



# **Confirmed Minutes**

Ordinary Meeting of Council

Tuesday, 17 June 2025

Commencing at 6.00pm

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# NOTICE OF MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the

Shire of Ravensthorpe

Ordinary Council

Meeting

Held on Tuesday, 17

June 2025 Commencing

at 6.00pm Located in the

Ravensthorpe Council Chambers

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Matthew Bird  
Chief Executive Officer

**Disclaimer**

The advice and information contained herein is given by and to the council without liability or responsibility for its accuracy. Before placing any reliance on this advice or information, a written inquiry should be made to the Council giving entire reasons for seeking the advice or information and how it is proposed to be used.

Please note this agenda contains recommendations which have not yet been adopted by Council

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# AGENDA

<b>Mission Statement</b>	<i>To grow our community through the provision of leadership, services and infrastructure.</i>
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## 1. DECLARATION OF OPENING AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS

The Presiding Member declared the meeting open at 6.00pm.

The Presiding Member acknowledged the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet, and pays respect to Elders past, present, and emerging.

## 2. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE, APOLOGIES AND APPROVED LEAVE OF ABSENCE

### **ELECTED MEMBERS**

Cr Thomas Major (Shire President) (Presiding Member)

Cr Mark Mudie

Cr Sue Leighton

Cr Graham Richardson

Cr Robert Miloseski

Cr Rachel Gibson

Cr Roger Mansell

### **OFFICERS**

Matthew Bird (Chief Executive Officer)

Paul Spencer (Executive Manager Infrastructure Services)

Les Mainwaring (Executive Manager Corporate Services)

### **VISITORS**

Trina Henderson, Ted Kilbey, Roy Henrickson, Shirl Sutherland, Graeme Sutherland, Geoff

Vivian (Esperance Weekender)

### **APOLOGIES**

Natalie Bell (Executive Manager Projects and Regulatory Services)

### **LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Nil

### 3. RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS PUBLIC QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE

Nil.

### 4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS TIME

**Ms Trina Henderson** asked the following questions (submitted written questions on 29 May 2025) and Shire CEO provided the below responses.

*"I have some questions and concerns regarding some recent and upcoming controlled burns within the Ravensthorpe Shire that I would like brought up at the next council meeting along with the enclosed photos (11) for reference sent with the hard copy of this letter to the Shire CEO.*

*I would firstly like to point out that I am not against prescribed burns when they are in areas to prevent wildfires from being a threat to communities and major infrastructure, these generally being in closer proximity to townsites ect.*

#### *Dunn's Swamp*

*What is the justification for this area to be burnt?*

*What or whom is in danger of a wild fire should it have originated from the Dunn's Swamp area? There are already multiple firebreaks and roads between Dunn's Swamp and any nearby infrastructure or housing.*

*Why was the area burnt when conditions were not ideal? It is clear to see that the fire was extremely hot and resembles the aftermath of a summer wildfire with large trees completely killed and not what is expected from a slow, cool burn that should only clean up the low lying excess fuel load.*

*Why had the burning tree trunks been left to burn and not doused with water from mop up crews? How can it be called a controlled burn when its obvious that the fire is left to do its own thing. At least half of all the larger trees in the area have been burnt through to the roots and fallen over, never to recover. This in itself makes a mockery of the intended idea to reduce the fuel load as now the area is covered in all the fallen trees complete with their dead leafy canopies.*

*The area was once a lovely place to go bird watching, bush walking and horse riding but is now nothing more than an eyesore and devoid of any wildlife that existed there. What has happened is nothing short of environmental vandalism.*

*I would like to know if the Shire CEO, Shire President and Shire Councillors who endorsed the prescribed burns have been out to the site to see the results of their decision making?*

#### *Other Prescribed Burns*

*I question the need for Coastal Reserves to be burnt. This seem completely unnecessary as once again a wild fire in these areas would not be catastrophic to people or infrastructure. These areas are fragile and prone to wind erosion.*

*I ask what is the reason for these areas to be burnt and is it justified?*

*I am asking the same question of the planned burn at the north eastern side of the Ravensthorpe roundabout. There is already significant firebreaks in this area not to mention a*

*very wide bitumen road. This could end up another major eyesore for locals and visitors alike if not carried out as a slow, cool burn.*

*My final complaint is from a burn carried out approximately two seasons ago in the reserve adjacent to the Ravensthorpe Cemetery. Once again, the burn was left uncontrolled causing multiple large Salmon Gums to burn out at the roots and topple over. There are many other trees still upright but now dead. As some may know I live in this area and often walked through that reserve observing many varieties of birds nesting in tree hollows. I had spent considerable time scratching out a basic walk trail there and enjoyed walking it with my dogs regularly. The mechanical mulcher and fire destroyed it all and I rarely go there now. The time and money would have been better spent on controlling the boxthorn infestation there instead.*

*In closing, I urge councillors and all other decision makers to spend more time carefully considering the need, timing and methods of any further controlled burns. There needs to be a balance and currently it is tipping towards reckless destruction."*

**Shire CEO** provided the following responses;

***Q1 What is the Justification?***

The justification for the burn is determined by the Shire Bushfire and Emergency Services team who assess the potential risk to life or assets. Protection of these included the Dunn Swamp burn on the basis that if there was a fire in the Dunn swamp reserve we would be faced with a high intensity bushfire incident that would prove to be very difficult to contain.

***Q2 What or whom is in danger?***

Residents who are departing their homes bound for emergency evacuation centres and or the first responders who are arriving in attempting to contain the incident. Unfortunately, roads, tracks and fire breaks are not generally sufficient in width to provide means of limiting the progress of summer time bushfire incidents and require additional complimentary works to afford protection.

***Q3 Why was the area burnt when conditions were not ideal?***

It may not seem so, but the conditions for prescribed burning in the coastal portions of the Shire this year have been some of the best for a number of years. Rain in April and early May has enabled prescribed burning to proceed with some soil moisture present.

Prescribed use of fire in the Mallee and heaths in the Ravensthorpe shire mirror bushfire intensities. Our native plants having evolved strategies to ensure their continued survival post fire and this is the vegetation type found at Dunn Swamp. Cool low intensity burns are the style of prescribed burning that occurs in Eucalypt woodlands where the accumulation of leaf and bark debris on the ground becomes the fuels for the burning activities.

The majority of fallen trees in the Dunn swamp reserve are Mallee in nature and it is quite typical that mallee fall over and are killed in the passage of a fire. Mallee have a lignotuberous root that enables the mallee to resucker from the root and re-establish. The Mallee and adjoining heathlands usually take around two years to recover post fire, with the first evidence of recovery being the resprouting sedges and grasses, and then in time with Mallee suckers and then the emerging heath and scrub plants.

Cool burns are not possible to achieve and or implement within the plant communities in the Dunn swamp reserve. We are confident that the native vegetation within and adjoining the reserve will in time recover, with significant vigour given the recent release of nutrients and bound up elements in the plant material and the dramatic stark nature of the burnt bush will soon be overcome.

