

WEST ARNHEM



REGIONAL COUNCIL



WEST ARNHEM REGIONAL COUNCIL AGENDA

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, 28 JANUARY 2026



WEST ARNHAM REGIONAL COUNCIL

Notice is hereby given that an Ordinary Meeting of the West Arnhem Regional Council will be held in Council Chambers {meeting-room} on Wednesday 28 January 2026 at 9:00 am.



Katharine Clare Murray
Chief Executive Officer

Code of Conduct: The Local Government Act 2019

As stipulated in Schedule 1 of the Act, the Code of Conduct for Members is as follows:

1. *Honesty and Integrity:* A member must act honestly and with integrity in performing official functions.
2. *Care and diligence:* A member must act with reasonable care and diligence in performing official functions.
3. *Courtesy:* A member must act with courtesy towards other members, council staff, electors and members of the public.
4. *Prohibition on bullying:* A member must not bully another person in the course of performing official functions.
5. *Conduct towards Council staff:* A member must not direct, reprimand, or interfere in the management of, council staff.
6. *Respect for cultural diversity and culture:* A member must respect cultural diversity and must not therefore discriminate against others, or the opinions of others, on the ground of their cultural background.
A member must act with respect for cultural beliefs and practices in relation to other members, council staff, electors and members of the public.
7. *Conflict of interest:* A member must avoid any conflict of interest, whether actual or perceived, when undertaking official functions and responsibilities.
If a conflict of interest exists, the member must comply with any statutory obligations of disclosure.
8. *Respect for confidences:* A member must respect the confidentiality of information obtained in confidence in the member's official capacity.
A member must not make improper use of confidential information obtained in an official capacity to gain a private benefit or to cause harm to another.
9. *Gifts:* Members must not solicit, encourage or accept gifts or private benefits from any person who might have an interest in obtaining a benefit from the council.
A member must not accept a gift from a person that is given in relation to the person's interest in obtaining a benefit from the council.'
10. *Accountability:* A member must be prepared at all times to account for the member's performance as a member and the member's use of council resources.
11. *Interests of municipality, region or shire to be paramount:* A member must act in what the member genuinely believes to be the best interests of the municipality, region or shire.
In particular, a member must seek to ensure that the member's decisions and actions are based on an honest, reasonable and properly informed judgment about what best advances the best interests of the municipality, region or shire.
12. *Training:* A member must undertake relevant training in good faith.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ITEM	SUBJECT	PAGE NO
1	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY AND OPENING OF MEETING.....	7
2	PERSONS PRESENT.....	8
3	APOLOGIES AND ABSENCES	8
3.1	Apologies, Leave of Absence and Absent Without Notice.....	8
4	ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA	9
4.1	Acceptance of Agenda	9
5	DECLARATION OF INTEREST OF MEMBERS OR STAFF	10
5.1	Disclosure of Interest of Members or Staff.....	10
6	STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT.....	11
7	CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES.....	11
7.0	Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes.....	11
8	DEPUTATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS	35
8.1	Presentations and Visitors - Apex Security Group	35
9	ACTION REPORTS.....	36
9.1	Review of Action Items	36
9.2	Filling Casual Vacancies Policy	40
9.3	Australian Local Government Association 2026 National General Assembly	45
9.4	Warruwi and Kakadu By-Election.....	71
9.5	Strategic Plan - Review of Pillars.....	73
9.6	Malbak Aboriginal Corporation - Letter of Support.....	75
9.7	Local Government Association of the NT April 2026 Conference and General Meeting - Alice Springs	77
9.8	Vacancy - Finance Committee.....	79
9.9	Financial report for period ending 31 December 2025.....	82
9.10	Sponsorship Policy	85
9.11	Proposed 4WD Bus for Sporting Events - Usage Agreement	90
9.12	West Arnhem Region - Community Flag Poles	100

9.13 Expenditure of WaRM Grant Funding.....	104
10 RECEIVE AND NOTE REPORTS.....	107
10.1 Incoming and Outgoing Correspondence	107
10.2 Meetings and Events attended by the Mayor	109
10.3 Meetings and Events attended by the CEO	111
10.4 Local Government Association NT - Local Government Act Amendments.....	114
10.5 LGANT Draft Submission - Senate Inquiry into Regional Aviation	169
10.6 LGANT - Gamba Eradication and Biodiversity Conservation (GEB) Project	189
10.7 Technical Services Projects Report	192
10.8 Regional Waste Update	198
10.9 Regional Cemetery Update	218
10.10 Finance Committee Minutes.....	221
10.12 Community and Council Services Report.....	237
10.13 Northern Territory Electoral Commission - West Arnhem Regional Council Election Report	251
11 ELECTED MEMBER QUESTIONS WITH OR WITHOUT NOTICE.....	270
11.1 Elected Member Questions with or without Notice	270
12 PROCEDURAL MOTIONS.....	271
12.1 Closure to the Public for the Discussion of Confidential Items.....	271
13 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS	273
13.1 Confirmation of Confidential Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes.....	273
13.2 Confirmation of Special Council Meeting Minutes	274
13.3 Confidential Finance Committee Minutes	275
13.4 Confidential Action Report	276
13.5 Current Status of Outstanding Regional Land Use Agreements from the Northern Land Council	277
13.6 Warruwi Local Authority Appointment.....	278
13.7 2025-26 Rates and Charges Payment Plans.....	279
13.8 Determination of Allowances for Members of Local Councils.....	280
13.9 Minjilang Lot 175 - Land Use Agreement.....	281
13.10 Council Issued Credit Cards.....	282
13.11 Grants Update.....	283

13.12 Jabiru Child Care Centre Roof	284
13.13 Jabiru Child Care	285
13.14 Chief Executive Officer's Report	286
14 DISCLOSURE OF CONFIDENTIAL RESOLUTIONS AND RE-ADMITTANCE OF THE PUBLIC	287
15 NEXT MEETING	287
16 MEETING DECLARED CLOSED	287

Acknowledgement of Country

West Arnhem Regional Council acknowledges the First Nations Custodians, and the many Language and Family groups who are Managers and Caretakers to each of their Traditional homelands and Waters across the West Arnhem Region Wards.

West Arnhem Regional Council pays its respects and acknowledges Elders, past, present and rising.

WEST ARNHEM REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 JANUARY 2026

Agenda Reference:	3.1
Title:	Apologies, Leave of Absence and Absent Without Notice
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

SUMMARY

This report is to table, for Council's record, any apologies, and requests for leave of absence received by Council's Chief Executive Officer from Elected Members, as well as record any absence without notice for the Ordinary Council meeting held on 28 January 2026.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL:

1. Notes the absence of ...
2. Notes the apology received from Deputy Mayor Jacqueline Phillips;
3. Determines ... are absent with permission of the Council; and
4. Determines ... are absent without permission of the Council.

COMMENT

Council can choose to accept the apologies or requests for leave of absence as presented or not accept them. Apologies or requests for leave of absence that are not accepted by Council will be recorded as absent without notice.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY

Section 47(o) of the *Local Government Act 2019*.

Council's Scheduling and Conduct of Meetings (Elected, Local Authority and Council Committee Members) Policy.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report is aligned to the following pillars and goals in the *Regional Plan and Budget*:

PILLAR 6 FOUNDATIONS OF GOVERNANCE

Integrity is at the heart of everything we do. We are leaders of best practice and excellence in governance, advocacy, consultation and administration. Our processes, procedures and policies are ethical and transparent.

Goal 6.3 Council and Local Authorities

Excellence in governance, consultation administration and representation

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

WEST ARNHAM REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 JANUARY 2026

Agenda Reference:	4.1
Title:	Acceptance of Agenda
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

SUMMARY

Agenda papers are presented for acceptance at the Ordinary Council meeting held on 28 January 2026.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL accepts the agenda papers as circulated for the Ordinary Council meeting held on 28 January 2026.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY

Section 92(1) *Local Government Act 2019*.

Council's Scheduling and Conduct of Meetings (Elected, Local Authority and Council Committee Members) Policy.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report is aligned to the following pillars and goals in the *Regional Plan and Budget*:

PILLAR 6 FOUNDATIONS OF GOVERNANCE

Integrity is at the heart of everything we do. We are leaders of best practice and excellence in governance, advocacy, consultation and administration. Our processes, procedures and policies are ethical and transparent.

Goal 6.3 Council and Local Authorities

Excellence in governance, consultation administration and representation

Goal 6.5 Planning and Reporting

Robust planning and reporting that supports Council's decision-making processes

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

WEST ARNHEM REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 JANUARY 2026

Agenda Reference:	5.1
Title:	Disclosure of Interest of Members or Staff
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

SUMMARY

Elected Members are required to disclose an interest in a matter under consideration at an Ordinary Council Meeting:

- 1) In the case of a matter featured in an officer's report or written agenda item by disclosing the interest to the meeting as soon as possible after the matter is raised.
- 2) In the case of a matter raised in a general debate or by any means other than the printed agenda of the Council meeting, disclosure as soon as possible after the matter is raised.

Under disclosure, the Member must abide by the decision of the Council on whether they shall remain in the Chambers and/or take part in the vote on the issue. The Council may elect to allow the Member to provide further particulars of the interest prior to requesting them to leave the Chambers.

Staff Members of the Council are required to disclose an interest in a matter at any time on which they are required to act or exercise their delegate authority in relation to the matter. Upon disclosure, the staff member is not to act or exercise their delegated authority unless Council expressly directs them to do so.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL acknowledges there were no declarations of interest in relation to the items as listed for consideration during the Council meeting held on 28 January 2026.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT

Section 114 (Elected Members) *Local Government Act 2019*

Section 179 (staff members) *Local Government Act 2019*

Council's Scheduling and Conduct of Meetings (Elected, Local Authority and Council Committee Members) Policy.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report is aligned to the following pillars and goals in the *Regional Plan and Budget*:

PILLAR 6 FOUNDATIONS OF GOVERNANCE

Integrity is at the heart of everything we do. We are leaders of best practice and excellence in governance, advocacy, consultation and administration. Our processes, procedures and policies are ethical and transparent.

Goal 6.4 Risk Management

The monitoring and minimisation of risks associated with the operations of Council.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

WEST ARNHEM REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 JANUARY 2026

Agenda Reference:	7.0
Title:	Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

SUMMARY

The unconfirmed minutes of the Ordinary Council meeting held on Thursday, 20 November 2025 are submitted to Council for confirmation that those minutes are a true and correct record of the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL confirms the minutes of the Ordinary Council meeting held on Thursday, 20 November 2025 as a true and correct record of the meeting.

STATUTORY AND POLICY

Section 101 and 102 *Local Government Act 2019*

Council's Scheduling and Conduct of Meetings (Elected, Local Authority and Council Committee Members) Policy.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report is aligned to the following pillars and goals of the *Regional Plan and Budget*:

PILLAR 6 FOUNDATIONS OF GOVERNANCE

Integrity is at the heart of everything we do. We are leaders of best practice and excellence in governance, advocacy, consultation and administration. Our processes, procedures and policies are ethical and transparent.

Goal 6.3 Council and Local Authorities

Excellence in governance, consultation administration and representation.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 2025-11-20 Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes - Unconfirmed [7.0.1 - 15 pages]



Minutes of the West Arnhem Regional Council Ordinary Council Meeting
Thursday, 20 November 2025 at 9:00 am
Council Chambers

1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY AND OPENING OF MEETING

Mayor James Woods declared the meeting open at 9:06am, welcomed all in attendance and did an Acknowledgement of Country.

2 PERSONS PRESENT

ELECTED MEMBERS PRESENT

Chairperson	James Woods (Mayor)
Deputy Mayor	Jacqueline Phillips (via Teams)
Councillor	Ralph F Blyth (via Teams)
Councillor	Mickitja Onus (via Teams)
Councillor	Jermaine Namanurki
Councillor	Henry Yates (via Teams)
Councillor	Ralph McCoy
Councillor	Steven Nabalmarda

STAFF PRESENT

Chief Executive Officer	Katharine Clare Murray
Director Community and Council Services	Fiona Ainsworth
Director Finance	Jocelyn Nathanael-Walters
Director Technical Services	Grant McKenzie
Manager Technical Services	Kylie Gregson
Governance Advisor	Debbie Branson
Executive Assistant	Violette Stehlin

GUESTS

Santos - Government and Stakeholder Relations Manager	Peta Haughey
Santos - First Nations Engagement Adviser NT/WA	Neil Pomfret

3 APOLOGIES AND ABSENCES

Agenda Reference:	3.1
Title:	Apologies, Leave of Absence and Absent Without Notice
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

The Council considered a report on Apologies, Leave of Absence and Absent Without Notice.

OCM286/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Cr Jermaine Namanurki
Seconded Cr Ralph McCoy

THAT COUNCIL:

1. Notes the apology received from Cr Joseph Diddo and acknowledge Cr Ralph F Blyth and Steven Nabalmarda's late attendance;
2. Determines Cr Joseph Diddo is absent with permission of the Council.

CARRIED

5 ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

Agenda Reference:	5.1
Title:	Acceptance of Agenda
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

The Council considered a report on Acceptance of Agenda.

