Western Power delays in project delivery timelines.

Ms. Eriksson, Mr. Arthur and Mr. Simmons left the meeting at 10.15am and did not return.

4.2 LGIS WA, 10.30am

Mr. Jordan Reid, Regional Services Manager at LGISWA, and Mr. James Sheridan, Chief Executive Officer of LGISWA, will attend the meeting to provide Councils with an opportunity to raise any thoughts or concerns regarding the Scheme.

Comments from the meeting:

- Mr. Sheridan opened by noting that regional feedback indicates LGISWA is not meeting service expectations and expressed a willingness to engage in open dialogue with Local Governments on areas for improvement.
- Mr. Nic Warren provided an example of a recent workers compensation claim that was deferred because a decision could not be made in 14 days and questioned whether LGISWA are resourced well enough to ensure that the right people are available to make decisions in the 14 day period.
- Mr. Sheridan responded by clarifying that under the Workers Compensation and Injury Management Bill 2023, insurers must respond to a workers' compensation claim within 14 days by issuing either a liability decision notice or a deferred decision notice. Decisions are made based on two primary documents – a claim form and medical certificate. Sometimes they need to defer a decision because they require more information. He therefore emphasized the importance of sending through as much information as

possible in the early stages to help expedite the claim. It was also noted that sometimes there are delays getting information through to them and the 14-day period starts when the Local Government receives the claim not when LGIS does, so it is important that there are not any delays in sending the information through. Having clarified these points, Mr. Sheridan did acknowledge that LGISWA had significant staff turnover last year and there was a decline in service provision while they were onboarding new staff and restructuring the organisation.

- Mr. Warren noted that some claims are questionable and asked whether employers have any avenues to require employees to substantiate the legitimacy of their claims. Mr. Sheridan responded to say that in Western Australia, the workers compensation scheme is based on a 'no-fault' principle which means that the employee does not have to prove that their employer was at fault to make a claim. Under this scheme, if there is any possible link back to the workforce the claim has to be accepted. Mr. Sheridan noted that it is a very generous compensation scheme, and employers nationally are struggling with it.
- Several WEROC members voiced frustration over the lack of communication throughout the claims process and the long times to process claims. It was suggested that LGISWA should focus on setting clear expectations about the process upfront, ensuring regular communication throughout and increasing response times. Mr. Sheridan responded to say that their work care team will be coming out to the region to explain the claims process to Local Government staff. A date for these information sessions has not yet been set. Mr. Reid added that if it was of interest to the group, LGISWA could have someone come out to a WEROC meeting to run through a technical explanation of the process,
- An additional concern was raised over delays in processing invoices. One example cited involved a legitimate workers' compensation claimant being told they needed to cover their own medical expenses because previous bills had not been paid. Mr. Sheridan acknowledged that there were delays in processing invoices between October and February and then a significant backlog to work through. Mr. Sheridan also noted that some invoices were being sent to the Local Government directly and were then not being forwarded on to LGISWA which meant that they were not being paid. Members were encouraged to inform LGISWA immediately if they become aware of issues like this arising.

Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Reid left the meeting at 11.07am and did not return.

5. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

5.1 Minutes of the WEROC Inc. Board Meeting held on Wednesday 7 May 2025

Minutes of the WEROC Inc. Board Meeting held in Westonia on Wednesday 7 May 2025 have previously been circulated.

Recommendation:

That the Minutes of the WEROC Inc. Meeting held in Westonia on Wednesday 7 May 2025 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Mr. Mark Furr

Seconded: Mr. Wayne Della Bosca

That the Minutes of the WEROC Inc. Meeting held in Westonia on Wednesday 7 May 2025 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

CARRIED

5.2 Decisions made by WEROC Board via Flying Email

Board members received an email from the Executive Officer on Thursday 5 June 2025 requesting approval for out of budget expenses associated with adding the Shire of Cunderdin to the WEROC website and the Eastern Wheatbelt self-drive trail.

It was advised that the website update had been quoted at \$195 + GST, and the map update at \$1,950 + GST. As these costs were not accounted for in the 2024-25 budget and the limits of budget allocations for consultancy services and website expenses have been reached, approval from the Board was required.

The recommendation contained in the email was as follows:

Recommendation: That the unbudgeted expenses outlined above be approved.

Members were asked to reply to the email indicating their support of or objection to the recommendation.

Responses endorsing the recommendation were received from the following members:

- Emily Ryan
- Andrew Malone indicated support from the Shire of Tammin
- Bill Price indicated support from the Shire of Westonia
- Mark Furr indicated support from the Shire of Bruce Rock
- Lisa O'Neill
- Craig Watts
- Ram Rajagopalan as a member indicated he would be happy to move that the unbudgeted expenses as outlined be approved.

As this constituted a majority of members eligible to vote, the recommendation was taken as accepted.

On Wednesday 23 July 2025, Board Members received an email from the Executive Officer requesting support for the existing Term Deposit amount of \$100,000 to be reinvested upon maturity on 8 August 2025. The Executive Officer advised that rates as of that date were as follows:

12 months: 3.55%

11 months (special fixed rate): 3.90%

6 months: 2.90%

Recommendation: That the \$100,000 be reinvested at the special fixed rate of 3.90% for 11 months.