*Q4 Why wasn't there any mop up done at Dunn Swamp?*

Mop up standards for a prescribed burn require black out of all alight materials on the ground within 10m of the boundary of the burn, the hot items are either picked up, where possible and walked inside the burn at a distance greater than 10m and or doused with water if not able to be relocated inside this zone. However if the surrounding country has been recently burnt, ie less than 10 years old, then in some circumstances a mop up may not be undertaken.

*Q5 Justification for Coastal Reserves being burnt?*

The decision to implement a prescribed burn in the Coastal reserve east of the 2 Mile recreation site and Hopetoun was considered as the preferred option as this is the start of the first coastal heath plant community east of Hopetoun. The burn was done to reduce the potential for a bushfire to impact the 2 Mile recreation site and east Hopetoun.

*Q6 Justification for the Ravensthorpe Roundabout burn*

With regards to the planned prescribed burn on the north east corner of the roundabout at the intersection of the Heavy haulage road, Hopetoun Ravensthorpe road and Jamieson Street the intent is to specifically target the very mature broombush thicket, not the adjoining mature stand of the Ravensthorpe Oil mallee. These stands of broombush vegetation have capacity to burn rapidly and create fire brands of alight material that does and will, under bushfire weather conditions, provide the opportunity for a fire to start down wind inside the town site adjacent to the Caravan park and Motel buildings. No preparatory works have commenced with this particular burn at this stage.

*Comment on Ravensthorpe Cemetery burn*

This prescribed burn and clean up within the Cemetery reserve was undertaken to reduce levels of accumulated fuels loads which would make containment of a bushfire incident very difficult, especially given the proximity to the adjoining Ravensthorpe Range subdivision.

The parcel of Salmon gum and Ravensthorpe Oil mallee reserve to the west of the current modern cemetery is all located on the Cemetery reserve. We made significant attempts to implement "advanced mop up" by raking back all of the accumulated debris around the base of all of the fire sensitive Salmon gum trees in the area we treated.

**Ms Shirl Sutherland** commented on the destructive nature of the shire's prescribed burn program and asked how the Councillors can sleep straight at night?

The Shire President cautioned Ms Sutherland to please remain respectful in her interactions with Council.

**Shire CEO** commented that the reason the Shire undertakes its prescribed burn program is ultimately to protect life and property. The CEO acknowledged that some members of the community do not support the Shire's prescribed burn program however is an important responsibility the Shire must undertake.

**5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cr Richardson declared a financial interest in item 15.2.

**6. APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Nil.

**7. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES 20 MAY 2025**

(Attachment: Yellow 7.1) Statutory Environment:

Section 5.22 of the *Local Government Act 1995* provides that minutes of all meetings are to be kept and submitted to the next ordinary meeting of the Council or Committee, as the case requires, for confirmation.

**COUNCIL DECISION**

**Moved by Cr Gibson and seconded by Cr Richardson**

**Resolution # 38/25**

**That the minutes and associated attachments of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 20 May 2025 be CONFIRMED as a true and correct record.**

**Carried 7/0**

## **8. ANNOUNCEMENTS/REPORTS BY ELECTED MEMBERS**

### **Cr Mudie**

- Attended the Great Southern Regional Road Groups meeting. MRWA Regional Manager announced there are currently no new capital expenditure allocations for the region, update provided on Albany Ring Road, crumbed rubber being reused in road resealing works, need to keep advocating for South Coast Highway upgrades.
- Attended the Shire LEMC meeting.

### **Cr Miloseski**

- Provided feedback received from a local community member on how great it was to have a local dentist service via the visiting dentist from Albany.

### **Cr Mansell**

- Nil

### **Cr Gibson**

- Participated in the Shire's Roads sub group meeting and found this very worthwhile. Looking forward to the next set of meetings.

### **Cr Richardson**

- Nil

### **Cr Leighton**

- Was part of the group that hosted the visit from representatives from the Shire of Greenbushes Bridgetown. Very worthwhile.
- Attended the "Run For Peace" visit, met at the Genestreams sculpture and Kukenerup Memorial.
- Attended the Council corporate discussion workshop.
- Attended the Ravensthorpe Historical Society meeting
- Attended the Ravensthorpe CRC meeting
- Was part of the Andrew Chapman podcast launch which was great.
- Ravensthorpe Wildflower Show meeting
- Mt Short Hopetoun Aerodrome 737 Plane Tail working group meeting.
- Presented the Shire award at the recent FBN Business Awards Night.

### **Cr Tom Major**

- Met with the regional management for the Department of Education.
- Hosted representatives from the Shire of Greenbushes Bridgetown. We have a few things in common so was a good learning experience.
- Participated in the Shire's Roads sub group meeting.
- Attended the Shire LEMC meeting.
- Attended two RH Future Fund board meetings.
- Attended RAIN meeting, sending some local members to "Innovation Generation" event, Spring trials field day coming up.
- Also mentioned the upcoming the Southerners Big Freeze event which he will be participating in.

**9. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE PRESIDING PERSON WITHOUT DISCUSSION**

Nil

**10. PETITIONS/DEPUTATIONS/PRESENTATIONS/SUBMISSIONS**

Nil

**11. MATTERS ARISING FROM COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL**

Nil.

## 12. REPORTS OF OFFICERS

### 12.1 EXECUTIVE SERVICES

#### 12.1.1 RECREATIONAL VEHICLE (RV) FRIENDLY POLICY

<b>File Reference:</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>All of Shire</b>
<b>Applicant:</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Author:</b>	<b>Chief Executive Officer</b>
<b>Authorising Officer</b>	<b>Chief Executive Officer</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>10 June 2025</b>
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	<b>Nil</b>
<b>Attachments: 12.1.1</b>	<b>A. Draft policy</b> <b>B. Copies of submissions received (names redacted).</b>
<b>Previous Reference:</b>	<b>N/A</b>

#### **PURPOSE**

1. For Council to consider the public comments received regarding the draft Recreational Vehicle (RV) Friendly policy and approve the policy as presented.

#### **BACKGROUND**

2. At the April 2025 OCM Council approved via resolution number 21/25 the Draft RV Friendly policy as per Attachment 12.1.1 for public comment as per below;

#### **COUNCIL DECISION**

***Moved by Cr Mudie and seconded by Cr Leighton Resolution # 21/25***

***That Council:***

- 1. ENDORSE the Draft RV Policy as per Attachment 12.1.1 to this report to seek public comment.***
- 2. AUTHORISE the CEO to work with commercial caravan park operators within the district to offer low cost camping options that ensure RV Friendly status is maintained for townships and the region.***
- 3. AUTHORISE the CEO to investigate additional opportunities to attract RV traveller visitation to the visit and stay in the region including encouraging small scale low impact tourism accommodation uses in rural areas that are complementary with existing agricultural uses.***

**Carried 7/0**

3. The policy was widely promoted for public review via the Shire website and social media platforms with a closing date for submissions being Wednesday 28 May.
4. A total of 19 written responses were received. Copies of all responses are included in attachments. Individual names have been redacted.