OCM287/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Mayor James Woods
Seconded Cr Henry Yates

THAT COUNCIL accepts the agenda papers as circulated for the Ordinary Council meeting held on 20 November 2025.

CARRIED

6 DECLARATION OF INTEREST OF MEMBERS OR STAFF

Agenda Reference:	6.1
Title:	Disclosure of Interest of Members or Staff
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

The Council considered a report on Disclosure of Interest of Members or Staff.

The Director Finance declared an interest in Item 8.1 – Presentations and Visitors – Santos – Barossa Aboriginal Future Fund.

The Deputy Mayor Jacqueline Phillips and Cr Henry Yates declared an interest in Item 13.3 – Current Status of Outstanding Regional Land Use Agreements from the Northern Land Council.

Cr Mickitja Onus declared an interest in Item 13.4 – Airports – Future Operations.

The Chief Executive Officer declared an interest in Item 13.5 – LGANT – Call for Nominations – NT Councils Discretionary Trust Advisory Committee.

OCM288/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Cr Henry Yates
Seconded Cr Jermaine Namanurki

THAT COUNCIL acknowledges the declarations of interest disclosed in relation to the item listed for the Ordinary Council meeting held on 20 November 2025.

CARRIED

7 CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Agenda Reference:	7.1
Title:	Confirmation of Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

The Council considered a report on Confirmation of Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes.

OCM289/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Deputy Mayor Jacqueline Phillips
Seconded Cr Ralph McCoy

THAT COUNCIL confirms the minutes of the Ordinary Council meeting held on Wednesday, 29 October 2025 as a true and correct record of the meeting.

CARRIED

Agenda Reference:	7.2
Title:	Confirmation of Special Council Meeting Minutes
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

The Council considered a report on Confirmation of Special Council Meeting Minutes.

Cr Steven Nabalmarda arrived at 9:17am.

OCM290/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Cr Henry Yates
Seconded Cr Ralph McCoy

THAT COUNCIL confirms the minutes of the Special Council meeting held on Thursday, 13 November 2025 as a true and correct record of the meeting.

CARRIED

Order of Business

Item 8 – Deputations and Presentations was deferred until the representatives had arrived.

9 ACTION REPORTS

Agenda Reference:	9.1
Title:	Review of Action Items
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

The Council considered a report on Review of Action Items.

OCM291/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Cr Mickitja Onus
Seconded Cr Steven Nabalmarda

THAT COUNCIL:

1. Receives and notes the report titled *Review of Action Items*; and
2. Reviews the outstanding action items and give approval for completed items to be removed from the register including the RJEDP items.

CARRIED

Meeting adjourned at 9:41am to receive an update on Cyclone Thina and the weather conditions across the region.

The meeting reconvened at 9:45am.

Agenda Reference:	9.2
Title:	LGANT - Call for Nominations - NT Water Safety Advisory Council
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

The Council considered a report on LGANT - Call for Nominations - NT Water Safety Advisory Council.

OCM292/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Cr Ralph McCoy
Seconded Cr Jermaine Namanurki

THAT COUNCIL:

1. Receives and notes the report titled *LGANT - Call for Nominations - NT Water Safety Advisory Council*; and
2. Endorses Deputy Mayor Jacqueline Phillips' nomination to the Royal Life Saving Society NT, NT Water Safety Advisory Council and advise Local Government Association of the NT

CARRIED

Agenda Reference:	9.3
Title:	LGANT - Call for Nominations - NT Place Names Committee
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

The Council considered a report on LGANT - Call for Nominations - NT Place Names Committee.

OCM293/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Mayor James Woods
Seconded Cr Ralph McCoy

THAT COUNCIL:

1. Receives and notes the report titled *LGANT - Call for Nominations - NT Place Names Committee*; and
2. Endorses the nomination of the Director of Finance to the Department of Lands, Planning and Environment NT Place Names Committee and advises the Local Government Association of the NT.

CARRIED

Meeting adjourned at 9:54am and reconvened at 10:06am.

Agenda Reference:	9.4
Title:	Financial report for period ending 31 October 2025
Author:	Jocelyn Nathanael-Walters, Director Finance

The Council considered a report on Financial report for period ending 31 October 2025.

OCM294/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Cr Ralph McCoy
Seconded Mayor James Woods

THAT COUNCIL

1. Receives and notes the report titled *Financial report for period ending 31 October 2025*;
2. Approves the Acquittal of Critical upgrades to Minjilang staff housing (IPG);
3. Approves the Acquittal of Purchase of a new garbage compactor for Minjilang (IPG); and
4. Approves the Acquittal of West Arnhem Cemetery Establishment Program.

CARRIED

8 DEPUTATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Agenda Reference:	8.1
Title:	Presentations and Visitors - Santos - Barossa Aboriginal Future Fund
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

The Council considered a report on Presentations and Visitors - Santos - Barossa Aboriginal Future Fund.

Peta Haughey, Government and Stakeholder Relations Manager and Neil Pomfret, First Nations Engagement Adviser NT/WA joined the meeting at 10:30am and left at 11:03am.

OCM295/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Mayor James Woods
Seconded Cr Jermaine Namanurki

THAT COUNCIL notes the presentations by Santos in relation to the Barossa Aboriginal Future Fund.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 11:04am and reconvened at 11:25am.

Cr Ralph F Blyth joined the meeting at 11:25am.

Agenda Reference:	8.2
Title:	Presentations and Visitors - Local Government Association NT Chief Executive Officer
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

The Council considered a report on Presentations and Visitors - Local Government Association NT Chief Executive Officer.

LGANT Chief Executive Officer, Mary Watson joined the meeting at 11:25am and left at 12:03pm.

OCM296/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Cr Ralph McCoy
Seconded Cr Jermaine Namanurki

THAT COUNCIL notes the presentations by the Local Government Association of the NT, Chief Executive Officer Mary Watson.

CARRIED

Meeting adjourned at 12:05pm and reconvened at 12:39pm.

Agenda Reference:	8.4
Title:	Presentations and Visitors - NT Police
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

The presentation was cancelled due to the representative's priorities in relation to the severe weather conditions within the region.

Agenda Reference:	8.5
Title:	Presentations and Visitors - National Indigenous Australians Agency
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

This item was scheduled for Friday, 21 November 2025 after the meeting had closed.

10 RECEIVE AND NOTE REPORTS

Agenda Reference:	10.1
Title:	Incoming and Outgoing Correspondence
Author:	Violette Stehlin, Acting Executive Assistant to Mayor and CEO

The Council considered a report on Incoming and Outgoing Correspondence.

OCM297/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Cr Mickitja Onus
Seconded Cr Henry Yates

THAT COUNCIL receives and notes the attached items of incoming and outgoing correspondence including:

- * Department of Housing, Local Government and Community Development - Delay to 2024/25 Local Authority Project Funding Certification and Project Reports;
- * NT Australia Government Gazette - Appointment of Financial Controller;
- * Jabiru Area School - 2025 Annual Awards Sponsorship; and
- * Kakadu Air - Jabiru Airport.

CARRIED

Agenda Reference:	10.2
Title:	Meetings and Events attended by the Mayor
Author:	Violette Stehlin, Acting Executive Assistant to Mayor and CEO

The Council considered a report on Meetings and Events attended by the Mayor.

OCM298/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Cr Steven Nabalmarda
Seconded Deputy Mayor Jacqueline Phillips

THAT COUNCIL receives and notes the report titled *Meetings and Events attended by the Mayor*.

CARRIED

Agenda Reference:	10.3
Title:	Meetings and Events attended by the CEO
Author:	Violette Stehlin, Acting Executive Assistant to Mayor and CEO

The Council considered a report on Meetings and Events attended by the CEO.

OCM299/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Cr Ralph Blyth
Seconded Cr Jermaine Namanurki

THAT COUNCIL receives and notes the report titled *Meetings and Events attended by the CEO*.

CARRIED

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Cr Ralph F Blyth made his Statement of Commitment as he was absent at the first meeting of the new Council.

Agenda Reference:	10.4
Title:	Community and Council Services Report
Author:	Fiona Ainsworth, Director of Community and Council Services

The Council considered a report on Community and Council Services Report.

OCM300/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Cr Ralph F Blyth
Seconded Cr Mickitja Onus

THAT COUNCIL receives and notes the report entitled *Community and Council Services Report*.

CARRIED

Agenda Reference:	10.5
Title:	Regional Waste Update
Author:	Meredith Newall, Waste and Resource Coordinator

The Council considered a report on Regional Waste Update.

OCM301/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Cr Ralph McCoy
Seconded Deputy Mayor Jacqueline Phillips

THAT COUNCIL receives and notes the report titled *Regional Waste Update*.

CARRIED

Agenda Reference:	10.6
Title:	Regional Cemetery Update
Author:	Meredith Newall, Waste and Resource Coordinator

The Council considered a report on Regional Cemetery Update.

OCM302/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Cr Steven Nabalmarda
Seconded Cr Henry Yates

THAT COUNCIL receives and notes the report titled *Regional Cemetery Update*.

CARRIED

Agenda Reference:	10.7
Title:	Technical Services Projects Report
Author:	Kylie Gregson, Manager Technical Services

The Council considered a report on Technical Services Projects Report.

OCM303/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Cr Ralph McCoy
Seconded Mayor James Woods

THAT COUNCIL receives and notes the report titled *Technical Services Projects Report*.

CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 2:13pm and reconvened at 2:27pm.

Agenda Reference:	10.8
Title:	LGANT - Call for Nominations - NT Planning Commission
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

The Council considered a report on LGANT - Call for Nominations - NT Planning Commission.

OCM304/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Mayor James Woods
Seconded Cr Ralph McCoy

THAT COUNCIL receives and notes the report titled *LGANT - Call for Nominations - NT Planning Commission*.

CARRIED

Agenda Reference:	10.9
Title:	Vacancy - Finance Committee
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

The Council considered a report on Vacancy - Finance Committee.

OCM305/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Mayor James Woods
Seconded Cr Mickitja Onus

THAT COUNCIL:

1. receives and notes the report titled *Vacancy - Finance Committee*; and
2. appoints Cr Ralph F Blyth as a member of the Finance Committee for a temporary appointment until permanently filled.

CARRIED

Agenda Reference:	10.10
Title:	Cultural Training in Communities
Author:	Katharine Murray, Chief Executive Officer

The Council considered a report on Cultural Training in Communities.

OCM306/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Cr Jermaine Namanurki
Seconded Cr Steven Nabalmarda

THAT Council receives and notes the report titled *Cultural Training in Communities*.

CARRIED

Agenda Reference:	10.11
Title:	Draft First Nations Employment Plan and Survey - Feedback
Author:	Katharine Murray, Chief Executive Officer

The Council considered a report on Draft First Nations Employment Plan and Survey - Feedback.

OCM307/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Cr Ralph McCoy
Seconded Cr Steven Nabalmarda

THAT COUNCIL receives and notes the report titled *Draft First Nations Employment Plan and Survey - Feedback*.

CARRIED

Agenda Reference:	10.12
Title:	Implementation of Remote Jobs and Economic Development Program
Author:	Fiona Ainsworth, Director of Community and Council Services

The Council considered a report on Implementation of Remote Jobs and Economic Development Program.

OCM308/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Cr Ralph F Blyth
Seconded Mayor James Woods

THAT COUNCIL receives and notes the report titled *Implementation of Remote Jobs and Economic Development Program*.

CARRIED

11 ELECTED MEMBER QUESTIONS WITH OR WITHOUT NOTICE

Agenda Reference:	11.1
Title:	Elected Member Questions with or without Notice
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

The Council considered a report on Elected Member Questions with or without Notice.

OCM309/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Cr Ralph F Blyth
Seconded Mayor James Woods

THAT Council acknowledge the following questions:

- Gunbalanya Flag poles, flags and solar lights – referred to Local Authority;
- Warruwi Flag poles – confirmation;
- Maningrida Airport – shelter / enclosed facility; and
- Cyclone shelters, Minjilang, Warruwi and Maningrida – priority discussions with NIAA, Closing the Gap (Priority Reform 2) and governments.

CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 3:11pm, scheduled to reconvene on Friday, 21 November 2025 at 10:05am with the absence of Cr Ralph F Blyth.

12 PROCEDURAL MOTIONS

Agenda Reference:	12.1
Title:	Closure to the Public for the Discussion of Confidential Items
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

The Council considered a report on Closure to the Public for the Discussion of Confidential Items.

OCM310/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Cr Henry Yates
Seconded Cr Ralph McCoy

THAT pursuant to section 99(2) and 293(1) of the Local Government Act 2019 and section 52 of the Local Government (General) Regulations 2021 the meeting be closed to the public at {time} to consider the Confidential items of the Agenda.

CARRIED

13 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

Agenda Reference:	13.1
Title:	Confirmation of Confidential Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

OCM311/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Mayor James Woods
Seconded Cr Jermaine Namanurki

THAT COUNCIL confirms the confidential minutes of the Ordinary Council meeting held on Wednesday, 29 October 2025 as a true and correct record of the meeting.