Responses endorsing the recommendation were received from the following members:

- Ms. Lisa O'Neill
- Ms. Emily Ryan
- Mr. Andrew Malone
- Mr. Raymond Griffiths
- Mr. Ram Rajagopalan
- Mr. Bill Price
- Mr. Stuart Hobley
- Mr. Nic Warren
- Mr. Craig Watts

As this constituted a majority of members the recommendation was taken as accepted.

For recording purposes, the decisions made via email are presented for endorsement.

Recommendation:

That the decisions made by the WEROC Inc. Board via “flying email” be endorsed.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Mr. Mark Furr

Seconded: Mr. Craig Watts

That the decisions made by the WEROC Inc. Board via “flying email” be endorsed.

CARRIED

5.3 Business Arising – Status Reports

5.3.1 Actions Arising from the WEROC Inc. Board Meeting held on 7 May 2025

Agenda Item	Action(s)	Status
7.2 Water Audit	Proceed with an application to the Community Water Supply Partnership Program	An application was submitted on 16 May 2025. The outcome is still pending. Please refer to Agenda item 8.3 for further information.
7.3 Proposal for Eastern Wheatbelt Projects Update	WEROC Executive Officer to work with RoeROC and NEWROC Executive Officers to prepare a proposal.	A draft agenda has been prepared and is presented for consideration. Please refer to Agenda item 7.4 for further information.
7.4 Governance Service Proposal	1) Request a revised proposal for a one off audit rather than a 12 month program 2) Query if the discount price applies to a smaller number of local governments.	A revised proposal was requested, and the discounted price was queried. The response from Civic Legal was forwarded to WEROC CEOs for consideration. It was decided that individual Councils may proceed in engaging Civic Legal independent of WEROC.
8.1 Marketing & Promotion	Source a quote to add the Shire of Cunderdin to the Eastern Wheatbelt self-drive trail map.	A quote was sourced and an email sent to Board members to endorse the expense. The map has now been updated. Please refer to Agenda item 8.1 for further detail.
8.2 Housing	Contact the Wheatbelt Development commission to confirm the cost of having additional housing feasibility models developed and if within the expected price point of \$6,000, request that they be completed.	The Wheatbelt Development Commission advised that the cost per site for feasibility testing is \$3,000. The total cost to have all six sites tested, would therefore be \$18,000. Please refer to Agenda item 8.2 for further detail.
9.2 Meeting with the Member for the Central Wheatbelt	Contact the office of the Member for the Central Wheatbelt and request an alternative venue, date and time for a meeting with WEROC Councils.	A meeting with Mr. Lachlan Hunter took place in Kellerberrin at the conclusion of the Zone meeting on Friday 13 June 2025. Please refer to Agenda item 7.2 for further information.
10.1 Shared services	Conduct an outsourced services audit.	Please refer to Agenda item 7.3 for further information.

Recommendation:

That the status reports be received.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Mr. Andrew Malone

Seconded: Mr. Nic Warren

That the status reports be received.

CARRIED

6. WEROC INC. FINANCE

6.1 WEROC Inc. Financial Report as of 30 June 2025

Author: Rebekah Burges, Executive Officer

Disclosure of Interest: No interest to disclose.

Date: 30 June 2025

Attachments: Nil

Voting Requirement: Simple Majority

At the WEROC Inc. Board Meeting held on 9 May 2024 the budget for the financial year commencing 1 July 2024 and ending 30 June 2025 was adopted. The approved Budget 2024-25 is used as the basis for the financial report.

An explanation for each of the notations on the financial report is provided below.

Note 1	Annual Financial contributions paid by Member Local Governments.
Note 2	Interest paid on term deposit
Note 3	GST received
Note 4	GST refund for Q4 BAS 2023-24
Note 5	Executive Officer services
Note 6	Executive Officer travel to Board and CEO meetings. This is higher than budgeted due to additional CEO meetings.
Note 7	Monthly subscription fee for Xero accounting software
Note 8	Payment to Audit Partners Australia for the 2023-24 financial year audit
Note 9	Payments to Vanessa King for Town Team Builder services, HR Cornerstone for IR/HR consultancy services, Carol Taylor for social media marketing campaign, Lauren Clarke for the branding guide and logo refresh, JE Planning and Econosis for the WEROC housing investigation, Australia's Golden Outback for cooperative marketing activities, Shire of Merredin for an advertisement in the Eastern Wheatbelt Visitors Guide and the two WEROC interns' meal allowance.
Note 10	Payments to PWD for website domain name renewal, website security upgrade and audit, and 12-months website hosting. This is higher than budgeted because only the website hosting was accounted for. The domain name renewal and website upgrade were unknown expenses.
Note 11	Catering expenses for WEROC CEO farewell in Kellerberrin on 9 May and ERP demonstrations in Kellerberrin on 6 August

Note 12	Personal accident, workers compensation, associations liability, public & products liability and cyber insurance renewals
Note 13	GST paid

WEROC Inc.
ABN 28 416 957 824
1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025