5. A wide range of viewpoints were received, some supporting free camping and others calling for the removal of Shire free camping sites.
6. A number of comments made the point of differentiating between Ravensthorpe and Hopetoun as visitor destinations. Hopetoun is an “end destination” that requires considered decision making to visit versus Ravensthorpe being largely a driving through town en-route to other destinations. A different free camping location approach was called for each of these locations.
7. The Shire’s Economic Growth Strategy (EGS) was endorsed by Council via Resolution 70/23 at the 15 August 2023 Ordinary Council Meeting. The endorsed vision is for *“a resilient and thriving economy that contributes directly and fairly to the local community, underpinning the long term vibrancy and liveability of the region”*.
8. Developing a vibrant local tourism industry sector is a key objective of the EGS. One of the four strategic themes is *“A Diversified Economy – Increase the percentage contribution to Gross Regional Product (GRP) from tourism and new industries”*. Key actions under this key objective are to;
  - i. Increase the number of businesses from new industries,
  - ii. Increase the number of overnight visitors to the region,
  - iii. Increase the number of people stopping in the Shire (day trippers), and
  - iv. Build awareness and regard for the region.
9. Reflecting the economic importance of tourism to the region a flow on Shire Tourism Strategy 2023 was also endorsed by Council via Resolution 70/23 at the 15 August 2023 Ordinary Council Meeting. The Strategy estimated current tourism visitation to the Shire of around 71,000 overnight visitors generating an annual tourism revenue of around \$8m to the region.
10. The Tourism Strategy recommends actions spread across either a 2 or 10 year time horizon and to adopt a gradual approach to tourism growth that is sustainable and in line with the wishes of the local community. The short term tourism recommendations include;
  - Focus on attracting and catering to the self-contained tourist,
  - Increase awareness of the Fitzgerald Coast region amongst tourists already travelling through along the south coast, and
  - Increase accommodation options with true nature connection experiences.
11. Strategic initiatives to increase accommodation options identified in the Tourism Strategy include; developing signature accommodation in the region, enhance existing campsites, new campsites, pool of holiday homes, incentivise local land owners to provide accommodation, and incentivise holiday park upgrades.
12. A self-contained Recreational Vehicle (RV) is defined as providing internal sleeping accommodation, have internal kitchen and dining facilities including refrigerators and/or freezers, carry their own internal water supply and have internal shower and toilet facilities with a holding tank that requires access from time to time to a liquid water dump point.
13. Caravan and camping are an important sector of the Western Australia tourism industry. Recreational Vehicle (RV), caravan and camping travel is one of the fastest-growing tourism sectors in Australia, with one in every 13 households in Australia owning an RV or campervan. Australia-wide, the number of RV, caravan, and camping travellers has grown by almost 50% to over 5.7 million travellers.

14. With an estimated number of 772,598 registered RVs in Australia, RV tourism continues to have significant benefits to the economy. Recent surveys indicate that the economic benefits from Caravan and Motorhome Club of Australia (CMCA) activities alone are considerable. According to research, CMCA members spend an average of \$770.00 per week when travelling on the road.

## **COMMENT**

15. As stated in the April 2025 OCM report, the Ravensthorpe Shire is ideally positioned to promote itself to the growing caravan and camping market as a destination that boasts a range of established RV, caravan, and camping facilities.
16. The development of a Shire RV Friendly policy is an important part of the above approach to achieving a sustainable local tourism sector that is complementary to community wishes.
17. The required outcomes of a successful draft RV Friendly policy are to:
  - Actively attract and cater to the RV Caravan and Camping travellers to the Shire and drive repeat visitation to grow the economic return from this market.
  - Identify and evaluate current RV camping sites and facilities, with recommendations to enhance the visitor experience of each site.
  - Address overflow and illegal free camping areas for improved management.
18. The objectives of the policy are to maximise economic activity from the RV, Caravan and Camping traveller market through:
  - a) Planning, development and maintenance of Shire RV Parking facilities.
  - b) Maintaining the Shire's status as an RV-Friendly destination.
  - c) Facilitating commercial camping and hospitality development in the Shire to enable enhanced options are available for travellers.
  - d) Provision of designated Shire public camping sites.
  - e) Work with commercial caravan park operators to provide low cost, designated RV only overnight parking bays within main town centres.
  - f) Regular patrolling by Rangers of designated public camp sites to manage overnight camping privileges.
  - g) Regular patrolling of all other public space areas to manage illegal camping and encourage legal camping at commercial or designated public camp sites.
19. The large number of written submissions highlights the interest from the local community on this matter. Feedback received was varied and reflects the diverging views held within the community.
20. The draft policy aims to create a balance between community interests and viewpoints and officers are now seeking Council endorsement for the policy as presented.

## **CONSULTATION**

21. 19 written submissions were received and are included in report attachments for Council consideration.

## STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT

22. The policy operates within the following framework of legislation;

*Planning and Development Act 2005*

*Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015*

*Caravan Parks and Camping Grounds Act 1995*

*Caravan Parks and Camping Grounds Regulations 1997*

## POLICY IMPLICATIONS

23. If approved this will be a new policy.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

24. Not applicable at this stage.

## RISK MANAGEMENT

25. The following risks have been identified as a part of this report;

Risk	Likelihood	Consequence	Risk Analysis	Mitigation
Performance (Operational) lack of clear direction for the Shire to manage the RV market.	Possible	Moderate	Medium	The adopted policy will provide clear direction on the development of the RV traveller sector.

## ALTERNATE OPTIONS

26. Council may amend the draft policy based on public feedback received.

## STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

27. This item is relevant to the Councils approved Strategic Community Plan 2020-2030 and Corporate Business Plan 2020-2024.

**Outcome 1: Economy** - The population is growing, in tandem with a thriving, resilient local economy

Item	Objectives and Strategies
1.1	To grow business and employment
1.2	The right resources and infrastructure are in place to support local commerce and industry

**Outcome 2: Community** - This is a safe and family-friendly community where people of all ages have access to services and facilities, and there is plenty to blow your socks off

Item	Objectives and Strategies
2.1	Social services and facilities are designed and delivered in a way that fits community needs and aspirations
2.3	People feel that their community is safe for all, free of nuisance and protected from risk of damage
2.4	People have access to attractive community facilities, activities and events which support activity and health, community involvement and enjoyment of life
2.5	Young people, older people and people with disability feel valued and have access to resources which provide opportunities for their development and enjoyment

**Outcome 3: Built Environment** - The built environment is accessible, honours history and provides for the economic and social needs of residents, industry and visitors

Item	Objectives and Strategies
3.2	New development (including commercial) is of a high quality and contributes positively to the character and appearance of the town

Item	Objectives and Strategies
3.3	The towns of the Shire have attractive streetscapes in keeping with local character
3.4	It is easy and safe to move around and in and out of the district

**Outcome 4: Natural Environment** - Our unique world class biosphere is valued and protected for the enjoyment of current and future generations

Item	Objectives and Strategies
4.1	Maximised resource recovery from waste and safe disposal of residual waste
4.3	The Shire's valued natural areas and systems are protected and enhanced

**Outcome 5: Governance and Leadership** - The Shire of Ravensthorpe partners the community, and is an effective advocate and responsible steward

Item	Objectives and Strategies
5.1	The Shire's community is engaged and involved
5.2	The Council ensures its decisions are well informed and considered
5.3	The Council, with the support of the community, is an effective advocate for resources and facilities which support the vision for the future
5.5	The value of community owned assets is maintained
5.7	Customer service and other corporate systems are of high quality

## VOTING REQUIREMENTS

28. Absolute Majority

## COUNCIL DECISION

**Moved by Cr Miloseski and seconded by Cr Mudie**

**That Council ENDORSE the Draft RV Policy as per Attachment 12.1.1 to this report.**

### AMENDED MOTION

**Resolution # 39/25**

**Cr Major moved and Cr Mudie seconded the following amendment;**

**That Council endorse the Draft RV Policy with the following amendments;**

### Policy Guidelines

#### 1. Designated Free and Low Cost Camping Areas

- a. Shire to work in collaboration with Hopetoun Beachside Caravan Park operator to relocate the current free 48 hour camp location in Hopetoun to within or adjacent caravan park location, and to retain the current shire managed free 48 hour camp location in Ravensthorpe (corner Morgans and Queen Streets).