CARRIED

Agenda Reference:	13.2
Title:	Confidential Special Council Meeting Minutes
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

OCM312/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Cr Henry Yates
Seconded Cr Ralph McCoy

THAT COUNCIL confirms the confidential minutes of the Special Council meeting held on Thursday, 13 November 2025 as a true and correct record of that meeting.

CARRIED

Agenda Reference:	13.3
Title:	Current Status of Outstanding Regional Land Use Agreements from the Northern Land Council
Author:	Clem Beard, Project Manager

OCM313/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Mayor James Woods
Seconded Cr Jermaine Namanurki

THAT COUNCIL:

1. Receives and notes the report titled Current Status of Outstanding Regional Land Use Agreements from the Northern Land Council; and
2. Notes the status of outstanding Land Use Agreements.

CARRIED

Agenda Reference:	13.4
Title:	Airports - Future Operation
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

OCM314/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Deputy Mayor Jacqueline Phillips
Seconded Cr Steven Nabalmarda

THAT COUNCIL:

1. Receive, accept and note the report titled *Airports - Future Operation*; and
2. Investigate the proposal further and report to Council at the Ordinary Council Meeting in February 2026.

CARRIED

Agenda Reference:	13.5
Title:	LGANT - Call for Nominations - NT Councils Discretionary Trust Advisory Committee
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

OCM315/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Mayor James Woods
Seconded Deputy Mayor Jacqueline Phillips

THAT COUNCIL:

1. Receives and notes the report titled *LGANT - Call for Nominations - NT Councils Discretionary Trust Advisory Committee*; and
2. Endorses the nomination of Chief Executive Officer, Katharine Murray to the NT Councils Discretionary Trust Advisory Committee and advise LGANT accordingly.

CARRIED

14 DISCLOSURE OF CONFIDENTIAL RESOLUTIONS AND RE-ADMITTANCE OF THE PUBLIC

Agenda Reference:	14.1
Title:	Disclosure of Confidential Resolutions and Re-admittance of the Public
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

OCM316/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Cr Steven Nabalmarada
Seconded Cr Henry Yates

THAT COUNCIL:

1. Approves to disclose the following selected resolutions from the confidential section of this meeting in the non-confidential meeting minutes:
 - Item 13.1 Confidential Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes
 - Item 13.2 Confidential Special Council Meeting Minutes
 - Item 13.3 Current Status of Outstanding Regional Land Use Agreements from the Northern Land Council
 - Item 13.4 Airports - Future Operation
 - Item 13.5 LGANT - Call for Nominations - NT Councils Discretionary Trust Advisory Committee
2. Opens the meeting to the public at 10:51am after the discussion of confidential items.

CARRIED

15 MEETING DECLARED CLOSED

Mayor James Woods declared the meeting closed at 10:52am.

This page and the preceding pages are the minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on Thursday 20 November 2025.

Click [here](#) to view the agenda for the Ordinary Council Meeting held on Thursday 20 November 2025.

16 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, 28 January 2026.

WEST ARNHEM REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 JANUARY 2026

Agenda Reference:	7.2
Title:	Special Council Meeting Minutes
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

SUMMARY

The unconfirmed minutes of the Special Council meeting held on Thursday, 11 December 2025 are submitted to Council for confirmation that those minutes are a true and correct record of the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL confirms the minutes of the Special Council meeting held on Thursday, 11 December 2025 as a true and correct record of the meeting.

STATUTORY AND POLICY

Section 101 and 102 *Local Government Act 2019*

Council's Scheduling and Conduct of Meetings (Elected, Local Authority and Council Committee Members) Policy.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report is aligned to the following pillars and goals of the *Regional Plan and Budget*:

PILLAR 6 FOUNDATIONS OF GOVERNANCE

Integrity is at the heart of everything we do. We are leaders of best practice and excellence in governance, advocacy, consultation and administration. Our processes, procedures and policies are ethical and transparent.

Goal 6.3 Council and Local Authorities

Excellence in governance, consultation administration and representation.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 2025-12-11 Special Council Meeting Minutes [7.2.1 - 7 pages]



Minutes of the West Arnhem Regional Council Special Council Meeting
Thursday, 11 December 2025 at 11:00 am
Council Chambers

1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY AND OPENING OF MEETING

Mayor James Woods declared the meeting open at 11:05am, welcomed all in attendance and did an Acknowledgement of Country.

2 PERSONS PRESENT

ELECTED MEMBERS PRESENT

Chairperson	James Woods (Mayor)
Councillor	Mickitja Onus
Councillor	Jermaine Namanurki
Councillor	Henry Yates
Councillor	Ralph McCoy
Councillor	Steven Nabalmarra

STAFF PRESENT

Chief Executive Officer	Katharine Clare Murray
Director Finance	Jocelyn Nathanael-Walters
Director Technical Services	Grant McKenzie
Governance Advisor	Debbie Branson

3 APOLOGIES AND ABSENCES

Agenda Reference:	3.1
Title:	Apologies, Leave of Absence and Absent Without Notice
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

The Council considered a report on Apologies, Leave of Absence and Absent Without Notice.

SCM83/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Cr Steven Nabalmarda
Seconded Cr Jermaine Namanurki

THAT COUNCIL

1. Notes the apology received from Deputy Mayor, Jacqueline Phillips; Cr Joseph Diddo and Cr Ralph F Blyth; and
2. Determines Deputy Mayor Jacqueline Phillips, Cr Diddo and Cr Ralph F Blyth are absent with permission of the Council.

CARRIED

4 ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

Agenda Reference:	4.1
Title:	Acceptance of Agenda
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

The Council considered a report on Acceptance of Agenda

SCM84/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Mayor James Woods
Seconded Cr Ralph McCoy

THAT COUNCIL accepts the agenda papers as circulated for the Special Council meeting held on 11 December 2025.

CARRIED

5 DECLARATION OF INTEREST OF MEMBERS OR STAFF

Agenda Reference:	5.1
Title:	Disclosure of Interest of Members or Staff
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

The Council considered a report on Disclosure of Interest of Members or Staff.

SCM85/2025 RESOLVED:
 On the motion of Cr Mickitja Onus
 Seconded Cr Steven Nabalmarda

THAT COUNCIL acknowledges there were no declarations of interest in relation to the items as listed for consideration during the Special Council meeting held on 11 December 2025.

CARRIED

6 ACTION REPORTS

Agenda Reference:	6.1
Title:	Threshold Value for a Contract
Author:	Jocelyn Nathanael-Walters, Director of Finance

The Council considered a report on Threshold Value for a Contract.

SCM86/2025 RESOLVED:
 On the motion of Mayor James Woods
 Seconded Cr Ralph McCoy

THAT COUNCIL:

1. Receives and notes the report titled *Threshold Value for a Contract*; and
2. Approves the Chief Executive Officer be delegated the power to enter into a contract, except a lease for land and buildings, of a value up to \$2 million on behalf of the Council.

CARRIED

Agenda Reference:	6.2
Title:	Fraud and Corruption Control Policy
Author:	Jocelyn Nathanael-Walters, Director of Finance

The Council considered a report on Fraud and Corruption Control Policy.

SCM87/2025 RESOLVED:
 On the motion of Mayor James Woods
 Seconded Cr Mickitja Onus

THAT COUNCIL:

1. receives and notes the report titled *Fraud and Corruption Control Policy*; and
2. approves the Fraud and Corruption Control Policy.

CARRIED

7 RECEIVE AND NOTE REPORTS

Agenda Reference:	7.1
Title:	Power and Water Corporation and Heads of Agency Maningrida
Author:	Katharine Murray, Chief Executive Officer

The Council considered a report on Power and Water Corporation and Heads of Agency Maningrida.

SCM88/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Mayor James Woods
Seconded Cr Henry Yates

THAT COUNCIL receives and notes the report titled *Power and Water Corporation and Heads of Agency Maningrida*.

CARRIED

8 PROCEDURAL MOTIONS

Agenda Reference:	8.1
Title:	Closure to the Public for the Discussion of Confidential Items
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

The Council considered a report on Closure to the Public for the Discussion of Confidential Items.

SCM89/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Cr Steven Nabalmarda
Seconded Cr Henry Yates

THAT pursuant to section 99(2) and 293(1) of the Local Government Act 2019 and section 52 of the Local Government (General) Regulations 2021 the meeting be closed to the public at 11:38am to consider the Confidential items of the Agenda.

CARRIED

9 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

Agenda Reference:	9.1
Title:	2025-26 Budget Review
Author:	Jocelyn Nathanael-Walters, Director of Finance

SCM90/2025 RESOLVED:

On the motion of Cr Ralph McCoy

Seconded Cr Jermaine Namanurki

THAT COUNCIL:

1. Receive and note the report titled *2025-26 Budget Review*; and
2. Approve the revised 2025-26 Budget and Long-Term Financial Plan subject to the following additional 2025-26 budget items:
 - a. Transfer to a balance sheet provision account \$40,000 for the CEO to begin systematic replacement of council's aged IT equipment;
 - b. Create a Sponsorship Reserve and transfer to that reserve up to \$30,000 from savings in 2025-26;
 - c. Create a Capital Reserve project to replace Jabiru Water Meters and transfer to that reserve up to \$30,000 from savings in 2025-26;
 - d. Create a Capital Reserve project for Fleet Replacements and transfer to that reserve up to \$32,500 from 2025-26 surplus funds;
 - e. Increase the unallocated Capital Reserve balance by \$50,000 to become \$200,000 for future capital projects; and
 - f. Repurpose the balance of budgeted 2025-26 savings to elected member travel to facilitate council meetings in council's Local Authority areas and the provision to visit another council.

CARRIED

Agenda Reference:	9.2
Title:	Local Government Act - Amendments
Author:	Katharine Murray, Chief Executive Officer

The Council considered a report on Local Government Act - Amendments.

SCM91/2025 RESOLVED:

On the motion of Mayor James Woods

Seconded Cr Micketja Onus

THAT COUNCIL receive and note the report titled *Local Government Act - Amendments*.

CARRIED

Agenda Reference:	9.3
Title:	Maningrida Region Project Development Consortium
Author:	Katharine Murray, Chief Executive Officer

The Council considered a report on Maningrida Region Project Development Consortium.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:27pm and reconvened at 1:02pm.

SCM92/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Cr Micketja Onus
Seconded Cr Ralph McCoy

THAT COUNCIL:

1. Receive and note the report titled *Maningrida Region Project Development Consortium*;
2. Support the Maningrida Region Project Development Consortium proposal; and
3. Agree that the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer signatures are applied to the draft stakeholder's letter.

CARRIED

Agenda Reference:	10.1
Title:	Disclosure of Confidential Resolutions and Re-admittance of the Public
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

The Council considered a report on Disclosure of Confidential Resolutions and Re-admittance of the Public.

SCM93/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Mayor James Woods
Seconded Cr Jermaine Namanurki

THAT COUNCIL:

1. Approve to disclose the following resolutions from the confidential section of this meeting in the non-confidential meeting minutes;
Item 9.1 2025-26 Budget Review
Item 9.2 Local Government Act Amendments
Item 9.3 Maningrida Region Project Development Consortium; and
2. Open the meeting to the public at 1:25pm after the discussion of confidential items.

CARRIED

The public was re-admitted at 1:25pm.

11 MEETING DECLARED CLOSED

Mayor James Woods declared the meeting closed at 1:26pm.

This page and the preceding pages are the minutes of the Special Council Meeting held on Thursday 11 December 2025.

Click [here](#) to view the agenda for the Special Council Meeting held on Thursday 11 December 2025.

UNCONFIRMED

WEST ARNHem REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 JANUARY 2026

Agenda Reference:	8.1
Title:	Presentations and Visitors - Apex Security Group
Author:	Violette Stehlin, Acting Executive Assistant to Mayor and CEO

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a presentation by one of the various stakeholders within the region.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL notes the presentation by Apex Security Group Director, Andrew Olive.

BACKGROUND

At various times, Council requests that presentations be made so that issues can be raised and information shared.

Apex Security Group Director, Andrew Olive, has been invited to provide an overview of the security support their organisation can offer to Maningrida.

COMMENT

Andrew Olive will be in attendance via TEAMS on Wednesday, 28 January 2026 at 10:00am.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report is aligned to the following pillars and goals of the *Regional Plan and Budget*:

PILLAR 1 PARTNERSHIPS, RELATIONSHIPS AND BELONGING

Investing in relationships and partnerships at all levels supports and strengthens community and belonging. We prioritise the value of partnerships and relationships as a key determinant of a happy, strong and thriving community.

Goal 1.1 Community Engagement

Seek out and support diverse perspectives and collaborations with community, community leaders, businesses, agencies and local service providers to enhance community life.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

WEST ARNHEM REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 JANUARY 2026

Agenda Reference:	9.1
Title:	Review of Action Items
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

SUMMARY

This report is submitted for Council to review and discuss the progress on outstanding action items from Council meetings.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL:

1. Receives and notes the report titled *Review of Action Items*; and
2. Reviews the outstanding action items and gives approval for completed items to be removed from the register.

BACKGROUND

Action items arise out of resolutions of Council or questions asked by Councillors. The attached register provides the current status of the action items as provided by the administration. The administration recommends items as complete but it is for Council to determine whether the item remains active or is complete and can be removed.