		Budget 2024/2025	Actual to 30/06/2025	Notes
	INCOME			
0501	General Subscriptions	\$72,000.00	\$102,000.00	1
504.01	Consultancy & Project Reserve	\$0.00	\$40,872.70	
0575	Interest received	\$4,863.29	\$4,863.29	2
584	Other Income	\$0.00		
	GST Output Tax	\$7,200.00	\$14,287.30	3
	GST Refunds	\$6,184.00	\$7,793.00	4
	Total Receipts	\$90,247.29	\$169,816.29	
	EXPENSES			
1545	Bank Fees & Charges	\$0.00	\$0.00	
1661.01	WEROC Inc. Executive Services	\$35,383.84	\$34,999.99	5
1661.02	Executive Officer Travel and Accommodation	\$1,400.00	\$2,706.40	6
1661.03	WEROC Executive Officer Recruitment	\$0.00	\$0.00	
1687	WEROC Financial Services Accounting	\$1,000.00	\$818.16	7
1687.03	WEROC Financial Services Audit	\$1,050.00	\$984.00	8
1585	WEROC Consultant Expenses	\$60,000.00	\$75,774.88	9
1850	WEROC Management of WEROC App & Website	\$420.00	\$1,149.00	10
1801	WEROC Meeting Expenses	\$500.00	\$829.09	11
1851	WEROC Insurance	\$6,300.00	\$6,020.79	12
1852	WEROC Legal Expenses	\$2,000.00		
1853	WEROC Incorporation Expenses	\$0.00	\$36.36	
1854	Transfer to Term Deposit	\$4,863.29	\$0.00	
1930	WEROC Sundry	\$300.00		
3384	GST Input Tax	\$10,835.39	\$11,351.23	13
	ATO Payments	\$3,464.57	\$4,960.00	
	Total Payments	\$127,517.09	\$139,629.90	
	Net Position	-\$37,269.79	\$30,186.39	
	OPENING CASH 1 July	\$64,270.72	\$69,784.64	
	CASH BALANCE	\$27,000.93	\$99,971.03	

Recommendation:

That the WEROC Inc. financial report for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025, be received.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Mr. Wayne Della Bosca

Seconded: Ms. Emily Ryan

That the WEROC Inc. financial report for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025, be received.

CARRIED

6.2 WEROC Inc. Financial Report as of 31 July 2025

Author: Rebekah Burges, Executive Officer

Disclosure of Interest: No interest to disclose.

Date: 31 July 2025

Attachments: Nil

Voting Requirement: Simple Majority

At the WEROC Inc. Board Meeting held on 7 May 2025 the budget for the financial year commencing 1 July 2025 and ending 30 June 2026 was adopted. The approved Budget for 2025-26 is used as the basis for the financial report.

An explanation for each of the notations on the financial report is provided below.

Note 1	Annual contributions paid by the Shire of Tammin and Shire of Yilgarn
Note 2	GST received
Note 3	Executive Officer services
Note 4	Executive Officer travel to meetings.
Note 5	Monthly subscription fee for Xero accounting software
Note 6	GST paid

WEROC Inc.

ABN 28 416 957 824

1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026

		Budget 2025/2026	Actual to 31/07/2025	Notes
	INCOME			
0501	General Subscriptions	\$84,000.00	\$24,000	1
504.01	Consultancy & Project Reserve	\$0.00	\$0	
0575	Interest received	\$4,392.33	\$0	
584	Other Income	\$0.00	\$0	
	GST Output Tax	\$8,400.00	\$2,400	2
	GST Refunds	\$6,399.00	\$0	
	Total Receipts	\$103,191.33	\$26,400	
	EXPENSES			
1545	Bank Fees & Charges	\$0.00	\$0.00	
1661.01	WEROC Inc. Executive Services	\$38,920.00	\$2,577.27	3

1661.02	Executive Officer Travel and Accommodation	\$3,080.00	\$136.00	4
1661.03	WEROC Executive Officer Recruitment	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	
1687	WEROC Financial Services Accounting	\$1,080.00	\$68.18	5
1687.03	WEROC Financial Services Audit	\$1,100.00	\$0.00	
1585	WEROC Consultant Expenses	\$70,000.00	\$0.00	
1850	WEROC Management of WEROC App & Website	\$900.00	\$0.00	
1801	WEROC Meeting Expenses	\$500.00	\$0.00	
1851	WEROC Insurance	\$6,300.00	\$0.00	
1852	WEROC Legal Expenses	\$2,000.00	\$0.00	
1853	WEROC Incorporation Expenses	\$0.00	\$0.00	
1854	Transfer to Term Deposit	\$0.00	\$0.00	
1930	WEROC Sundry	\$300.00	\$0.00	
3384	GST Input Tax	\$12,518.00	\$264.55	6
	ATO Payments	\$9,088.71	\$0.00	
Total Payments		\$146,786.71	\$3,046.00	
Net Position		-\$43,595.38	\$23,354.00	
OPENING CASH 1 July		\$94,312.12	\$99,971.03	
CASH BALANCE		\$50,716.74	\$123,325.03	

Recommendation:

That the WEROC Inc. financial report for the period 1 to 31 July 2025, be received.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Mr. Stuart Hobley

Seconded: Mr. Andrew Malone

That the WEROC Inc. financial report for the period 1 to 31 July 2025, be received.