**Amend definition of "Shire approved overnight rest area" to include current free Ravensthorpe townsite location.**

**Carried 6/1**

Cr Miloseski against

*Cr Mudie commented that this is a good amendment, Ravensthorpe is largely a passing through location and the public comment received supported keeping it where it is.*

## 12.2 CORPORATE SERVICES

### 12.2.1 MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT – 30 APRIL 2025

<b>File Reference:</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>Shire of Ravensthorpe</b>
<b>Applicant:</b>	<b>Nil</b>
<b>Author:</b>	<b>Accounting Manager</b>
<b>Authorising Officer</b>	<b>Executive Manager Corporate Services</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>6 June 2025</b>
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	<b>Nil</b>
<b>Attachments: 12.2.1</b>	<b>Monthly Financial Report for 30 April 2025</b>
<b>Previous Reference:</b>	<b>Nil</b>

#### **PURPOSE**

1. In accordance with the *Local Government Financial Management Regulations (1996)*, Regulation 34, a local government is to prepare a monthly Statement of Financial Activity for approval by Council.

#### **BACKGROUND**

2. Council is requested to review the April 2025 Monthly Financial Reports.

#### **COMMENT**

3. The April 2025 Monthly Financial Reports are presented for review.

#### **CONSULTATION**

4. Executive Team

#### **STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT**

5. Section 6.4 of the *Local Government Act 1995* and Regulation 34 of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996 apply.

#### **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

6. Nil.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

7. All expenditure has been approved via adoption of the 2024/2025 Annual Budget, or resulting from a Council Motion for a budget amendment.

#### **RISK MANAGEMENT**

8. The following risks have been identified as a part of this report;

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Risk Analysis</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
Reputational - That Council does not receive the Financial Activity Statements as required by S6.4 of the <i>LG Act 1995</i> .	Rare	Insignificant	Very Low	That council receives the Financial Activity Statements as required by legislation.

## ALTERNATE OPTIONS

9. Nil.

## STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

10. This item is relevant to the Councils approved Strategic Community Plan 2020-2030 and Corporate Business Plan 2020-2024.

**Outcome 5: Governance and Leadership** - The Shire of Ravensthorpe partners the community, and is an effective advocate and responsible steward

Item	Objectives and Strategies
5.5	The value of community owned assets is maintained
5.5.1	Assets renewals and upgrades are funded to the level required to maintain asset value and agreed service levels
5.5.2	Projects are well-planned planned and delivered on time and on budget, with effective and thorough risk management and reporting
5.6	Financial systems are effectively managed
5.6.1	Financial management and reporting systems are able to deliver on all administrative and management functions (including reporting), and long-term financial planning requirements

## VOTING REQUIREMENTS

11. Simple Majority

## COUNCIL DECISION

**Moved by Cr Mudie and seconded by Cr Gibson**

**Resolution # 40/25**

**That Council:**

**RECEIVE the April 2025 Monthly Financial Reports as presented.**

**Carried 7/0**

## 12.2.2 MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT – 31 MAY 2025

<b>File Reference:</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>Shire of Ravensthorpe</b>
<b>Applicant:</b>	<b>Nil</b>
<b>Author:</b>	<b>Accounting Manager</b>
<b>Authorising Officer</b>	<b>Executive Manager Corporate Services</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>6 June 2025</b>
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	<b>Nil</b>
<b>Attachments:</b> 12.2.2	<b>Monthly Financial Report for 31 May 2025</b>
<b>Previous Reference:</b>	<b>Nil</b>

### **PURPOSE**

1. In accordance with the *Local Government Financial Management Regulations (1996)*, Regulation 34, a local government is to prepare a monthly Statement of Financial Activity for approval by Council.

### **BACKGROUND**

2. Council is requested to review the May 2025 Monthly Financial Reports.

### **COMMENT**

3. The May 2025 Monthly Financial Reports are presented for review.

### **CONSULTATION**

4. Executive Team

### **STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT**

5. Section 6.4 of the *Local Government Act 1995* and Regulation 34 of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996 apply.

### **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

6. Nil.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

7. All expenditure has been approved via adoption of the 2024/2025 Annual Budget, or resulting from a Council Motion for a budget amendment.

### **RISK MANAGEMENT**

8. The following risks have been identified as a part of this report;

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Risk Analysis</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
Reputational - That Council does not receive the Financial Activity Statements as required by S6.4 of the <i>LG Act 1995</i> .	Rare	Insignificant	Very Low	That council receives the Financial Activity Statements as required by legislation.

### **ALTERNATE OPTIONS**

9. Nil.

## STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

10. This item is relevant to the Councils approved Strategic Community Plan 2020-2030 and Corporate Business Plan 2020-2024.

**Outcome 5: Governance and Leadership** - The Shire of Ravensthorpe partners the community, and is an effective advocate and responsible steward

Item	Objectives and Strategies
5.5	The value of community owned assets is maintained
5.5.1	Assets renewals and upgrades are funded to the level required to maintain asset value and agreed service levels
5.5.2	Projects are well-planned planned and delivered on time and on budget, with effective and thorough risk management and reporting
5.6	Financial systems are effectively managed
5.6.1	Financial management and reporting systems are able to deliver on all administrative and management functions (including reporting), and long-term financial planning requirements

## VOTING REQUIREMENTS

11. Simple Majority

## COUNCIL DECISION

**Moved by Cr Richardson and seconded by Cr Miloseski**

**Resolution # 41/25**

**That Council:**

**RECEIVE the May 2025 Monthly Financial Reports as presented.**

**Carried 7/0**

## 12.2.3 SCHEDULE OF ACCOUNT PAYMENTS – MAY 2025

<b>File Reference:</b>	<b>GR.ME.8</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>Shire of Ravensthorpe</b>
<b>Applicant:</b>	<b>Shire of Ravensthorpe</b>
<b>Author:</b>	<b>Finance Officer</b>
<b>Authorising Officer</b>	<b>Executive Manager Corporate Services</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>10 June 2025</b>
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	<b>Nil</b>
<b>Attachments: 12.2.3</b>	<b>A. Creditors List of Accounts Paid May 2025 B. Credit Card Transactions to 01 May 2025 C. Fuel Card Transactions May 2025</b>
<b>Previous Reference:</b>	<b>Nil</b>

### **PURPOSE**

1. This item presents the schedule of payments for Council approval in accordance with Regulation 13 of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996.