COMMENT

The actions that Council resolves to occur are to be acted upon by the administration. This report enables Council to progressively discuss and acknowledge the status of items.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report is aligned to the following pillars and goals in the *Regional Plan and Budget*:

PILLAR 6 FOUNDATIONS OF GOVERNANCE

Integrity is at the heart of everything we do. We are leaders of best practice and excellence in governance, advocacy, consultation and administration. Our processes, procedures and policies are ethical and transparent.

Goal 6.3 Council and Local Authorities

Excellence in governance, consultation administration and representation.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Actions - Open [9.1.1 - 3 pages]

Action Report

Meeting Date	Document	Status	Action Required	Assignees	Action Taken
30/06/2025	Ordinary Council Meeting - 30 June 2025	In Progress	Cultural Training OCM157/2025 RESOLVED: Request a draft policy be prepared to be considered further at a future workshop which will include consultation with the local authorities.	Katharine Murray, Luisa Arango	Council approved the proposed topics. Consultation with the Local Authorities will commence in March 2026.
29/10/2025	Ordinary Council Meeting - 29 October 2025	In Progress	Risk Management and Audit Committee OCM264/2025 RESOLVED: Draft Terms of Reference to Ordinary Council Meeting January 2026 and fill vacancy in Council Members	Jocelyn Nathanael-Walters	
29/10/2025	Ordinary Council Meeting - 29 October 2025	Recommend Complete	Jabiru Town By-Laws OCM274/2025 RESOLVED: Review by-laws, policies and procedures step by step at the Kakadu Ward Advisory Committee.	Fiona Ainsworth	Referred to the Kakadu Ward Advisory Committee in March 2026.
29/10/2025	Ordinary Council Meeting - 29 October 2025	In Progress	Animal Management - Communities OCM284/2025 RESOLVED Advise rangers in each community concerns in relation to managing feral animals, in particular to buffalo, wild pigs and dingos.	Fiona Ainsworth	Administration has reached out to rangers in respective communities: Gunbalanya - Njanjma Rangers are currently in community consultation to determine a strategy to manage the feral animals in community and have suggested a meeting with Council in January to provide update. Jabiru - KNP do not have a strategy in place for Jabiru township but are open to discuss further. Djurrubu Rangers have not been available to discuss. Warrwui - Mardbalk Sea Rangers have a Healthy Country Plan in conjunction with NLC and TOs and are monitoring animal numbers and collecting data to formulate strategy. Minjilang - Garngi Community Rangers are unable to comment as no coordinator on island. Maningrida - Have been unable to make contact with Bawinanga/Djelk Rangers. Will provide further updates when received.

29/04/2025	Ordinary Council Meeting - 29 April 2025	In Progress	Carpark Sealing at the rear of Maningrida Council Office OCM101/2025 RESOLVED: Explore options of relocating water line through Power Water to facilitate further car park options.	Kylie Gregson	Council has requested quotes for consideration. This matter will be handed to the Regional Roads Manager once recruitment takes place, position is currently advertised.
29/04/2025	Ordinary Council Meeting - 29 April 2025	In Progress	Maningrida Airport Fencing OCM106/2025 RESOLVED: The need for permanent fencing.	Grant Mckenzie, Kylie Gregson	At beginning of November DLI received confirmation of project funding. This is comprised \$500,000 Australian Government funding matched by \$500,000 Northern Territory Government funding. Procurement will proceed with a forecast project delivery during the 2026 dry season.
29/04/2025	Ordinary Council Meeting - 29 April 2025	Recommend Complete	Gunbalanya Airport Fencing OCM106/2025 RESOLVED: Director to provide regular updates to Council.	Grant Mckenzie	Completed November 2025.
21/05/2024	Ordinary Council Meeting - 21 May 2024	In Progress	AFL West Arnhem OCM157/2023 RESOLVED: Request increased advocacy for AFL in West Arnhem Region - refer to WFL in West Arnhem document. BACKGROUND Marnie Mitchell: Through a partnership with AFL NT remote development managers will help support program and development sessions for both Minjilang and Warruwi with WARC covering accommodation / travel / meal costs and AFLNT cover wages of the staff. Community leadership are working together to facilitate the community visits bimonthly. Council Services Manager continue to support AFL initiatives within their Sport and Recreation Teams. OCM109/2024 RESOLVED: Requests further information on the details including costs of Tiwi Bomber football team for AFTNT. OCM215/2024 RESOLVED A pproach West Arnhem stakeholders to support the development of a West Arnhem AFL team.	Fiona Ainsworth	Meeting held Friday 28 November 2025 with ALF and CEO and Mayor WARC. Further information report to follow in March 2026.

20/11/2025	Ordinary Council Meeting - 20 November 2025	In Progress	Council's Medium to Long Term Financial Position SCM79/2025 RESOLVED: Require the CEO to provide an updated report on Council's medium to longer term financial position, with the 2025-26 budget review, between January and April 2026.	Jocelyn Nathanael-Walters	Approximately March / April 2026.
20/11/2025	Ordinary Council Meeting - 20 November 2025	Recommend Complete	Vacancy - Finance Committee OCM305/2025 RESOLVED: Permanent appointment to be made by Council.	Debbie Branson	Refer to report within the agenda.
20/11/2025	Ordinary Council Meeting - 20 November 2025	Recommend Complete	Flag Poles within Communities OCM309/2025 RESOLVED: Requested details of flags across the community.	Grant Mckenzie	Refer to report within the agenda.
20/11/2025	Ordinary Council Meeting - 20 November 2025	In Progress	Cyclone Shelters OCM309/2025 RESOLVED: Minjilang, Warruwi and Maningrida - priority discussions with NIAA, Closing the Gap (Priority Reform 2) and governments.	Katharine Murray	Attempted meeting with NIAA delayed.
18/06/2024	Ordinary Council Meeting - 18 June 2024	On Hold	Fleet Disposal Policy OCM137/2024 RESOLVED: Request policy of fleet disposal to be updated to include assessment of each vehicle and expression of interests within community before auction in Darwin.	Kylie Gregson	Delegations Manual needs to be rationalised before Asset Management Policy can proceed.
18/06/2024	Ordinary Council Meeting - 18 June 2024	In Progress	Identification Services OCM6/2025 RESOLVED: Request Council partner with MVR to assist with certifying documents for identification services.	Fiona Ainsworth	MVR Director has advised MOU is still under lawyer consideration and draft is not yet available to present.
18/12/2024	Ordinary Council Meeting - 18 December 2024	Recommend Complete	Sponsorship Proposal OCM393/2024 RESOLVED: Request a policy be created for Sponsorship and Donations	Jocelyn Nathanael-Walters	Refer to report within the agenda.

WEST ARNHEM REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 JANUARY 2026

Agenda Reference:	9.2
Title:	Filling Casual Vacancies Policy
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an updated version of the Filling Casual Vacancies Policy and seek Council's endorsement.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL:

1. Receives and notes the report titled *Filling Casual Vacancies Policy*; and
2. Endorses the updated Filling Casual Vacancies Policy as attached to the report.

BACKGROUND

Council must fill a casual vacancy for an ordinary member and an appointed Principal Member under the legislation in accordance with its policy.

The Council's current policy is due for review.

Minor amendments have been made to the current policy. The proposed policy aligns with the department's guidelines and includes the appointment of a vacant Deputy Mayor.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY

Local Government Act NT 2019 (s54)

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report is aligned to the following pillars and goals of the *Regional Plan and Budget*:

PILLAR 6 FOUNDATIONS OF GOVERNANCE

Integrity is at the heart of everything we do. We are leaders of best practice and excellence in governance, advocacy, consultation and administration. Our processes, procedures, and policies are ethical and transparent.

Goal 6.3 Council and Local Authorities

Excellence in governance, consultation, administration and representation.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Filling Casual Vacancies v2 (1) [9.2.1 - 4 pages]



Policy Name	Filling Casual Vacancies	
Publication Date:		
Council Decision (Reference):		
Classification:	Governance Policy	
Categorisation:	Governance	
Review Frequency:	3 years	
Review Date:	28/01/2029	
Responsible Officer:	Governance Advisor, Office of the CEO	
Version (Revision Number):	2.0	

1. PURPOSE

This policy outlines how casual vacancies for the position of an ordinary member and an appointed Mayor and Deputy Mayor, may be filled.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all casual vacancies for Elected Members with Council.

3. DEFINITIONS

In the context of this policy the following definitions apply:

Casual vacancy means a vacancy in the office of a member of Council.

Ordinary member means an Elected Member of Council who is not the Mayor or Deputy Mayor.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

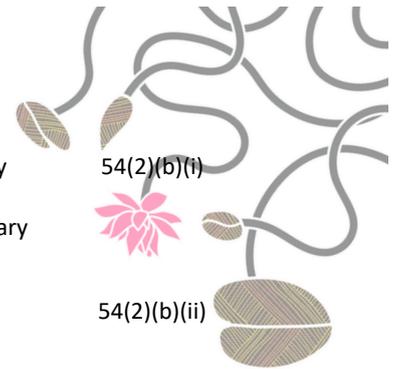
Casual Vacancies – Ordinary Member

Council will fill casual vacancies in the office of an ordinary member as follows:

Date Vacancy Occurs	Action	Section of the Act
18 months or more before the next general election.	Council will hold a by-election to fill the vacancy.	54(2)c
Less than 18 months, but not less than 6 months, before the next general election.	Council will appoint a person to fill the vacancy until the next general election (in accordance with the clause on filling the office of an ordinary member – see below).	54(2)a



6 months or less, but not less than 3 months, before the next general election.	Council will appoint a person to fill the vacancy until the next general election (in accordance with the clause on filling the office of an ordinary member – see below).
3 months or less before the next general election.	Council will leave the office of the ordinary member vacant.



Filling the Office of an Ordinary Member

As soon as practicable after the casual vacancy occurs in the office of an ordinary member, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will advertise the vacancy for appointment by publishing an advertisement in a local newspaper, on the council website, and on council noticeboards in the community.

The advertisement will:

- Invite applications from electors who are:
 - Eligible under section 46 of the Act; and
 - Enrolled in the relevant ward; and
- Invite applicants to provide either a written statement (1 page) or video submission (3 minutes) that outlines why the person wants to be a Council Member and the qualities they would contribute to the Council; and
- Advise that the written statement or video submission of the applicant may be made public by the Council.

The closing date for applications will be four (4) weeks (20 business days) from the date the advertisement is published in the local newspaper and on the council website.

As soon as practicable after the closing date, the CEO will provide copies of all applicant statements to all Council Members. At the next ordinary Council Meeting following the closing date, the matter is to be included as an agenda item for Council's consideration.

When appointing a person to be a Council Member, Council will give due consideration to:

- The person's level of community involvement;
- The person's suitability for the role; and
- Any other relevant matters.

Council will decide the appointment by resolution, to take effect seven (7) days after the date of the resolution.

The CEO is to ensure the successful applicant is advised of their appointment to Council and that an induction to the position is undertaken as soon as practicable.

Casual Vacancies – Mayor and Deputy Mayor

As appointment is the basis for filling the office of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, Council will fill casual vacancies in the office of the Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor as follows:



Date Vacancy Occurs	Action	Section of the Act
18 months or more before the next general election.	Council will appoint an existing Council Member to be the Mayor/Deputy Mayor, by vote of existing members (in accordance with the clause below on Appointing a Mayor or Deputy Mayor). Council will hold a by-election to fill the vacancy in the office of an ordinary member.	65(2)(a) 54(2)c
Less than 18 months, but not less than 6 months, before the next general election.	Council will appoint an existing Council Member to be the Mayor/Deputy Mayor, by vote of existing members (in accordance with the clause below on Appointing a Mayor or Deputy Mayor). Council will appoint a person to fill the vacancy in the office an ordinary member until the next general election (in accordance with the clause above on filling the office of an ordinary member.)	65(2)(a) 54(2)a
6 months or less, but not less than 3 months, before the next general election.	Council will appoint an existing Council Member to be the Mayor/Deputy Mayor, by vote of existing members (in accordance with the clause below on Appointing a Mayor or Deputy Mayor). Council will appoint a person to fill the vacancy in the office an ordinary member until the next general election (in accordance with the clause above on filling the office of an ordinary member.)	65(2)(a) 54(2)(b)(i)
3 months or less before the next general election.	Council will appoint an existing Council Member to be the Mayor/Deputy Mayor, by vote of existing members (in accordance with the clause below on Appointing a Mayor or Deputy Mayor). Council will leave the office of the ordinary member vacant.	65(2)(b)(i) 54(2)(b)(ii)

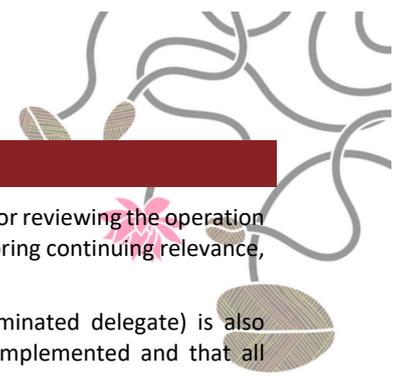
Appointing a Mayor or Deputy Mayor

The matter of appointing a person to fill a casual vacancy in the office of the Mayor or Deputy Mayor is to be on the agenda at the next ordinary Council Meeting after the vacancy occurs. At the ordinary Council Meeting, Council will, by vote of existing Council Members, resolve:

- To appoint an existing Council Member to fill the vacancy in the office of the Mayor or Deputy Mayor until the next general election; and
- For the appointment to commence immediately.