CARRIED

6.3 Income, Expenditure & Balance Sheet

Author: Rebekah Burges, Executive Officer

Disclosure of Interest: No interest to disclose.

Date: 31 July 2025

Attachments: Nil

Voting Requirement: Simple Majority

A summary of income and expenditure for the period 1 May to 31 July 2025 is provided below.

Date	Description	Credit	Debit	Running Balance
Opening Balance		46,229.88		
02 May 2025	Shire of Yilgarn	5,660.00	0.00	51,889.88
08 May 2025	150 Square Pty Ltd	0.00	3,145.90	48,743.98
08 May 2025	Shire of Merredin	5,660.00	0.00	54,403.98
13 May 2025	Code Research	0.00	120.45	54,283.53

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20 May 2025	ATO	2,650.00	0.00	56,933.53
23 May 2025	Shire of Cunderdin	5,660.00	0.00	62,593.53
29 May 2025	Shire of Kellerberrin	5,660.00	0.00	68,253.53
30 May 2025	Shire of Bruce Rock	5,660.00	0.00	73,913.53
30 May 2025	Shire of Tammin	5,660.00	0.00	79,573.53
05 Jun 2025	JE Planning	0.00	1,000.00	78,573.53
05 Jun 2025	JE Planning	0.00	10,000.00	68,573.53
10 Jun 2025	PWD Australia	214.50	0.00	68,788.03
10 Jun 2025	150 Square Pty Ltd	0.00	3,588.00	65,200.03
10 Jun 2025	PWD Australia	0.00	214.50	64,985.53
16 Jun 2025	PWD Australia	0.00	214.50	64,771.03
19 Jun 2025	Wheatbelt Development Commission	11,000.00	0.00	75,771.03
20 Jun 2025	Shire of Cunderdin	33,000.00	0.00	108,771.03
24 Jun 2025	JE Planning	0.00	8,800.00	99,971.03
14 Jul 2025	150 Square Pty Ltd	0.00	3,046.00	96,925.03
25 Jul 2025	Shire of Tammin	13,200.00	0.00	110,125.03
25 Jul 2025	Shire of Yilgarn	13,200.00	0.00	123,325.03
TOTAL		107,224.50	30,129.35	
Closing balance		123,325.03		

Balance Sheet

Wheatbelt East Regional Organisation of Councils Inc
As at 31 July 2025

31 July 2025

Assets	
Bank	
Term Deposit	100,000.00
Westpac Community Solution One	123,325.03
Total Bank	223,325.03
Current Assets	
Accounts Receivable	66,000.00
Total Current Assets	66,000.00
Total Assets	289,325.03
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
GST	8,846.44
Total Current Liabilities	8,846.44
Non-current Liabilities	
GST Clearing	2,894.00
Total Non-current Liabilities	2,894.00
Total Liabilities	11,740.44
Net Assets	277,584.59
Equity	
Current Year Earnings	81,218.55
Retained Earnings	196,366.04
Total Equity	277,584.59

Recommendation:

That the WEROC Inc. summary of income and expenditure for the period 1 May to 31 July 2025 be received.

That the Accounts Paid by WEROC Inc. for the period 1 May to 31 July 2025 totalling \$30,129.35 be approved.

That the Balance Sheet as of 31 July 2025 be noted.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Ms. Emily Ryan

Seconded: Mr. Craig Watts

That the WEROC Inc. summary of income and expenditure for the period 1 May to 31 July 2025 be received.

That the Accounts Paid by WEROC Inc. for the period 1 May to 31 July 2025 totalling \$30,129.35 be approved.

That the Balance Sheet as of 31 July 2025 be noted.

CARRIED

7. MATTERS FOR DECISION

7.1 Public Health Planning

Author: Rebekah Burges, Executive Officer

Disclosure of Interest: No interest to disclose.

Attachments: ***Attachment 1:*** State Public Health Plan

Consultation: Nil

Financial Implications: Nil

Voting Requirement: Simple Majority

Background:

At the WEROC Inc. Board meeting held on 27 August 2020 it was resolved that WEROC Inc. would progress with the development of an overarching Health Plan that can be used as a proforma for the Member Councils to develop individual Public Health Plans, once Stage 5 of the Public Health Act commenced.

Stage 5 of the Act has progressed, the State Public Health Plan has now been completed, and Local Governments need to develop or amend current local public health plans consistent with the state plan by 4 June 2026.

Executive Officer Comment:

This matter has been discussed several times since the initial proposal was put forward back in 2020. Now that the State plan has been completed and there is a firm timeframe for Local Governments to develop or amend their plans, the Executive Officer would like direction from the Board on whether to proceed in seeking quotes from consultants to assist with this work as a collective or, given that some Councils have already completed or commenced development of their Plans, should the original motion be rescinded to allow each Council to proceed independently.

Recommendation:

That the Board either:

1. Endorses the Executive Officer to seek quotes from suitably qualified consultants to undertake the development or review of Local Government Plans as a collective project, for those member Councils that wish to participate;
OR
2. Rescinds the original motion, allowing individual Councils to proceed independently with the development or review of their Plans.