### **BACKGROUND**

2. Period 01/05/2025 – 31/05/2025

<b>2024/2025</b>						
<b>Month</b>	<b>Cheques</b>	<b>EFT Pymts</b>	<b>Direct Debits</b>	<b>Credit Card</b>	<b>Total Creditors</b>	<b>Payroll</b>
Jul	17,790	1,293,044	105,982	12,502	1,429,318	377,723
Aug	11,617	584,755	137,072	4,563	738,007	365,425
Sep	6,118	699,166	50,146	8,503	763,934	440,523
Oct	10,460	788,134	64,705	11,999	875,299	507,921
Nov	8,520	632,429	58,225	13,603	712,777	369,762
Dec	8,716	519,297	47,915	10,646	586,574	344,413
Jan	6,386	1,081,650	619	3,202	1,091,856	351,326
Feb	10,133	578,659	198,515	2,532	789,839	367,581
Mar	6,850	427,994	100,500	7,867	543,212	370,626
Apr	11,557	696,509	73,434	7,443	788,943	504,948
May	10,539	1,129,983	52,219	4,809	1,197,551	340,758
Jun	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>108,685</b>	<b>8,431,622</b>	<b>889,332</b>	<b>87,669</b>	<b>9,517,309</b>	<b>4,341,004</b>
<b>23/24</b>	<b>186,555</b>	<b>12,324,178</b>	<b>1,020,367</b>	<b>106,440</b>	<b>13,637,540</b>	<b>4,948,850</b>
<b>22/23</b>	<b>114,562</b>	<b>12,445,050</b>	<b>943,431</b>	<b>81,842</b>	<b>13,584,885</b>	<b>4,162,759</b>
<b>21/22</b>	<b>109,610</b>	<b>11,455,728</b>	<b>1,217,128</b>	<b>101,107</b>	<b>12,883,572</b>	<b>4,057,812</b>
<b>20/21</b>	<b>219,357</b>	<b>8,442,181</b>	<b>965,406</b>	<b>135,103</b>	<b>9,762,047</b>	<b>3,790,863</b>

### **COMMENT**

3. The schedule of accounts as presented, submitted to each member of the Council, have been checked and are fully supported by vouchers and invoices which are submitted herewith and which have been duly certified as to the receipt of goods, the performance of services, to prices computation, costing's and the amounts that have been paid.

## **CONSULTATION**

4. Accountant and Executive Manager Corporate Services.

## **STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT**

5. Regulation 13 (1) – (3) of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations.

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

6. Nil.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

7. This item discloses Council's expenditure from Trust and Municipal funds which have been paid under delegated authority.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT**

8. The following risks have been identified as a part of this report;

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Risk Analysis</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
Reputational – That Council does not receive the schedule of account payments.	Rare	Insignificant	Very Low	That Council receives the schedule of account payments.

## **ALTERNATE OPTIONS**

9. Nil.

## **STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT**

10. This item is relevant to the Councils approved Strategic Community Plan 2020-2030 and Corporate Business Plan 2020-2024.

**Outcome 1: Economy** - The population is growing, in tandem with a thriving, resilient local economy

<b>Item</b>	<b>Objectives and Strategies</b>
1.2	The right resources and infrastructure are in place to support local commerce and industry

**Outcome 5: Governance and Leadership** - The Shire of Ravensthorpe partners the community, and is an effective advocate and responsible steward

<b>Item</b>	<b>Objectives and Strategies</b>
5.2	The Council ensures its decisions are well informed and considered
5.3	The Council, with the support of the community, is an effective advocate for resources and facilities which support the vision for the future
5.6	Financial systems are effectively managed
5.7	Customer service and other corporate systems are of high quality

## **VOTING REQUIREMENTS**

11. Simple Majority

**OFFICER RECOMMENDATION**

**Moved by Cr Leighton and seconded by Cr Gibson**

**Resolution # 42/25**

**That Council:**

**Pursuant to Regulation 13 of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*, the payment of accounts for the month of May 2025 be NOTED.**

**Carried 7/0**

<b>File Reference:</b>	<b>RV.RC.001</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
<b>Applicant:</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
<b>Author:</b>	<b>Executive Manager Corporate Services</b>
<b>Authorising Officer</b>	<b>Chief Executive Officer</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>15 June 2025</b>
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	<b>Nil</b>
<b>Attachments:</b>	<b>McMahon Mining Titles Services Submission FQM Australia Nickel Pty Ltd Submission</b>
<b>Previous Reference:</b>	<b>Nil</b>

#### **PURPOSE**

1. This report recommends that Council endorse the two submissions received after the 21 days of advertising of proposed 2025/2026 differential rates which closed 15 June 2025.

#### **BACKGROUND**

2. At the Ordinary Council Meeting 20 May 2025 Council resolved to:

1. *Endorse the following differential rates across all categories to form the basis of the proposed rate setting for the 2025/2026 budget.*

	<i>Cost in \$</i>	<i>Minimum</i>
<i>GRV Residential</i>	0.129672	\$1,077.00
<i>GRV Commercial</i>	0.161048	\$1,077.00
<i>GRV Industrial</i>	0.161048	\$1,077.00
<i>GRV – Transient Workforce Camps / Short Stay Accommodation</i>	0.332050	\$1,077.00
<i>UV - Rural</i>	0.003375	\$1,077.00
<i>UV – Mining</i>	0.243628	\$1,077.00

2. *Adopt the Objectives and Reasons for the Proposed Differential rates for 2025/2026*
3. *Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to advertise the differential rates and call for public submissions in accordance with Section 6.36 of the Local Government Act 1995 for a minimum of 21 days*
4. *Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to make application to seek Ministerial approval under Section 6.33 of the Local Government Act 1995 to impose differential rates that are more than twice the lowest differential rate being imposed.*
5. *Adopt the draft Long Term Financial Plan 2025/26 TO 2035/36 as the policy of rating strategy*
  
3. As part of the process of Ministerial approval for Differential Rates, Council is required to give full consideration to submissions received before proceeding with the application.

## **COMMENT**

4. Section 6.36 of the *Local Government Act (1995)* ('the Act') allows Council to implement a system of differential rating subject to public advertising, adoption by Council, and approval from the Minister for Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries, before being applied.

The Act allows for differential rates to be applied to help overcome an issue where the land use within the rating category has a differing contributory cost to Council infrastructure or services and therefore rates in the dollar applied are varied. The use of differential rating helps to ensure equality of contribution within the rating system.

In May 2025 Council adopted the Long Term Financial Plan that sets an agreed policy of rates strategy that has set the increase in general rates for 2025/2026, then adjusted this down slightly to 4.95%.

The notice of intention to impose differential rates was advertised in the "West Australian" Newspaper on Friday 23 May 2025 and submissions closed at 4pm Sunday 15 June 2025.