The vacancy in the office of the ordinary member will be filled in accordance with the clause above on filling the office of an ordinary member.





5. Responsibilities

The Chief Executive Officer is the Policy Custodian for this policy and is responsible for reviewing the operation of the policy (every 3 years or more frequently as may be required), and for monitoring continuing relevance, effectiveness, and consistency with related documents and the Law.

Following approval of this policy document, the Governance Advisor (or a nominated delegate) is also responsible for ensuring that the implementation and communication plan is implemented and that all Council employees have access to the policy.

6. Related Documents

Legislation and References

Local Government Act 2019 (NT)

Policy documents

Responsibilities, Induction and Training (Elected, Local Authority and Council Committee Members) Policy

Procedures

Nil

Instructions, tools, guidelines, forms and templates

Nil

DRAFT



Approved by Chief Executive Officer

Date

Page 4 of 4

WEST ARNHEM REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 JANUARY 2026

Agenda Reference:	9.3
Title:	Australian Local Government Association 2026 National General Assembly
Author:	Katharine Murray, Chief Executive Officer

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) Annual Conference, the 2026 National General Assembly.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL:

1. Receives and notes the report titled *Australian Local Government Association 2026 National General Assembly*;
2. Nominates Cr ... together with the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer to attend the 2026 National General Assembly in Canberra;
3. Approves costs associated to travel, accommodation and registration for each delegate attending;
4. Submits / does not submit a motion to the 2026 National General Assembly; and
5. Reschedules the Ordinary Council Meeting scheduled for Wednesday 24 June 2026 to Wednesday 1 July 2026.

BACKGROUND

The Australian Local Government Association Annual Conference, the National General Assembly of Local Government (NGA), will be occurring in Canberra from 23-25 June 2025 at the National Convention Centre.

In 2025 West Arnhem Regional Council put forward the following motions:

#	Motion	Referred to	Status
71	This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to: a. Establish a dedicated Public Lighting Infrastructure Fund to support local governments in upgrading and modernising street lighting networks across Australia. b. Provide financial incentives and low-interest loans to accelerate the transition to energy-efficient LED street lighting, particularly in regions that have made limited progress to date. c. Develop national guidelines and standards for smart lighting technologies to ensure interoperability and maximise energy savings and safety benefits. d. Fund research and pilot projects exploring innovative public lighting solutions that can enhance community safety, reduce energy consumption, and support smart city initiatives.	The Hon Catherin King MP and The Hon Chris Bowen MP	Response Pending

72	<p>This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish a dedicated funding program specifically for the upgrade and ongoing maintenance of unsealed road networks in regional and remote Australia that provide essential access to critical infrastructure and services, including but not limited to: landfills, aerodromes, barge landings, health facilities, schools and emergency services. 2. Allocate a minimum of \$200 million per annum for this program, indexed annually to account for inflation and construction cost increases. 3. Prioritise projects that demonstrate a clear link to improved community safety, enhanced economic opportunities, and increased access to essential services for residents in remote and isolated areas. 4. Work collaboratively with state and territory governments and local councils to develop streamlined application processes and reporting requirements for this funding program, minimising administrative burden and maximising the efficient use of resources. 5. Ensure that the funding allocation formula for this program takes into account the unique challenges faced by remote councils, including vast distances, low population densities, extreme weather conditions, and limited access to skilled labour and materials. 	The Hon Catherin King MP	Response Pending
----	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------	---------------------

COMMENT

ALGA is now calling for councils to submit motions for the 2026 National General Assembly. Attending this Conference to debate policy motions that will be considered by the ALGA Board, the NGA is the Council's opportunity to shape the federal advocacy agenda that ALGA will undertake on behalf of Australian local governments.

The theme of the 2025 NGA will be "Stronger, Together: Resilient, Productive, United". ALGA is seeking motions that align with this theme and identify opportunities for new federal programs and policies that will support councils to build trust, both in our communities and as a local delivery partner for the Australian Government.

The attached discussion paper will help prepare Council's motions, which are due by Friday 27 February 2026.

It is also recommended, in the absence of the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer, that the Ordinary Council Meeting scheduled for 24 June 2026 be rescheduled.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY

Not applicable.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Approx \$15,000.00 for travel, tickets etc.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report is aligned to the following pillars and goals of the *Regional Plan and Budget*:

PILLAR 1 PARTNERSHIPS, RELATIONSHIPS AND BELONGING

Investing in relationships and partnerships at all levels supports and strengthens community and belonging. We prioritise the value of partnerships and relationships as a key determinant of a happy, strong and thriving community.

Goal 1.1 Community Engagement

Seek out and support diverse perspectives and collaborations with community, community leaders, businesses, agencies and local service providers to enhance community life.

Goal 1.4 Community Events

Deliver cultural, civic and sporting events which engage and unite the community.

PILLAR 6 FOUNDATIONS OF GOVERNANCE

Integrity is at the heart of everything we do. We are leaders of best practice and excellence in governance, advocacy, consultation and administration. Our processes, procedures and policies are ethical and transparent.

Goal 6.3 Council and Local Authorities

Excellence in governance, consultation administration and representation.

Goal 6.5 Planning and Reporting

Robust planning and reporting that supports Council's decision-making processes.

ATTACHMENTS

1. NG A 2026 Discussion Paper [9.3.1 - 22 pages]
2. 2025.12.18 - Email from ALGA - NGA Motions for Debate [9.3.2 - 1 page]

**Stronger Together:
Resilient. Productive. United**

**2026
National
General
Assembly
Discussion Paper**

National Convention Centre Canberra



ALGA
Australian Local
Government Association

The Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) is pleased to convene the 32nd National General Assembly of Local Government (NGA), to be held in Canberra in June 2026.

As convenor of the NGA, the ALGA Board warmly invites all councils to send representatives to this important national event.

The NGA is the premier national gathering of local governments. It gives councils a chance to come together, share ideas, debate motions, and strengthen the relationship between local government and the Australian Government.

This discussion paper contains essential information for Australian councils considering submitting motions for debate at the 2026 National General Assembly of Local Government (NGA).

It is recommended that all councils and delegates intending to attend the 2026 NGA familiarise themselves with the guidelines for motions contained in this paper.

KEY DATES

24 October 2025 | Opening of Call for Motions

27 February 2026 | Acceptance of Motions closes

TO SUBMIT YOUR MOTION

VISIT: [ALGA.COM.AU](https://alga.com.au)

2

ALGA AND THE NGA – WORKING FOR YOU

Established 1947, ALGA is a federation of member state and territory associations. Its mission is to achieve outcomes for local government through advocacy with impact, and maximise the economic, environmental and social wellbeing of councils and our communities.

Since 1994, the NGA has raised the profile of local government on the national stage, showcasing the value of councils and demonstrating – particularly to the Australian Government – the strength and value of working with local government to deliver on national priorities.

Debate on motions was introduced to the NGA as a vehicle for councils from across the nation to canvas ideas. Outcomes of these debates (NGA Resolutions) can be used by councils to inform their own policies and priorities, as well as their advocacy when dealing with federal politicians.

At the same time, they help ALGA and its member state and territory associations gain valuable insight into council priorities, emerging national issues, and the level of need and support for new policy and program initiatives.

Given ALGA's structure, Constitution, and resources, the NGA resolutions do not bind ALGA. However, NGA resolutions are carefully considered by the Board to determine ALGA's policies, priorities and strategies to advance local governments within the national agenda.

This is your NGA, and ALGA is pleased to act as the convenor. ALGA's policies and priorities will continue to be determined by the ALGA Board in the interests of all councils.

We encourage councils to consider the topics and guidance in this paper as you develop your motions.

The ALGA Board thanks all councils for attending the NGA 2026 and those who submit motions for debate.

SUBMITTING MOTIONS

The National General Assembly of Local Government (NGA) gives you and your council an important opportunity to influence the national policy agenda.

The Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) Secretariat has prepared this short discussion paper to help you identify motions that address the NGA 2026 theme of “Stronger Together: Resilient. Productive. United.” This theme encourages debate on how councils across Australia can become more resilient, contribute to the nation’s productivity agenda, and present a united voice to the federal government on key issues in the national sphere.

We encourage you to read all the sections of the paper. We have included guiding questions to assist in developing your motion, but you do not have to respond to every question. You can address one or more of the issues identified in the discussion paper with your motion.

Your NGA motion should focus on how local governments can work in partnership with the Australian Government to address the challenges our communities face or seize the opportunities that are national priorities.

Each year the Secretariat receives a high volume of motions. Councils are encouraged to submit only their highest-priority motions and ensure it meets the criteria below. Multiple motions on a similar topic may be re-written into a single strategic motion, and councils will be invited by the Secretariat to put their council name to the proposal.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- Each motion requires a contact officer, a clear national objective, a summary of the key arguments in support of the motion, and endorsement of your council.
- You can lodge motions electronically using the online portal available at www.alga.asn.au
- **Motions should be received no later than 11:59 pm AEST on Friday 27 February 2026.**

WHO CAN SUBMIT A MOTION

- Any council that is a financial member of their state or territory local government association can submit a motion.
- We will not accept motions submitted on behalf of external third parties that may seek to use the NGA to apply pressure to Board members or gain national political exposure for positions that are not directly relevant to the work of, or in the national interests of, local government.

CRITERIA FOR MOTIONS

To be eligible for inclusion in the NGA Business Papers, and debate it on the floor of the NGA, you must meet the following criteria:

- > Submit a new motion that has not been debated at an NGA in the preceding two years as found in previous business papers on the ALGA website.
- > Ensure your motion is relevant to the work of local government across the nation, not focused on a specific location or region, unless the project has national implications.
- > Align your motion with the policy objectives of your state and territory local government association.
- > Propose a clear action and outcome on a single issue, calling on the Australian Government to take action. Motions covering more than one issue will not be accepted.
- > Ensure the motion does not seek to advantage one or a few councils at the expense of others.
- > Avoid being prescriptive in directing how the matter should be pursued.

WRITING TIPS

Motions should seek the NGA's support for a particular action or policy change at the federal level which will assist local governments to meet local community needs.

- > Start with: "This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to...".
Be concise, clearly worded, and unambiguous.
- > Use the background section of the form to help delegates understand your issue.
- > Keep your motion to 100 words, the national objective to 100 words, and the key arguments to 150 words.

PROCESS OF SELECTION

The ALGA Secretariat will review motions for quality control and consistency with the criteria.

- > With the agreement of the relevant council, we may edit motions to ensure consistency.
- > If we have any questions about the substance or intent of a motion, we will raise these with the nominated contact officer.
- > Where there are multiple motions on a similar issue, the Secretariat may combine them into a single overarching strategic motion and invite the council to attach their name to the strategic motion.
- > Motions that reflect existing ALGA policy will be noted in the Business papers—but will not be included for debate, as they have already been covered in existing ALGA advocacy and policy positions.

The ALGA Board provides final decision on which motions are included in the Business paper.

- > The ALGA Board and state and territory local government associations will review all submitted motions to determine their eligibility.
- > The ALGA Board will consider the importance and relevance of the issue to local government and whether the motions meet all the criteria.
- > The ALGA Board will refer any motion primarily concerned with local or state issues to the relevant state or territory local government association and it will not include it in the NGA Business Papers.

WHO WILL SPEAK TO THE MOTION AT NGA?

We expect any council that submits a motion to be present at the National General Assembly to move and speak to the motion. The decision on the speaker is at the discretion of the council.

AFTER THE NGA

The resolutions of the NGA will be referred to the relevant federal Minister as an outcome of the NGA.

Resolutions passed at the NGA do not become binding policy on ALGA, with policy positions to remain at the discretion of the ALGA Board.

All NGA resolutions will be published on www.NGA26.com.au.

As the host of the NGA, ALGA will communicate resolutions to the relevant Australian Government Minister and publish Ministerial responses as they are received on the ALGA website.

OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER

- > It is important to complete the background section of the submission form. Do not assume NGA delegates will know the background of the proposal. This section helps all delegates to understand your motion and informs decision making. Please note, motions should not be prescriptive in directing how the matter should be pursued.
- > Keep motions practical, focussed and can be implemented. This ensures that relevant Australian Government Ministers can respond thoughtfully and promptly. Avoid complex motions with multiple points that require cross-portfolio implementation.
- > If there are any questions about a motion, ALGA will contact the nominated officer. With the council's agreement, these motions may be edited before being included in the NGA Business Papers.
- > Debate will follow the rules published in the Business Papers and will focus on the strategic motions.

SETTING THE SCENE

In the face of evolving challenges and opportunities, local governments around Australia stand at the forefront of driving resilience and productivity. Local governments know we are stronger together and the importance of unity across all levels of government. The theme for this year's NGA, **Stronger Together: Resilient. Productive. United**, underscores the pivotal role councils play in shaping the nation's future and delivering national priorities.