Comments from the meeting:

- Mr. Craig Watts advised that the Shire of Merredin have already engaged a consultant to assist them with their Public Health Plan.
- Mr. Mark Furr advised that Bruce Rock have completed a Public Health Plan and are undertaking a review to comply with the State Health Plan.
- Mr. Stuart Hobley noted that numerous examples of Public Health Plans are available online for use as proformas and advised that some Local Governments are combining Public Health Plan engagement with community engagement for their Strategic Community Plan reviews.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Mr. Craig Watts

Seconded: Mr. Stuart Hobley

That the WEROC Inc. Board rescind the motion to engage a consultant to develop a proforma Public Health Plan, enabling individual Councils to independently develop or review their own Plans.

CARRIED

7.2 Meeting with Lachlan Hunter MLA

Author: Rebekah Burges, Executive Officer

Disclosure of Interest: No interest to disclose.

Attachments: **Attachment 2:** Letter from Minister Punch

Attachment 3: Copy of correspondence from Lachlan Hunter to Hon Reece Whitby MLA

Attachment 4: Policy – Recognise and Protect Prime Agricultural Land

Consultation: Nil

Financial Implications: Nil

Voting Requirement: Simple Majority

Background:

A meeting with the Member for the Central Wheatbelt, Lachlan Hunter MLA, took place in Kellerberrin on Friday 13 June 2025. This meeting provided WEROC members with the opportunity to hear from Mr. Hunter on a range of pre-advised topics and the opportunity to raise additional concerns for his consideration.

Actions/recommendations arising from this meeting included:

- Lachlan Hunter to provide a copy of the letter received from the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs seeking clarity on the correct traditional owner group for eastern Wheatbelt local governments to engage with on cultural matters.
- Recommendation that WEROC meet with the CEO of the Ballardong Aboriginal Corporation.
- Recommendation that WEROC meet with the live sheep export transition advocate, Dr Chris Rodwell.
- Lachlan Hunter to provide a copy of the Nationals policy position on the protection of prime agricultural land.
- WEROC Executive Officer to forward the letter sent to the former Minister for Police regarding funding for CCTV and other security technologies.

Executive Officer Comment:

The Office of the Member for the Central Wheatbelt has provided a communique from Minister Punch regarding cultural matters. The communique confirms that the Ballardong Aboriginal Corporation holds

responsibility for facilitating the involvement of Traditional Owners with cultural connections to areas within the Ballardong region.

As outlined previously, at the meeting held on 13 June, it was recommended that member Councils engage directly with the CEO of the Ballardong Aboriginal Corporation. The Executive Officer understands that some Councils have already individually met with the Ballardong Aboriginal Corporation. The Board may wish to consider whether there is value in also arranging a collective meeting involving all member Councils.

Additionally, Mr. Hunter has recommended that WEROC meet with the Live Sheep Export Transition Advocate, Dr Chris Rodwell. Dr Rodwell's role is to support stakeholders during the transition period, facilitate communication between the sheep supply chain and government, and provide information regarding the transition plan and the support available to industry. A meeting with Dr Rodwell may assist member Councils in better understanding the assistance and funding that could be available to communities and industry within the eastern Wheatbelt.

Recommendation:

That the Board:

1. Confirm its interest in arranging a meeting with the CEO of the Ballardong Aboriginal Corporation, and provide direction on the desired format and key topics for discussion; and
2. Confirm its interest in the Executive Officer facilitating a meeting with Dr Chris Rodwell, the Live Sheep Export Transition Advocate, to explore opportunities for assistance and support relevant to the region.

Comments from the meeting:

- In relation to the request for funding for Local Governments to install CCTV and other security technologies, the Executive Officer advised that the Member for the Central Wheatbelt had received a response to his letter to the Minister for Police, the Hon Reece Whitby MLA, advising that this is a Local Government issue, not a police issue. The correspondence was then forwarded to the Minister for Local Government, the Hon Hannah Beazley MLA for comment. No response has been received from Minister Beazley.
- It was commented by multiple Shires that they are receiving letters from their local police asking them to install security technology, which comes at a significant cost. This matter will continue to be followed up.
- The value in a meeting with the CEO of the Ballardong Aboriginal Corporation was discussed. It was agreed that an individual approach would be better than a group meeting.
- The Board discussed meeting with the Live Sheep Export Transition Officer and agreed it would be valuable to hear from Dr. Rodwell. An invitation will be extended for him to attend the next WEROC meeting.

7.3 Outsourced Services Audit

Author: Rebekah Burges, Executive Officer

Disclosure of Interest: No interest to disclose.

Attachments: Nil

Consultation: WEROC CEOs

Financial Implications: Nil

Voting Requirement: Simple Majority

Background:

At the WEROC Inc. Board held on 7 May 2025, it was noted that the option of formalising shared resources across the WEROC Shires has been discussed several times over recent years. At present the only shared

resource arrangement is the visitor servicing provided by the Shire of Merredin through the Central Wheatbelt Visitors Centre. There is also in place, an agreement with HR Cornerstone to provide ad-hoc HR and IR support at a rate of \$225 + GST per hour.

Following the discussion, it was suggested that a cost analysis be undertaken to better understand what Shires are currently paying for outsourced services, with a view to exploring potential cost savings through shared resource arrangements.