The Shire has also individually notified the owners of the two transient workforce camps differentially rated under GRV which has a proposed 4.95% increase in line with the general increase.

In considering the rating strategy it was recognised that notwithstanding the marked decrease in mining activity during the past 12 months the shire has opted for a proposed relatively moderate increase in rates that will be offset by a change in services, for example the divestment of childcare services.

Noting that the Shire, after a state-imposed rates freeze of 0% in 2020-2021 (which creates an ongoing negative rates impact in perpetuity equivalent to about \$240,000 each year based on a notional 4% rate increase forgone), has increased general rates modestly by 4% (2021-22), 3.5% (2022-23), 4.75% (2023-24), 4.50% (2024-25) over the past 4 years after COVID.

Previously in 2024-25 the differential UV mining rate used by the shire was ranked 15<sup>th</sup> in the state out of 30 local governments differentially rating for UV Mining, therefore the shire has followed a middle of the road approach to UV Mining rates.

### **International Graphite (UV) Submission:**

The first submission received from McMahon Mining Title Services Pty Ltd, on behalf of their client International Graphite, raised the same point as previous years that the state government was increasing rents on prospecting licenses, exploration licenses and mining leases, therefore this would flow through to valuations and a local government increase would be placed against the increased valuations creating a compounding effect.

Our response to the submission is to make the point that whilst mention of the WA Government rental increases have had the effect of increasing mining valuations, this does not necessarily cause an automatic increase in rates. We are pleased to advise that this is not the approach of the Shire of Ravensthorpe as we have determined a set yield in rates according to our rating strategy and adopted Long Term Financial Plan and if valuations subsequently increase then rates in the dollar will be adjusted downwards to maintain the set yield, meaning there is no passive connection of setting a rate and letting rate income ride upwards through valuation increases. Alternatively, if valuations fall, we would also adjust our rates in the dollar to maintain the desired \$ yield.

### **FQM Australia Nickel Pty Ltd (GRV and UV) Submission:**

The second submission from FQM essentially argues for a reduction in the mining camp GRV valuation on the basis that there are no costs to the shire when transient workforce camps experience a reduction in workforce numbers during a period of care and maintenance. It has been counter argued that airport and road infrastructure still need to be maintained at required standards so that these assets are fully available for use when required as mining activity increases.

The FQM UV objection was similarly based on an argument that usage of the sealed local road network has reduced during care and maintenance, meaning that road expenditure should now be negligible, although it was pointed out that the shire in 2024/2025 is directly spending \$809,000 for capital maintenance on Jerdacuttup Road and our budgeted operating maintenance for roads in 2024/2025 was \$2.1 Million from a rates base of \$6.0 Million. There will also be further works on Tamarine Road in 2025/2026, partly contributed to by FQM, therefore works for the shire continue based upon repairing past use and maintaining the standard of road for the same future use.

The Shire of Ravensthorpe welcomes mining activity to the region and to assist mining families that want to relocate to the area, the Shire is heavily invested into medical services for about \$220,000 in direct cash support per annum for the benefit of family's health and wellbeing. This is not a function generally attributed to local government responsibilities, however falls to remote regional local governments to compensate for private market failure and is a sizeable investment given the size of the shire.

In the recent past we had also engaged promotional activities, in close collaboration with our mining partners, through the Channel 7 TV program Our Town in order to promote the liveability of the area in support of mining operations attracting and retaining staff by encouraging families to move and live in the area. We have a good working relationship with our mining partners and do all we can to assist in facilitating social initiatives, which includes a vibrant performing arts culture and generous support structures for local community groups for the benefit of mining community families.

In May 2025 Council endorsed a review of the Long Term Financial Plan that sets an agreed rates strategy which includes setting an increase in general rates for 2025/2026 of 4.95%.

From the UV Mining Valuation roll there has been an average overall change of +3.6% indicating the effects of State Government increases to rents, leases and licenses tenements.

UV Rural Other rates have also been adjusted downwards to counterbalance a revaluation increase of 20.28% in unimproved land values.

The advertised rates in the dollar for 2025/2026 are outlined below:

RATING CATEGORY	2025/26 RATE Advertised Cent in \$
GRV Residential	0.129672
GRV Commercial	0.161048
GRV Industrial	0.161048
GRV Transient Workforce / Short Stay	0.332050
UV Rural Other	0.003375
UV Mining Tenements	0.243628
Minimum Rates	
GRV Residential/Commercial/Industrial	\$1077
GRV Transient Workforce / Short Stay	\$1077
UV Rural Other	\$1077
UV Mining Tenements	\$1077

## **CONSULTATION**

5. Elected Members and Executive Team

## **STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT**

6. Regulation 13 (1) – (3) of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

7. Nil.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8. Rates are a significant source of funding and provided 49% of the Shire's operating income in 2024/25.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT**

9. The following risks have been identified as part of this report:

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Risk Analysis</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
Performance (operational) – Council is required to prepare and adopt a budget by 31 August, in the form and manner prescribed, a budget for its municipal fund for the financial year ending 30 <sup>th</sup> June next, following that 31 August.	Unlikely	Moderate	Medium	Council to adopt the budget before 31 August

## **ALTERNATE OPTIONS**

10. Nil.

## **STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT**

11. This item is relevant to the Councils approved Strategic Community Plan 2020-2030 and Corporate Business Plan 2020-2024

**Outcome 5: Governance and Leadership** - The Shire of Ravensthorpe partners the community, and is an effective advocate and responsible steward

<b>Item</b>	<b>Objectives and Strategies</b>
5.6	Financial systems are effectively managed
5.6.1	Financial management and reporting systems are able to deliver on all administrative and management functions (including reporting), and long-term financial planning requirements

## **COUNCIL DECISION**

**Moved by Cr Mudie and seconded by Cr Gibson**

**Resolution # 43/25**

**That Council;**

1. **RECEIVE the submission for the proposed UV differential rates for 2025/2026 from McMahon Mining Titles Services Pty Ltd on behalf of International Graphite.**
2. **RECEIVE the submission for the proposed GRV and UV differential rates for 2025/2026 from FQM Australia Nickel Pty Ltd.**
3. **AUTHORISE the Chief Executive Officer to make application to seek Ministerial approval under Section 6.33 of the *Local Government Act 1995* to impose differential rates that are more than twice the lowest differential rate being imposed.**

**Carried 7/0**

## 12.2.5 SCHEDULE OF FEES AND CHARGES 2025/2026

<b>File Reference:</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>Shire of Ravensthorpe</b>
<b>Applicant:</b>	<b>Nil</b>
<b>Author:</b>	<b>Executive Manager Corporate Services</b>
<b>Authorising Officer</b>	<b>Chief Executive Officer</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>6 June 2025</b>
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	<b>Nil</b>
<b>Attachments:</b> 12.2.5	<b>Draft Schedule of Fees and Charges 2025/2026</b>
<b>Previous Reference:</b>	<b>Nil</b>

### **PURPOSE**

1. As part of the budget preparation process council needs to review the fees and charges which it wishes to set for the coming financial year.