As the backbone of local communities, councils are uniquely positioned to implement place-based solutions that address both local needs and national priorities. This year's NGA encourages debate on how councils can enhance their resilience, contribute meaningfully to the nation's productivity agenda, and present a cohesive voice to the federal government on critical issues.

By fostering collaboration and innovation, local governments can lead the way in creating sustainable and thriving communities.

The 2026 NGA provides you - the elected representatives of Australia's local councils and communities - with the opportunity to engage with the Federal Government and key Ministers, ensuring that the voices of local communities are heard at the national level.

In this context, this year's call for motion focusses on ten priority areas:

- Financial sustainability
- Emergency management
- Housing and planning
- Roads and infrastructure
- Closing the Gap
- Jobs and skills
- Environment
- Cyber security
- Climate change
- Intergovernmental relations.

1. FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Financial sustainability is the biggest challenge facing Australia's local governments which is why it remains one of ALGA's top priorities. Sustainably funded, councils can play a key role delivering local solutions to national priorities.

The 2025 Parliamentary inquiry interim report into local government sustainability confirmed that the role of councils has evolved and expanded over time, putting significant pressure on local government budgets. It is critical the Federal Government reinstates and finalises the Parliamentary inquiry into local government sustainability.

For almost one in four councils, federal Financial Assistance Grants make up at least 20 per cent of their annual operating revenue. This funding is untied, meaning it can be used to address local priorities.

Over the past 30 years, the value of Financial Assistance Grants as a percentage of Commonwealth taxation revenue has dropped from 1% in 1996 to just 0.5% today. To address this, ALGA is advocating for a **return to 1% of Commonwealth taxation revenue for local government over the next three years.**

ALGA also proposes five new, untied funding streams to be distributed to all councils on a formula basis, including:

- \$1.1 billion per year for enabling infrastructure to unlock housing supply,
- \$500 million per year for community infrastructure,
- \$600 million per year for safer local roads,
- \$900 million per year for increased local government emergency management capability and capacity, and
- \$400 million per year for climate adaptation.

Additionally ALGA advocates for permanent, full membership of National Cabinet, the Council on Federal Financial Relations and the Local Government Ministers' Forum to ensure local perspectives are considered in national decision making.

What are the opportunities to address financial sustainability across councils, and support their capacity to deliver local solutions to national priorities?

Are there improvements to be made to existing federal funding programs and arrangements that would support improved local government financial sustainability?

2. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The frequency, duration, and severity of natural disasters in Australia are a major concern for local governments.

Between 2019 and 2023, 434 of Australia's 537 councils faced natural disasters. Since 2020, 346 councils have dealt with at least two or more natural disasters. These numbers highlight that Australia will likely face more frequent and severe climate-driven disasters in the future, as noted by the 2025 Australian National Climate Risk Assessment (NCRA). Regional communities, which have the least capacity to plan and respond to natural disasters, are often hit the hardest. However, the NCRA also warns that even areas that have never experienced disasters will face one at some point as the climate continues to warm.

More frequent disasters will further strain emergency services and disaster response and recovery efforts at all levels of government. Natural disasters currently cost Australia \$38 billion per year in direct physical damage, economic disruption, and social impacts, affecting millions of people. This figure is forecast to rise to approximately \$73 billion by 2060.

Councils are crucial in supporting their communities during and after disasters, but do not have enough funding to carry out these functions. They are already stretched thin, with many councils facing financial instability, and the increasing frequency of disasters has a cumulative financial impact.

Investing more in disaster prevention and resilience, as well as boosting local government emergency management response funding, will save money in the long run and better protect lives, homes, and businesses. Every dollar spent on reducing the impact of climate-related disasters saves the government up to \$8 in the long term.

ALGA is asking for \$900 million per year to help councils improve their disaster response and resilience. They also want the Commonwealth to fully implement the recommendations from the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements and other major reviews, including the Independent Review of National Natural Disaster Governance Arrangements (the Glasser Review) and the Independent Review of Commonwealth Disaster Funding (the Colvin Review)

The Independent Reviews by Colvin and Glasser support a strategic shift towards disaster risk reduction and resilience. The Colvin Review recommended a major capacity uplift for local government and an enhanced national training and exercise regime which tests and builds local government capability. However, while ALGA notes the need to invest in risk-reduction and resilience-building initiatives, embedding recovery at all points along the emergency management continuum, should always be at the front of mind for all levels of government. ALGA's response to these Reviews reiterated the need for a sustainable funding model for disasters through a non-competitive pathway, and dedicated funding for local government.

Councils are encouraged to draw on their practical experience of the improvements that could be made to better support them in preparing, responding to, and recovering from, natural disasters.

Please note that many aspects of emergency management are state or territory responsibilities, and your motions should focus on how the Australian Government could assist.

What new programs, or improvements to existing programs, could the Australian Government develop to partner with local government to improve the current natural disaster management systems to further assist in recovery and build resilience?

How can the Government best support Australian councils to prepare for, respond to and recover from natural disasters?

3. HOUSING AND PLANNING

Australia is experiencing an affordable housing crisis, with a lack of housing supply impacting on homeowners and renters.

The crisis is leading to more people experiencing homelessness and struggling with housing insecurity and affordability.

In many jurisdictions, local government performs a key role in zoning and approving housing and delivering enabling infrastructure. However, councils are often unfairly blamed for delays in housing approvals when most applications that meet the requirements are processed quickly and efficiently.

One of the biggest barriers to building more homes is a lack of funding for enabling infrastructure, including the roads, power and water connections necessary for new developments.

The National Housing Accord – which ALGA is a signatory to on behalf of local government - sets an ambitious national target of 1.2 million new, well-located homes over the next five years. According to ALGA's research, it will cost at least \$5.7 billion to build the infrastructure needed to meet the national housing target. This is in addition to the existing funding gaps for local government infrastructure, which is estimated to be between \$50-\$55 billion for replacing infrastructure in poor condition (2024 National State of the Assets Report).

The 2024 Addressing the Housing Crisis: Unlocking Local Government's Contribution Report by Equity Economics found that 40% of surveyed local governments have reduced new infrastructure developments due to insufficient funding for enabling infrastructure required to support new housing, further exacerbating the housing crisis.

ALGA is calling for a new five-year, \$1.1 billion annual fund that would be provided to all councils to get the foundations right for increasing Australia's housing supply.

We are advocating for local governments to be provided with \$500 million per year for critical and community infrastructure and assets that will help create more liveable communities.

ALGA is also seeking a seat at the table for national discussions on housing policy, including full membership of National Cabinet and the Housing and Homelessness Ministerial Council.

What new programs and policies could the Australian Government develop to partner with local government to support the provision of more affordable housing?

How can local governments be better supported in their role in planning and approving housing, and delivering enabling infrastructure?

4. ROADS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Local governments are responsible for about one-third of Australia's public infrastructure, including local roads, buildings, facilities, airports, water and land.

According to ALGA's 2024 National State of the Assets report, Australia's councils manage over \$600 billion worth of assets and infrastructure, which is about ten times their annual revenue.

This makes local governments the most asset-intensive level of government. Councils manage local roads, which make up around 75% of the national road network, totalling more than 650,000 km. These roads serve every Australian and business daily, and are key to Australia's productivity.

Safer roads

The unacceptable number of deaths and serious injuries on Australian roads has continued to rise every year since 2020.

Tragically, around half of all fatal road crashes occur on local roads in regional areas. During the 12 months ending August 2025 there were 1,353 road deaths, 4.3% higher than the same time in the previous year, according to national road safety data.

Effectively funding the maintenance and necessary safety upgrades of Australia's local road network is a big challenge, and despite recent increases in the federal Roads to Recovery funding, there is still a \$500 million per year shortfall, according to the 2023 Grattan Institute's Potholes and Pitfalls report.

ALGA is calling for \$600 million per year safer roads fund – with \$500 million for infrastructure improvements and \$100 million for road safety programs – to support all councils to play a more effective role reducing deaths on Australian roads.

Community infrastructure

Local government libraries, playgrounds, bike paths and community centres are vital to the wellbeing and liveability of communities. However, many of these facilities need significant attention and upgrades.

According to ALGA's 2024 National State of the Assets report, around \$8.3 billion of local government buildings and facilities and \$2.9 billion of parks and recreation assets are in poor condition.

On a positive note, since 2021, the amount of local government buildings and facilities in poor condition has fallen from 10 per cent to eight per cent. This is the result of increased federal investment through the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure program, from both the Coalition and Labor governments since 2020.

Unfortunately, this program has ceased and there is an urgent need for ongoing and significant community infrastructure. ALGA is proposing a \$500 million per year community infrastructure fund – to be provided to all councils – to build, (and importantly), maintain and upgrade the local facilities that make communities great.

Are there new programs or initiatives that the Australian Government could adopt to improve the long-term sustainability of local government roads and community infrastructure?

Are there programs or initiatives that the Australian Government could provide to improve the sector's capacity to manage local government infrastructure and to integrate these plans into long-term financial plans?

Are there opportunities for the Australian Government to support councils to invest in local infrastructure that will help address national priorities?

5. CLOSING THE GAP

Local governments play a crucial role in closing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. ALGA is a signatory to the National Agreement on Closing the Gap Partnership, which focuses on four priority reform targets and 19 socio-economic targets in areas like education, employment, health, justice, safety, housing, land and waters, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.

Local governments are uniquely positioned to support partnerships that address long-term service gaps and ensure their delivery. However, the Productivity Commission Review of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap found that Federal and state governments are not adequately supporting or involving local governments in these reforms.

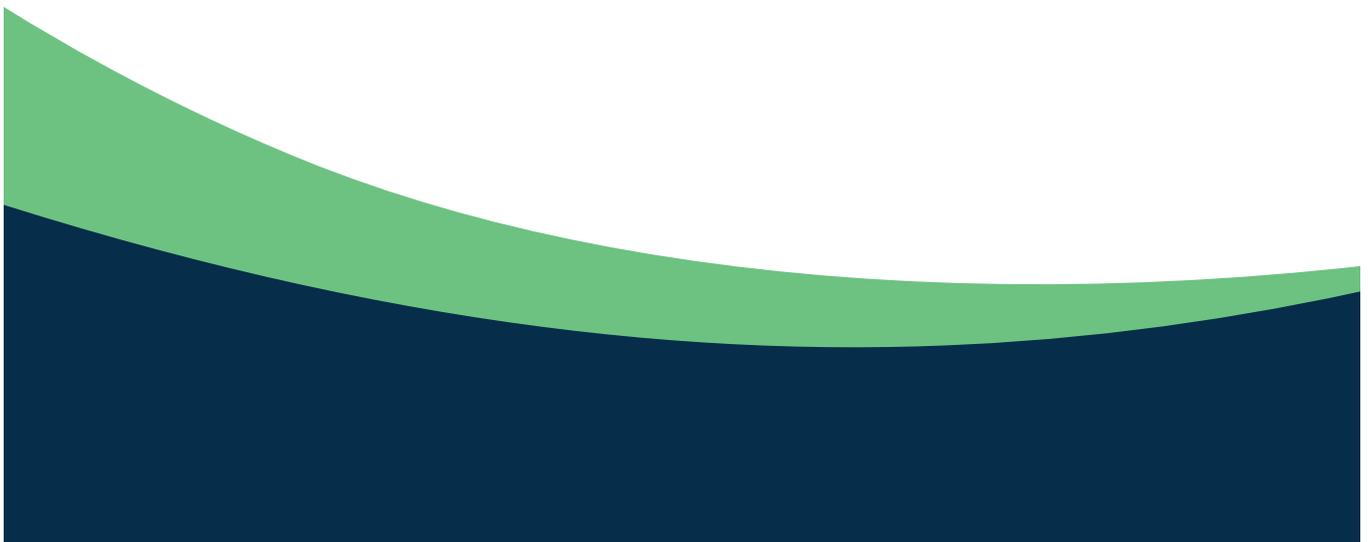
ALGA is calling for more resourcing and funding for local government, to support place-based initiatives or broader programs to enable councils to better facilitate and meet Closing the Gap objectives in their communities.

ALGA is also advocating for the Commonwealth to:

- Establish a national framework/set of protocols outlining which Federal Government departments/agencies should engage with local government in place-based initiatives, and planning for community-level projects or expenditure.
- Seek greater local government input in programs that impact on Closing the Gap targets to better shape programs with local knowledge and the needs of specific communities.
- Develop programs, with state and territory governments, to include funded support positions for local government coordination and partnership efforts (including member associations).
- Recognise councils with majority or all Aboriginal-elected members as key service delivery bodies in policy and program development.

Are there programs or initiatives that the Australian Government could adopt to assist local government to advance reconciliation and close the gap?

Are there practical programs or initiatives that local government and the Australian Government could introduce to maintain, build and strengthen the level of trust between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and governments?



6. JOBS AND SKILLS

Australia's jobs and skills crisis is significantly impacting local governments, which employ around 213,000 people nationwide. ALGA's 2022 Local Government Workforce Skills and Capability Survey found that nine out of ten Australian councils face jobs and skills shortages, hindering project and service delivery.