Executive Officer Comment:

A high level summary of the outsourced services audit is provided below:

	Environmental Health Kellerberrin, Tammin, Westonia Service Providers: HBP Services, Tim Jurmann (Crowe Certification), Mort Wignall	Cost (per annum): \$10,000 - \$20,000 Mode of service delivery: Varied - as required, monthly service, quarterly service Issues: Availability/ turnaround times
	Building Services Kellerberrin, Tammin, Westonia, Yilgarn, Merredin Service Providers: Hayley Fegan, Tom Rielly, CF Building Approvals, Tim Jurmann	Cost (per annum): \$1, 000 - \$15,000 Mode of service delivery: Primarily on an as required basis. Tammin have a once per month service. Issues: No major issues reported
	Town Planning Kellerberrin, Tammin, Merredin, Yilgarn Service Providers: ExUrban, HBP Services, Town Planning Innovations, Paul Bashall	Cost (per annum): \$6,500 - \$35,000 Mode of service delivery: As required Issues: Availability/ turnaround times
	Ranger Services Kellerberrin, Tammin, Westonia, Yilgarn, Merredin Service Providers: WA Contract Ranger Services	Cost (per annum): \$5,000 - \$130,000 Mode of service delivery: Fortnightly or weekly visits and as required Issues: Responsiveness can be problematic. Cost is high
	Infrastructure Maintenance & Development Tammin, Yilgarn Service Providers: Various	Cost (per annum): Up to \$1.4m Mode of service delivery: As required Issues: Attendance by contractors can be problematic at times.
	IT Services Kellerberrin, Tammin, Westonia, Yilgarn, Merredin Service Providers: Perfect Computer Solutions, 2VNet, JH Computing	Cost (per annum): \$6,500 - \$95,000 Mode of service delivery: Monthly service or as required Issues: Declining response times

If there is interest in exploring shared resourcing across any of the service areas identified above, a number of options are available:

1. **Lead Shire Employment Model:** A staff member is employed by a lead Shire to facilitate service delivery across participating Shires, with each contributing to the cost proportionally based on their level of service usage. This is similar to the model currently used for the Central Wheatbelt Visitor Centre.
- 1) **Collaborative Procurement:** A contractual arrangement where pricing is negotiated to reflect the collective purchasing power of multiple local governments. Similar to the arrangement in place for HR/IR services.
2. **WEROC-Engaged Contract Resource:** WEROC engages a resource on a contract basis to deliver services to member Councils. This model is used by the Hunter Joint Organisation, where a Board made up of Mayors and General Managers oversees specialist business units established to provide expert services to local governments. Current offerings include Local Government Legal and Regional Procurement services (see: [Local Government Services - Hunter Joint Organisation](#)).

Recommendation:

That:

- 1) WEROC member Councils consider the findings of the outsourced services audit and indicate their interest in exploring shared resourcing opportunities in one or more service areas.
- 2) Consideration be given to forming a working group comprising representatives from interested Councils to investigate and scope potential shared service models, including delivery mechanisms, cost-sharing arrangements, and governance options.

Comments from the meeting:

- Ms. Alison Harris suggested that it would be useful to start with a register of which service providers, each Local Government is using.
- The Executive Officer observed that IT services are a high cost service and might be an area to look at for a collaborative procurement process.
- Mr. Nic Warren suggested that Environmental Health Services could be looked at for a shared service arrangement.
- Mr. Craig Watts advised that the Shire of Merredin are currently recruiting an Environmental Health Officer. It was questioned whether there is scope for the Shire of Merredin to outsource this service to other Shires. The Shires of Kellerberrin, Yilgarn, Bruce Rock and Merredin will discuss this option further out of session.
- At the next WEROC CEO Committee meeting, further discussion will be held around IT services.

7.4 Made in the Eastern Wheatbelt – Joint ROC Event

Author: Rebekah Burges, Executive Officer

Disclosure of Interest: No interest to disclose.

Attachments: **Attachment 5:** Made in the Eastern Wheatbelt Draft Agenda

Consultation: NEWROC and RoeROC Executive Officers

Financial Implications: \$2,000

Voting Requirement: Simple Majority

Background:

At the WEROC Inc. Board meeting held on 7 May, the concept of hosting a joint ROC event was discussed. While no formal resolution was passed, there was broad support for the initiative. Suggested discussion topics included land development and housing, the protection of agricultural land, and funding arrangements for

Local Governments. It was also proposed that part of the event focus on improving collaboration between the ROCs. To minimise costs, it was recommended that the WALGA conference room be used as the venue.

Executive Officer Comment:

The Executive Officers of NEWROC, RoeROC, and WEROC have collaborated on a proposed agenda that reflects the priorities identified by each ROC. It is proposed that the Chair of each ROC deliver a presentation outlining the collective views of the ROCs on three spotlight topics – education, industry and housing.

The WALGA conference room was explored as a venue but was deemed unsuitable due to its limited capacity. Alternative centrally located venues are now being explored. The proposed budget for the event is \$6,000 + GST. Each ROC will be required to contribute \$2,000 + GST. This will cover venue hire, catering and AV equipment hire.

A date for the event has not yet been set as confirmation of availability is pending from the Hon. Sabine Winton MLA, Minister for the Wheatbelt.

Recommendation:

That WEROC Inc. support the proposed joint ROC event and agree to contribute up to \$2,000 + GST towards event costs.