### **BACKGROUND**

2. A review of the fees and charges to be imposed is carried out annually as part of the budget process

### **COMMENT**

3. The 2025/2026 schedule of fees and charges have been formulated using the 2024/2025 year as a basis. In reference to current economic conditions, it is proposed that all council fees and charges are increased by at least 4.95% and rounded to the nearest \$0.10 or dollar as necessary. There has also been a comprehensive review of all programmes with the addition of new fees and charges and an update of some existing fees and charges to cover all areas of business more thoroughly.
4. The following new fees and charges have been added to the 2025/2026 Schedule of Fees and Charges:

<b>Fee Description</b>	<b>Fee (incl. GST)</b>
<b>Refuse/Rubbish Disposal/Environment</b>	
Munglinup Annual Rubbish Tip fee for non-ratepayer (+bond for access FOB)	220.00
Replacement FOB / Swipe Card Bond	40.00
Oil Disposal – 5lt container	6.20
Oil Disposal – 10lt container	8.20
Oil Disposal - 20lt container (NOTE – containers more than 20lt not accepted)	12.80
Tractor Tyre (up to 1.5m) (no rims)	161.25
<b>Standpipe Water Charges</b>	
Untreated Water – Jerdacuttup (Shire) 1 KL (per 1,000 Litres)	No Charge
Untreated Water – Fitzgerald (Shire) 1 KL (per 1,000 Litres)	No Charge
<b>Engineering Services</b>	
Front end loader (WA320)	222.20
Front end loader (WA430)	245.50
D6 Dozer	300.00

Elevated Work Platform (EWP) Trailer (incl. operator)	135.00
Trailer heavy plant (12,000kg) daily	150.00

5. The following fees and charges have been updated for the 2025/2026 Schedule of Fees and Charges:

Fee Description	Fee (incl. GST)
<b>Rates Administration Fees</b>	
Rates Late Penalty Interest max 11%	11%
<b>Environmental Health Services</b>	
Temporary Accommodation Fee (Up to 30 days)	\$150.00
Temporary Accommodation Fee (Over 30 days and less than 24 months)	\$600.00
Temporary Accommodation Renewal Fee (Over 30 days and less than 24 months)	\$300.00
Annual Registration – Caravan Parks (per annum)	
Minimum Fee	\$200.00
Long Stay (per site)	\$6.00
Short Stay (per site)	\$6.00
Camp Sites (per site)	\$3.00
Overflow Site (per site)	\$1.50
<b>Town Planning Fees</b>	
Extractive Industries – Annual Renewal	\$105.00
Extractive Industries - Bond for Reinstatements (Per Hectare)	\$10,000.00

6. Refuse/Rubbish Disposal/Environment have been updated to reflect services the Shire currently provide and recover cost adequately for staff and plant time.

7. Untreated water charges of no charge have been added for shire stock water locations of Jerdacuttup and Fitzgerald.

8. Wet plant hire rates have been included for additional plant items.

9. The Rates Late Penalty Interest Rate has been returned back to the maximum 11% after being reduced during the COVID period to 7%.

10. Annual registration fees for caravan parks has been aligned with schedules of fees in state government regulations.

11. Extractive Industry fees have been reviewed in line with local regional shires.

## CONSULTATION

12. Internal Managers and Staff

## STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT

13. Sections 6.16 and 6.17 of the *Local Government Act 1995* (Imposition of fees and charges and Setting the level of fees and charges) Clauses 24 & 25 of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996 (Service charges & fees and charges).

## POLICY IMPLICATIONS

14. Nil.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

15. Setting of fees and charges is an integral part of the budget preparation and will assist in predicting other revenue forecasts, other than rates.

## RISK MANAGEMENT

16. The following risks have been identified as a part of this report;

Risk	Likelihood	Consequence	Risk Analysis	Mitigation
Financial	Unlikely	Minor	Low	Fees allow for services to be provided on a user pays principle and reduces subsidy

## ALTERNATE OPTIONS

17. Nil proposed.

## STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

18. This item is relevant to the Councils approved Strategic Community Plan 2020-2030 and Corporate Business Plan 2020-2024.

**Outcome 5: Governance and Leadership** - The Shire of Ravensthorpe partners the community, and is an effective advocate and responsible steward

Item	Objectives and Strategies
5.5	The value of community owned assets is maintained
5.6	Financial systems are effectively managed

## VOTING REQUIREMENTS

19. Absolute Majority

## COUNCIL DECISION

**Moved by Cr Richardson and seconded by Cr Leighton      Resolution # 44/25**

**That Council:**

1. **ADOPT the 2025/2026 Schedule of Fees and Charges as presented; and**
2. **ENDORSE the adopted 2025/2026 Schedule of Fees and Charges to be implemented and effective from the 1 July 2025.**

**Carried 7/0**

## 12.2.6 AUDIT COMMITTEE INDEPENDENT MEMBERS

<b>File Reference:</b>	<b>GR.AU.1</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Applicant:</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Author:</b>	<b>Executive Manager Corporate Services</b>
<b>Authorising Officer</b>	<b>Chief Executive Officer</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>11 June 2025</b>
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	<b>Nil</b>
<b>Attachments:</b>	<b>Nil</b>
<b>Previous Reference:</b>	<b>Nil</b>

### **PURPOSE**

1. The Local Government Amendment Act 2024 requires all council to establish an Audit, Risk, and Improvement Committee (ARIC) to replace the existing Audit Committee.
2. Membership rules prohibit local government employees and council members from serving as the Presiding or Deputy Presiding member of the ARIC.
3. The Shire of Ravensthorpe must recruit two independent members with expertise in financial reporting, audits, governance and risk management.
4. Independent members will serve two-year terms aligned with local government elections.
5. Remuneration is recommended at \$200 per meeting per independent member, within the approved range for Band 3 local governments.

### **BACKGROUND**

6. As specified in the Local Government Act 1995 ('the Act') local governments were required to establish an audit committee of three (3) or more persons to exercise and discharge the duties conferred on it. The members of the audit committee were to be appointed by the local government and at least three (3) of the members, and the majority, being Council members. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) was not permitted to be a member, or nominate a person for membership. The Shire of Ravensthorpe Audit Committee currently consists of all the Shire's elected members.
7. The audit committee plays a key role in assisting a local government in fulfilling its governance and oversight responsibilities, particularly regarding financial reporting, internal controls, risk management, legislative compliance, ethical accountability and audit functions.
8. This legislative reform is designed to add governance strength to the Shire by the use of independent skills and oversight, that may not be available within the elected member group.

### **COMMENT**

9. The Local Government Amendment Act 2024 received assent on 6th of December 2024. As part of this amendment, several changes were made to Part 7 of the Local Government Act 1995, specifically regarding the audit of local governments financial accounts and the conduct of audits.
10. Division A1 section 7.1A of the Local Government Amendment Act 2024 requires all local governments to establish a committee of its council under section 5.8 of 'the Act' to be

called the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC), which was previously known as the Audit committee under previous legislation.