Town planners, building surveyors, and engineers are the most in-demand professions. These roles are crucial for supporting and enabling communities to become more resilient and to help boost local economic growth and national productivity. National priorities, such as increasing housing supply, cannot be achieved without local government support and the right professionals to undertake this work.

Several factors drive these skill shortages, including difficulty attracting young people to local government jobs, lack of available training courses, wage competition, and insufficient resources to upskill the current workforce. This includes access to training facilities for rural and remote councils, workplace supervisors, subject matter experts, and contextualized training resources.

Councils urgently need more federal funding to invest in workforce development and training programs, attract workers to regional areas, and address broader skills shortages in the national economy. ALGA is calling for the Federal Government's National Skills Plan to acknowledge the vital role of local governments as employers in training and skills development. ALGA also seeks funding opportunities for council employees to access training for identified skills shortage areas, especially in regional and remote communities.

Additionally, it is important for the Commonwealth to undertake a national audit of institutions offering urban and land use planning, building surveyors, and engineering qualifications, and to identify more readily available pathways for regional and remote study.

Are there programs or initiatives that the Australian Government could implement that would enhance local government's capacity to attract and retain appropriately skilled staff now and into the future?

Are there programs or changes to existing programs that would increase local government's ability to employ apprentices and trainees?

Are there other initiatives that the Australian Government could provide to improve the sector's ability to plan and develop skills fit for the future?

7. ENVIRONMENT

Local governments play a crucial role in protecting our local environment including places, flora and fauna.

Councils spend more money on environmental protection than any other level of government. According to SGS Economics and Planning, councils spent \$6.75 billion in 2021-22 on biodiversity, biosecurity, water management, and waste management. By comparison, states and territories spent \$6.62 billion, and the Commonwealth allocated \$6.7 billion over the same period.

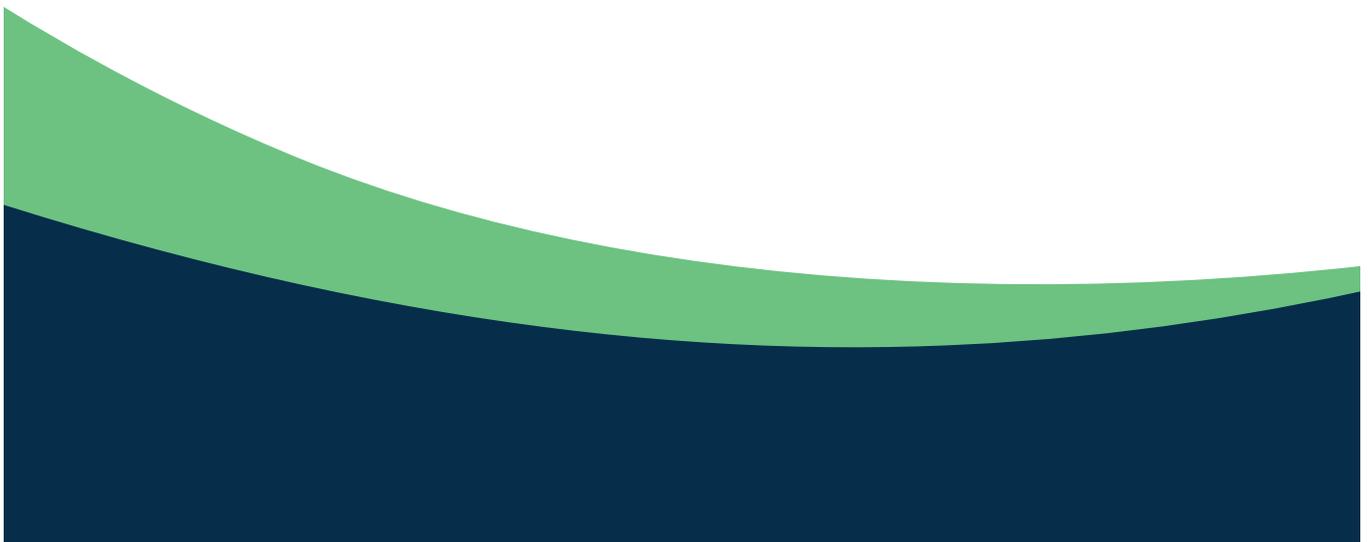
Local government is also key in improving waste management and resource recovery to reduce pollution, maintain communities and keep people healthy. However, as the Australian Government recently reported, we are running out of viable landfill space and circular economy solutions are required.

Local governments are ideal partners for on-the-ground action to deliver environmental priorities and outcomes, but they need better funding and support.

Councils bring a local, community-based and integrated approach to managing environmental issues, including weed and pest management, monitoring and protecting threatened species, contributing to water security and enhancing biodiversity.

ALGA is calling on the Federal Government to:

- Fund councils to support the delivery of national environmental outcomes. This includes outcomes stipulated in international conventions, threatened species action plans, matters of national, state, and local environmental significance, and any new obligations/expectations under reforms to the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act.
- Fund local governments to manage environmental threats, including pests, weeds, and biosecurity threats.
- Ensure local government is appropriately recognised and engaged through environmental law reform processes.
- Seek agreement, under the National Water Initiative, on the overarching social, cultural, economic and environmental outcomes and goals for water on a national and holistic basis, and action planning and funding and achieve these outcomes and goals.



Waste management and resource recovery

Collecting, treating, and disposing of waste costs local governments an estimated \$3.5 billion annually.

The 2022 National Waste report revealed waste generation has increased 20 per cent over the last 15 years (8.3 per cent coming from municipal waste). Although, recycling and recovery of Australia's core waste has increased by 57 per cent since 2006-07, Australia still has one of the lowest rates of recycling among OCED countries.

The responsibility and cost for waste reduction in Australia should be borne by industry, and not local governments.

Implementing mandatory product stewardship, including payments to local governments for any residual resource recovery services, would ensure producer responsibility is operationalised and reduce the cost and risk burden on councils.

ALGA is advocating for the Federal Government to:

- Establish a mandatory product stewardship approach for waste materials and ensure product stewardship schemes include, and are effective, in regional and remote areas.
- Ban the importation and manufacturing of products containing identified contaminants.
- Prioritise national policy attention to waste streams with the highest potential to improve environmental outcomes, reduce costs to local government, and create economic opportunity.
- Introduce a 'local government impact assessment' into national waste policy and reform processes to ensure council interests are systematically incorporated into policy design.

How could the Australian Government partner with local government to strengthen Australia's environmental services and infrastructure?

What new programs could the Australian Government partner with local government in to progress local regional and national objectives?

What actions and investments should the Australian Government prioritise to improve resource recovery rates?

What initiatives and approaches should the Australian Government take to improve waste, recycling and resource recovery in regional, rural and remote LGAs?

What are the most significant opportunities in the circular economy and how can the Australian Government engage with local governments to leverage these opportunities?

8. CYBER SECURITY

Cyber security is a growing risk for all Australian governments and businesses, and councils are not immune. However many local governments are under-resourced and struggle to deal with increasingly sophisticated cyber threats and attacks.

Local governments manage large amounts of sensitive data about communities and community members, including private information from the aged care, health, and social services they deliver. Furthermore, most councils are responsible for managing critical infrastructure, including water, waste, power networks, and transport systems.

Councils need greater support to strengthen their cyber security preparedness and response capability, and protect valuable data.

ALGA is calling for greater funding and support from the federal government to improve cyber security capability and capacity across the local government sector.

Drawing upon your council's experience, and your knowledge of other councils within your state or territory, are there programs and initiatives that the Australian Government could implement to help local government develop its digital technology services and infrastructure?

Are there actions the Australian Government could take to improve cyber security within the local government sector?

9. CLIMATE CHANGE

The impacts of climate change – including from more frequent and severe natural disasters, coastal erosion and rising temperatures – are being felt right across every community.

Councils, being the closest government to communities, are crucial in creating a sustainable future and helping the Federal Government achieve net zero emissions by 2050. However, they need support to manage these impacts.

Climate adaptation

Local governments are on the frontline of climate adaptation. They build public swimming pools to keep people cool, plant trees for shade, and upgrade stormwater systems to handle heavy rains. With their local knowledge and leadership, they play a vital role in addressing climate risks and seizing new opportunities from new industries and achieving national climate adaptation objectives.

Councils are already investing significantly in climate adaptation, but they need more support to match the scale of the challenges. ALGA's modelling shows that councils deliver \$0.8 to \$3.1 in benefits for every \$1 invested. A \$2 billion investment by 2030 could benefit local communities by \$2.2 to \$4.7 billion.

ALGA is calling for a new \$400 million per year climate adaptation fund, to be distributed across all councils to provide local, place-based solutions to Australia's changing climate.

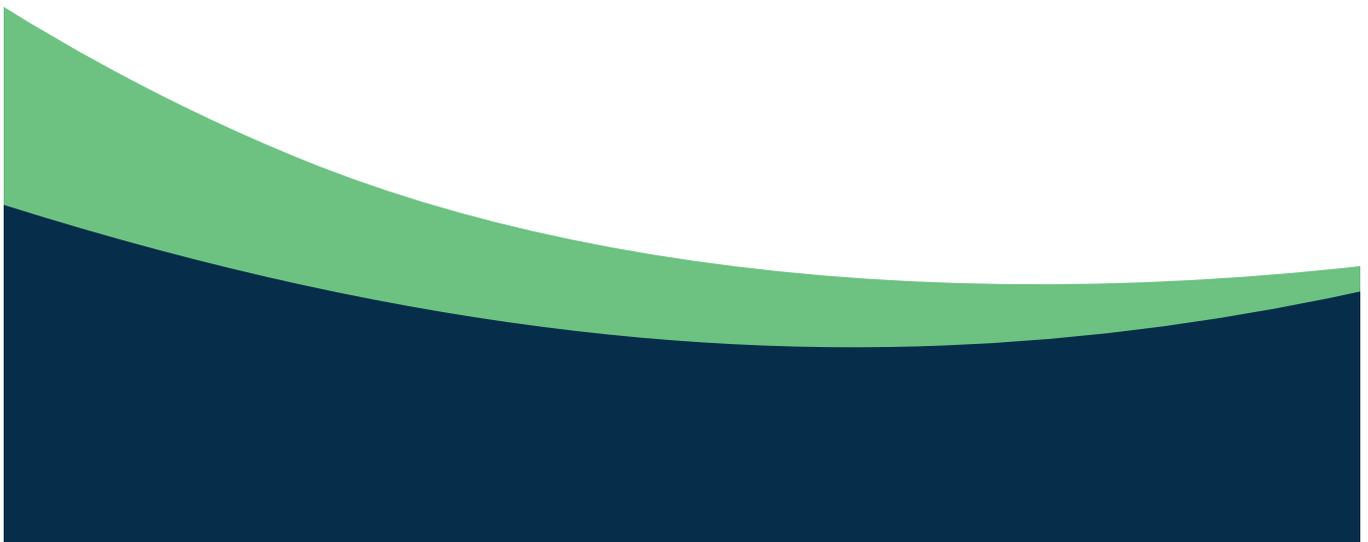
We are also asking the Federal Government to:

- Streamline and make it easier for local governments to undertake climate risk management. This should involve implementing a voluntary climate risk framework for local government which supports consistent climate risk assessment, reporting, decision making and expenditure.
- Develop, operate and maintain an information and data suite designed specifically for local government adaptation use (on an opt-in basis).

Emissions reduction

The Australian Local Government Climate Review 2024 found that 86% of councils (out of 120 respondents) had an emissions inventory. However, they face barriers in reducing corporate emissions, such as internal resourcing (69%), funding (64%), and staff capability (40%).

While councils are committed to reducing emissions locally, they need more funding to avoid burdening ratepayers and to allow communities to benefit from low-emissions technologies sooner.



ALGA is asking the Federal Government to:

- Collaborate with local governments as part of a multi-level governance approach (per the Australian Government's pledge to the Coalition for High Ambition Multilevel Partnerships) to undertake strategic planning and prioritisation of net zero projects, infrastructure and service needs on a regional level.
- Fund emissions reduction plans with local governments across states and territories to facilitate a place-based approach to achieving net zero communities.
- Expand, and make more accessible, existing funding programs which enable local governments to reduce emissions and support community emissions reduction.
- Provide councils with accessible and nationally harmonised tools to maintain pace with trends in emissions measurement and reporting.
- Ensure local governments are compensated where emissions reduction processes place additional pressure on services and infrastructure (e.g. heavier EV truck impact on maintenance/standards of roads/bridges).

Renewable energy transition

Local governments are crucial partners in the transition to net zero. They engage with project proponents, negotiate community benefits, provide trusted information to residents, and manage the impacts of large projects on roads, housing, and local skills.

Councils strive to create a positive long-term legacy while balancing the immediate risks and impacts of the transition.

ALGA is asking the Federal Government to:

- Create a program of work dedicated to understanding local government experiences with renewable energy transition in their local area and region and develop specific supports for local governments.
- Establish a national approach and mechanism for cost recovery to local governments for the role of brokering benefits between project proponents and their communities, benefitting all Australians.
- Develop and maintain regional plans and a national map demonstrating zoning for prospective and proposed renewable energy projects and transmission corridors.