Comments from the meeting:

- It was questioned whether the meeting time could be moved to an afternoon and followed by a sundowner to promote networking and collaboration.
- City farm was suggested as a possible venue.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Mr. Nic Warren

Seconded: Ms. Emily Ryan

That WEROC Inc. support the proposed joint ROC event and agree to contribute up to \$2,000 + GST towards event costs.

7.5 Eastern Wheatbelt Self-Drive Trail Social Media Management

Author: Rebekah Burges, Executive Officer

Disclosure of Interest: No interest to disclose.

Attachments: **Attachment 6:** CWVC Proposal for Eastern Wheatbelt Self-Drive Trail Social Media Management

Consultation: Ms. Carina Macdonald, Coordinator Central Wheatbelt Visitors Centre

Financial Implications: \$5,205

Voting Requirement: Simple Majority

Background:

At its meeting on 28 November 2024, the WEROC Inc. Board considered a proposal from social media influencer Carol Taylor (Taylormadefortravel) to establish and manage social media accounts for the Eastern Wheatbelt self-drive trail. The Board resolved not to proceed with the proposal, noting that the Central Wheatbelt Visitor Centre (CWVC) already undertakes some promotional activity in this space. It was suggested that the CWVC be approached to see if they had capacity to expand their social media coverage of the drive trail.

Executive Officer Comment:

In July 2025, the Executive Officer discussed the possibility of the Central Wheatbelt Visitor Centre managing dedicated social media accounts for the drive trail with CWVC Coordinator, Ms. Carina Macdonald. Ms.

Macdonald confirmed that the Centre does have capacity to take on this role on behalf of WEROC and has prepared a proposal for consideration.

Recommendation:

That the WEROC Inc. Board supports the engagement of the Central Wheatbelt Visitor Centre to manage social media accounts for the Eastern Wheatbelt self-drive trail subject to agreement on scope of work, deliverables, and cost.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Ms. Lisa O'Neill

Seconded: Mr. Nic Warren

That the WEROC Inc. Board supports the engagement of the Central Wheatbelt Visitor Centre to manage social media accounts for the Eastern Wheatbelt self-drive trail at a cost of \$5,205 + GST per annum.

CARRIED

7.6 Financial Statements for Approval

Author: Rebekah Burges, Executive Officer

Disclosure of Interest: No interest to disclose.

Attachments: **Attachment 7:** Draft Financials for signing

Attachment 8: Representation letter

Consultation: Audit Partners Australia

Financial Implications: Nil

Voting Requirement: Simple Majority

Background:

At the WEROC Inc. Annual General Meeting held on 28 November 2024, Audit Partners Australia were appointed to undertake the financial audit for WEROC Inc. for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

Executive Officer Comment:

Audit Partners Australia have prepared a draft financial report and representation letter for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025. These documents are presented for endorsement.

Recommendation:

That the WEROC Inc. Board approve the Draft Financial Report and Representation Letter and authorise the WEROC Inc. Chair and Executive Officer to sign the documents.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Mr. Wayne Della Bosca

Seconded: Mr. Craig Watts

That the WEROC Inc. Board approve the Draft Financial Report and Representation Letter and authorise the WEROC Inc. Chair and Executive Officer to sign the documents.

CARRIED

8. PROJECT UPDATES

8.1 Marketing/Promotion

Attachment 9: *Wheatbelt Weekends Campaign Report*

Attachment 10: *Revised Eastern Wheatbelt Self-Drive Trail Map and Brochure*

WEROC as a partner organisation to the Wheatbelt Co-operative Marketing Group, contribute \$3,000 + GST each year to cooperative marketing initiatives in conjunction with Roe Tourism, NEW Travel, Pioneers Pathway and Australia's Golden Outback. Part of this funding from the last financial year was used toward a Wheatbelt

Weekends autumn campaign which ran from 22 March to 28 April 2025. The campaign report is provided as an attachment. The next scheduled activity is a wildflower campaign which will run over August and September.

The Eastern Wheatbelt Self-Drive trail map and brochure have now been updated to include the Shire of Cunderdin. Visitor feedback indicated that the original version of the map was not detailed enough in terms of the number of roads that were named. The revised version includes additional detail to address this.

An additional marketing opportunity is available to promote the Eastern Wheatbelt self-drive trail through the *Australia's Golden Outback 2026 Holiday Planner*. In previous years, WEROC has shared the cost of a half-page advertisement in the planner with the Central Wheatbelt Visitor Centre and Pioneers' Pathway. For the 2026 edition, the Visitor Centre will utilise the Shire of Merredin's page for promotion, while Pioneers' Pathway plans to purchase its own 1- or 2-unit advert. The Eastern Wheatbelt self-drive trail will also feature in the planner's "27 Epic Road Trips" section. To increase visibility, WEROC may wish to consider purchasing its own advertisement—either a 1-unit advert (\$460) or a 2-unit advert (\$805).

Comments from the meeting:

- The marketing opportunity through the AGO Holiday Planner was discussed, and it was agreed that there is little value in an additional advertisement if the drive trail is already going to be featured.