11. The following provisions apply in respect of the membership of the ARIC.
12. An employee of the local government is not to be a member.
13. No member is to be nominated by, or is to be appointed to represent, any employee of the local government.
14. The presiding member of the AIRC cannot be a council member of the local government or any other local government.
15. Any deputy presiding member of the ARIC cannot be a council member of the local government or of any other local government.
16. As a result of the changes provided by the Local Government Amendment Act 2024 the Shire of Ravensthorpe is required to recruit two independent members to the ARIC.
17. Independent members will preside over the ARIC meetings ensuring a level of neutrality and impartial oversight and will be required to have experience and knowledge in the following areas:
  - Financial Reporting.
  - Audit and Assurance.
  - Principles of good organisational governance; and
  - Risk management and internal control principles.
  - Additional desirable skills and experience include:
  - Strong leadership qualities to guide effective committee decisions
  - Analytical skills to assess complex information
  - Knowledge of the local government sector
  - Familiarity with meeting procedures and Local Law Standing Orders; and
  - Awareness of emerging risks such as cyber security and climate change.
  - Independent audit committee members are appointed for a two-year term in line with local government elections. As there are no Audit Committee meetings prior to election day, this will result in the initial appointment from election day 19th October 2025 until the next ordinary election day in October 2027.
18. The remuneration for independent audit committee members is determined in accordance with the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal's guidelines for Band 3 local governments. The approved attendance fee range for Band 3 local governments is between \$0 and \$215, in addition to any reasonable expenses as outlined in the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996 and the relevant Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Determination.
19. It is recommended that Council approve a remuneration payment of \$200 per individual, per meeting attended, as compensation for Independent Audit Committee Members. Currently, the committee holds at least two meetings per year in March and December. Providing appropriate remuneration is essential to attract and retain qualified, experienced, and independent candidates who can effectively contribute to the audit committee's oversight and governance responsibilities.

20. The Shire of Ravensthorpe is required to comply with the Local Government Act 1995 and the Local Government Amendment Act 2004 by establishing an Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) with two independent audit members. These members are deemed to bring essential expertise in governance, risk management, and audit functions to the committee, ensuring neutrality and impartial oversight. To effectively attract qualified candidates, it is recommended that the Shire offer competitive remuneration in line with the Salaries and Allowances Tribunals guidelines. This appointment and the associated changes will strengthen the Shire's governance framework, aligning with both legal requirements and the needs for enhanced oversight in the local government sector.

## **CONSULTATION**

21. Nil.

## **STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT**

22. *Local Government Amendment Act 2024*

Division 1A – Audit, risk and improvement committee

### **7.1 A Establishment of audit, risk and improvement committee.**

A local government must establish a committee of its council under section 5.8 to be called the audit, risk and improvement committee.

The following provisions apply in respect of the membership of the audit, risk and improvement committee:

- An employee of the local government is not to be a member.
- No member is to be nominated by, or is to be appointed to represent, any employee of the local government.
- Section 5.10(1)(b) does not apply.
- The presiding member of the audit, risk and improvement committee cannot be a council member of the local government or of any other local government.
- Any deputy presiding member of the audit, risk and improvement committee cannot be a council member of the local government or of any other local government.

### **7.1 B Deputy of presiding member or of deputy presiding member.**

The local government must appoint a person under section 5.11A to be a deputy of the presiding member of the audit, risk and improvement committee.

In addition to the requirement of section 5.11A(2)(c), the deputy of the presiding member cannot be a council member of any other local government.

If section 5.14 applies to a meeting of the audit, risk and improvement committee, the committee members present at the meeting must choose the deputy of the presiding member, if present, to preside at the meeting.

If the local government appoints a person under section 5.11A to be a deputy of the deputy presiding member of the audit, risk and improvement committee, in addition to the requirement of section 5.11A(2)(c), the appointed deputy cannot be a council member of any other local government.

## **7.1 C Delegation to audit, risk and improvement committee**

The only powers and duties that the local government may delegate to the audit, risk and improvement committee under section 5.16 are as follows:

- any of its powers and duties under this part;
- any prescribed power or duty.

The provision that may be made by regulations for the purposes of subsection (1)(b) is not limited by the other subject matter of this part.

The local government's power to delegate to the audit, risk and improvement committee is not limited by section 5.17.

### **7.1CA Decisions of audit, risk and improvement committee**

Despite section 5.20, a decision of the audit, risk and improvement committee is to be made by a simple majority.

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

23. Nil.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

24. On current meeting regularity \$800 pa, plus workforce time and cost on recruitment every two years.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT**

25. The following risks have been identified as a part of this report;

Risk	Likelihood	Consequence	Risk Analysis	Mitigation
Performance (Operational)	Unlikely	Minor	Low	Conflicts of interest
Financial	Unlikely	Insignificant	Very Low	Nil
Reputational	Unlikely	Insignificant	Low	Nil
Environmental	Rare	Insignificant	Very Low	Nil

## **ALTERNATE OPTIONS**

26. Seek reciprocal arrangements with suitably qualified professionals in neighbouring Shires, or rely solely on remote access to qualified people.

## **STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT**

27. This item is relevant to the Councils approved Strategic Community Plan 2020-2030 and Corporate Business Plan 2020-2024.

**Outcome 5: Governance and Leadership** - The Shire of Ravensthorpe partners the community, and is an effective advocate and responsible steward

Item	Objectives and Strategies
5.2	The Council ensures its decisions are well informed and considered
5.5	The value of community owned assets is maintained
5.6	Financial systems are effectively managed

## **VOTING REQUIREMENTS**

28. Simple Majority

## **OFFICER RECOMMENDATION**

**Moved by Cr Leighton and seconded by Cr Richardson      Resolution # 45/25**

**That Council:**

- 1. RENAMES the audit committee as the 'Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee' (ARIC);**
- 2. AUTHORISES the Chief Executive Officer to initiate the recruitment/search process for both Presiding, and Deputy Presiding, Independent ARIC members; and**
- 3. SETS the remuneration for Independent ARIC members at \$200 per individual, per meeting attended.**

**Carried 7/0**

- 13. MEMBERS NOTIONS OF WHICH PREVIOUS NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN**  
Nil.
- 14. NEW BUSINESS OF AN URGENT NATURE INTRODUCED BY DECISION OF MEETING**  
Nil.
- 15. MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED BEHIND CLOSED DOORS**

**COUNCIL DECISION**

**Moved by Cr Gibson and seconded by Cr Richardson** **Resolution # 46/25**  
**That Council move behind closed doors to consider items 15.1 and 15.2**  
**Carried 7/0**

**Members of the public left the Chambers at 6.39pm**

15.1 Matter relating to commercial in confidence.

**Confidential item 15.1 was endorsed via resolution number 47/25**

15.2 Matter relating to commercial in confidence.

Cr Richardson had disclosed a financial conflict of interest and left the Chambers at 6.45pm.  
Item 15.2 was laid on the table for further discussion at next Council workshop.

**COUNCIL DECISION**

**Moved by Cr Major and seconded by Cr Mudie** **Resolution # 48/25**  
**That Council return from behind closed doors.**  
**Carried 6/0**

Cr Richardson and members of the public returned to Council Chambers at 7.25pm.

**16. CLOSURE**

The Presiding Member declared the meeting closed at 7.26pm.