8.2 Housing

Attachment 11: Grant Agreement WEROC_NEWROC Housing Investigation

At the last WEROC Board meeting, it was resolved that WEROC would allocate up to an additional \$6,000 to undertake site feasibility assessments across each of the Shires participating in the Workforce Housing Analysis Project. The original scope of work provided for two site assessments at a cost of approximately \$3,000. Based on this, it was assumed that the remaining four sites could be assessed for an additional \$6,000. However, following discussions with the Wheatbelt Development Commission (WDC), it was confirmed that the actual cost is \$3,000 per site. As such, the total cost to assess all six sites would be \$18,000 + GST.

To support the inclusion of additional sites, the WDC proposed a co-funding arrangement, whereby they would contribute \$5,000 and WEROC would match this amount, enabling feasibility assessments to be undertaken for three sites.

On 30 May 2025, Board Members were informed via email of a grant funding agreement with the WDC that would provide both WEROC and NEWROC with \$5,000 each for site feasibility assessments, as part of the second phase of the broader housing investigation project. This funding will support feasibility assessments for three sites in each region. Under the terms of the agreement, WEROC will receive a total of \$10,000 in grant funding and will be responsible for engaging and paying the consultant to complete assessments on behalf of both WEROC and NEWROC. NEWROC will either reimburse WEROC for their \$5,000 co-contribution or pay the consultant directly.

The funding agreement (refer to Attachment 12) was signed and returned to the WDC, with funds received on 19 June 2025.

Comments from the meeting:

- All participating Shires are encouraged to check the suggested sites for feasibility testing and provide feedback.

8.3 Application to Community Water Supplies Partnership Program

WEROC Inc. submitted an application to the Community Water Supplies Partnership Program in mid-May 2025, with the aim of securing funding to develop water strategies for each of the seven WEROC local governments. The Executive Officer contacted the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation on 29 July to query the progress of the application. They advised that due to a high volume of submissions, applications were assessed in multiple rounds. Successful applicants from rounds 2 and 3 were announced on

25 June and 25 July, respectively. WEROC's application has been included in round 4. Based on the timing of previous announcements, it is anticipated that we should receive an outcome by mid-to-late August.

9. EMERGING ISSUES

NIL

10. OTHER MATTERS (FOR NOTING OR DISCUSSION)

10.1 Guidelines on Community Benefits for Renewable Energy Projects

Attachment 12: *Draft Guideline on Community Benefits for Renewable Energy Projects*

Attachment 13: *WALGA Renewable Energy Community Benefits and Engagement Guidelines*

Attachment 14: *Rating of Large Scale Renewable Energy Facilities*

Attachment 15: *Implications for the Renewable Energy Industry*

The WA Government have released a Draft Guideline on Community Benefits for Renewable Energy Projects and are inviting feedback. Submissions are due by 18 August 2025.

The draft Guideline outlines a suggested range for community benefits values, informed by best practice arrangements from across Australia:

- \$500–\$1,500 per MW per annum for wind projects
- \$150–\$800 per MW per annum for solar projects

The guidelines also suggest that the final dollar per MW community benefit value of a project should be informed by considerations including:

- Community size and population
- Scale of the project
- Neighbouring benefit arrangements
- Strain on community infrastructure from the project
- Cumulative impact of multiple projects on a community or region

These guidelines are intended to reflect a policy position rather than impose a legal obligation on proponents. However, during the webinar held on Tuesday, 15 July 2025, it was noted that a legal requirement remains a possibility. Powering WA will monitor adherence to the guideline over time to assess whether a formal regulatory approach is necessary.

WALGA have also released their Renewable Energy Community Benefits and Engagement Guide. This document provides guidance for Local Governments on planning for community engagement and communication with proponents.

Mr. Craig Watts has shared details of a motion recently put forward at the Peel Zone, seeking WALGA's support to undertake a review and obtain legal advice and recommendations on potential legislative changes that would allow for gross rental value (GRV) rating of renewable energy facilities in Western Australia. This is an issue WEROC Councils may wish to consider in conjunction with discussions around a Community Benefit approach.

Comments from the meeting:

- Some WEROC Shires have submitted individual responses on the Powering WA guidelines. A key concern highlighted in these submissions, is that the guidelines may not lead to tangible action from proponents, and without legislative backing, community benefit schemes may fail to achieve meaningful impact.

10.2 Eastern Wheatbelt Works & Services Development Day

A development day bringing together the works and services staff from across RoeROC, NEWROC and WEROC is being proposed. The date is yet to be determined but the location will be Bruce Rock. The intent of this event is to strengthen the skills and leadership capacity of works and services teams and to foster collaboration between Shires.

There will be no cost to the ROCs. Expenses will be covered through participant registration fees.

11. FUTURE MEETINGS

The approved schedule of meeting dates and locations for 2025 is as follows:

WEROC Inc. Board Meetings

Date	Host Council
Wednesday 17 March 2025	Merredin
Wednesday 7 May 2025	Westonia
Wednesday 13 August 2025	Kellerberrin
September - TBA	Southern Cross
Thursday 27 November 2025	Cunderdin

The next meeting date is pending.

Comments from the meeting:

- The next meeting will be held in Southern Cross on Tuesday 14 October, commencing at 9.30am.

12. CLOSURE

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 12.15pm.