Noting the Australian Government's approach to reducing emissions, are there partnerships, programs, and initiatives that local government and the Australian Government can form to achieve Australia's 2050 net zero emissions target?

What are the opportunities to support councils to increase community resilience to the impacts of climate change?

What support do councils need to ensure that renewable energy projects deliver lasting benefits to the communities that house them?

What are the most significant climate risks being faced by local governments and what approach should the Australian Government take to supporting councils?

What roles and responsibilities for emissions reduction and climate risk management is your council shouldering that should be primarily managed by other levels of government? How should this responsibility be shared or rebalanced?

What are the most significant emissions reduction opportunities for your council and what could the Commonwealth provide to enable you to implement these opportunities?

10. INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

ALGA has unique access and insight into government decision-making in Australia.

We represent local government at Ministerial Councils and forums on a range of key issues including transport, emergency management, energy, climate, environment, planning, culture and Closing the Gap.

At these meetings, ALGA's leaders provide a powerful and strong voice for councils and communities, and ensure local perspectives are considered in national policy development.

However, ALGA does not have a permanent voice on National Cabinet – the main forum linking all governments across the nation.

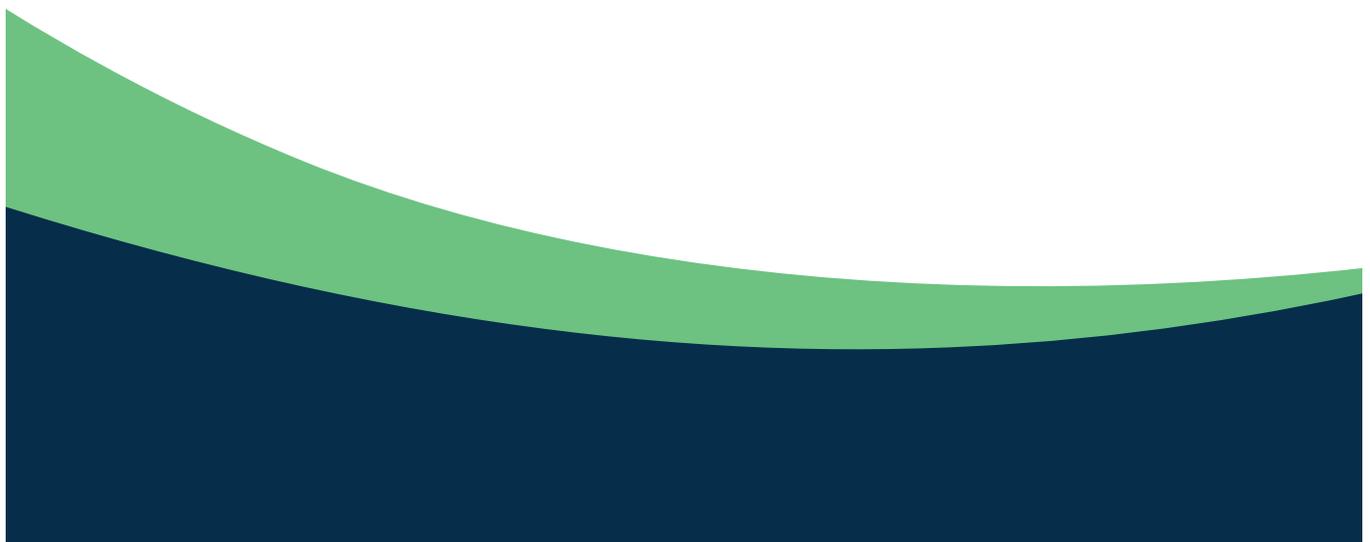
For almost 30 years, ALGA was a valued member and contributor to the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). However, ALGA's membership did not carry over when COAG transitioned to National Cabinet in 2020, and ALGA now only attends one meeting each year as an observer. ALGA is also invited to attend one meeting per year of the Council on Federal Financial Relations.

ALGA is calling on the Federal Government to return ALGA as a full member of National Cabinet with ongoing membership and voting rights. This will enable local government leaders to provide local perspectives on national decision making and ensure the views of Australian communities are understood and considered.

We are also seeking full membership of the Local Government Ministers' Forum, which ALGA currently attends in an ex-officio capacity.

Given the important role councils play delivering local solutions to national priorities, how can intergovernmental arrangements be further improved in Australia?

Are there new initiatives and programs that could be adopted to improve the level of cooperation and collaboration between the Australian Government and local government?



CONCLUSION

Thank you for taking the time to read this discussion paper and your support for the 2026 National General Assembly of Local Government.

A final reminder:

- Motions should be lodged electronically at www.alga.com.au and received no later than **11.59pm AEST on 27 February 2026**.
- Motions must meet the criteria published in this paper.
- Motions should commence with the following wording: *'This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to...'*
- Motions should not be prescriptive in directing how the matter should be pursued.
- Motions should be practical, focussed and relatively simple.
- It is important to complete the background section on the form.
- Motions must not seek to advance an outcome that would result in a benefit to one group of councils to the detriment of another.
- When your council submits a motion there is an expectation that a council representative will be present at the 2026 National General Assembly to move and speak to that motion if required.
- Resolutions of the National General Assembly do not automatically become ALGA's national policy positions. The resolutions are used by the ALGA Board to inform policies, priorities and strategies to advance local governments within the national agenda.

We look forward to hearing from you and seeing you at the 2026 National General Assembly in Canberra.



Executive Assistant

Subject: FW: 2026 NGA: Motions for Debate Open

From: National General Assembly Secretariat <nga@confco.com.au>
Sent: Thursday, 18 December 2025 2:59 PM
To: Katharine Clare Murray <clare.murray28@gmail.com>
Cc: Gina Carrascalao <gina.carrascalao@westarnhem.nt.gov.au>
Subject: 2026 NGA: Motions for Debate Open

CAUTION: This is an external email, please take care when clicking links or opening attachments. When in doubt, contact your IT Department



2026 NGA MOTIONS FOR DEBATE OPEN!

The Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) is pleased to convene the 32nd National General Assembly of Local Government (NGA), to be held in Canberra 23 - 25 June 2026.

As convenor of the NGA, the ALGA Board cordially invites all councils to send representatives to this important national event.

The NGA is the premier national gathering of local governments, and provides councils with the opportunity to come together, share ideas, debate motions, and most importantly unite and further build on the relationship between local government and the Australian Government.

A discussion paper providing further information, and outlining the criteria that motions must meet, can be downloaded below. **Motions are due by Friday 27 February 2026 and must be lodged online on the link below.**

[2026 Discussion Paper](#) | [Submit your motion now!](#)

The call for NGA motions has been open since early November and we remind you that it closes on Friday 27 February 2026.

Any other questions, please contact ALGA:
(02) 6122 9400
alga@alga.asn.au

Wishing you a relaxing holiday break and see you in June 2026 for NGA 2026!

1

WEST ARNHAM REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 January 2026

Agenda Reference:	9.4
Title:	Warruwi and Kakadu By-Election
Author:	Katharine Murray, Chief Executive Officer

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on the vacancy for the Warruwi and Kakadu Wards and the proposed By-Election.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL:

1. Receives and notes the report titled *Warruwi and Kakadu By-Election*; and
2. Determines a date for the Warruwi and Kakadu By-Election.

BACKGROUND

A vacancy occurred in October 2025 when the Ward Member for Warruwi passed away.

Kylie Linder informed Council on Monday, 20 January 2026 of her resignation, creating a vacancy in the Kakadu Ward.

In accordance with the Local Government Act 2019, the council must hold a by-election if the vacancy occurs 18 months or more before the next election.

The Northern Territory Electoral Commission (NTEC) have contacted Council with two possible dates for a By-Election.

The proposed dates are:

- **24 April 2026 (election day)** – nominations opening 2 April and closing 8 April
- **15 May 2026 (election day)** – nominations opening 23 April and closing 29 April

However, the Chief Executive Officer contacted Gerri Narul and asked her to speak to the family of the previous Warruwi Ward member, regarding the dates. The family has requested that the By-Election not be held until June 2026. The Chief Executive Officer has spoken to the Northern Territory Electoral Commissioner and if Council is supportive will seek the Minister for Local Government's approval to conduct the by-election in June 2026. The Kakadu By-Election will also be held in June 2026.

STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT

Local Government Act 2019

Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2021

Filling Casual Vacancies Policy

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

To be funded from the 2025/26 Budget.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report aligns to the following pillars and goals as outlined in the *Regional Plan and Budget*:

PILLAR 6 FOUNDATIONS OF GOVERNANCE

Integrity is at the heart of everything we do. We are leaders of best practice and excellence in governance, advocacy, consultation and administration. Our processes, procedures and policies are ethical and transparent.

Goal 6.3 Council and Local Authorities

Excellence in governance, consultation administration and representation.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

WEST ARNHAM REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 JANUARY 2026

Agenda Reference:	9.5
Title:	Strategic Plan - Review of Pillars
Author:	Katharine Murray, Chief Executive Officer

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an opportunity to review the current Strategic Plan Pillars.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL:

1. Receives and notes the report titled *Strategic Plan - Review of Pillars*; and
2. Endorses the proposal by the CEO to commence consultation with the elected members, local authorities and senior management to review the strategic direction to ensure alignment with current priorities and values.

BACKGROUND

In 2020 WARC set a new Vision, Purpose and Values. These being:

Vision – ‘Strong Communities. We achieve our goals together by walking in both worlds’.

Purpose – ‘We work in partnership with community towards providing meaningful employment and economic opportunities, delivering outstanding customer services and infrastructure’.

Values – ‘Respectful, Inclusive, Innovative and Integrity’.

In November 2021 Council undertook consultation with Elected Members, Local Authorities, senior management and the executive to establish a new strategic direction and service delivery plan. Six key themes emerged which became the six foundational pillars for the Councils strategic direction for 2022-2023. The Pillars are:

Pillar 1: Partnerships, Relationships and Belonging

Pillar 2: Increased Local Indigenous Employment

Pillar 3: Safety and Wellbeing

Pillar 4: Service Delivery and Built Environment

Pillar 5: Sustainability and Climate Action

Pillar 6: Foundations of Governance

This wasn’t endorsed by Council until 8 March 2023 as the five-year corporate strategy (2022-2027) to inform the West Arnhem Regional Plan and set the strategic direction.

COMMENT

At the Local Government 2025 General Elections and the 2025 Supplementary Local Government Elections, 5 new Councillors were elected to the West Arnhem Regional Council. There is one vacant seat with a by-election to be held in April or May 2026. At the July 2025 Ordinary Council Meeting, Council resolved to dissolve the Local Authorities so that the election aligned with the Local

Government elections. Community was encouraged to nominate for the Local Authorities. Nominations were received and considered by Council at the Ordinary Council Meeting on 23 September 2025. Nominees were notified on 24 September 2025. With half of Council being new, and a number of new LA members, it is appropriate to clarify shared priorities, strategic objectives and key advocacy issues. These will set the foundation for a unified Council direction.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY

Local Government Act 2019 – Section 33

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report is aligned to the following pillars and goals of the *Regional Plan and Budget*:

PILLAR 6 FOUNDATIONS OF GOVERNANCE

Integrity is at the heart of everything we do. We are leaders of best practice and excellence in governance, advocacy, consultation and administration. Our processes, procedures, and policies are ethical and transparent.

Goal 6.5 Planning and Reporting

Robust planning and reporting that supports Council's decision-making processes.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

WEST ARNHEM REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 January 2026

Agenda Reference:	9.6
Title:	Malbak Aboriginal Corporation - Letter of Support
Author:	Katharine Murray, Chief Executive Officer

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's endorsement for a letter of support for Malbak Aboriginal Corporation.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL:

1. Receives and notes the report titled *Malbak Aboriginal Corporation - Letter of Support*; and
2. Endorses a letter from West Arnhem Regional Council in support of Malbak Aboriginal Corporation's Expression of Interest to the Barossa Aboriginal Future Fund.

BACKGROUND

Malbak Aboriginal Corporation have requested a letter of support to apply for funding for a two-year project through the Barossa Aboriginal Future Fund.

STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT

Nil

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report aligns to the following pillars and goals as outlined in the *Regional Plan and Budget*:

PILLAR 6 FOUNDATIONS OF GOVERNANCE

Integrity is at the heart of everything we do. We are leaders of best practice and excellence in governance, advocacy, consultation and administration. Our processes, procedures and policies are ethical and transparent.

Goal 6.3 Council and Local Authorities

Excellence in governance, consultation administration and representation.

ATTACHMENTS

1. West Arnhem Council LOS Malbak [9.6.1 - 1 page]

Letter of Support – West Arnhem Regional Council

To whom it may concern,

West Arnhem Regional Council provides this letter in support of Malbak Aboriginal Corporation's Expression of Interest to the Barossa Aboriginal Future Fund for a two-year project focused on community development and tourism readiness in Marlkawo Homelands.

Council recognises the challenges faced by remote homelands such as Marlkawo, including limited access to services, seasonal isolation and restricted employment pathways. We acknowledge the strong commitment of families who choose to live on country and maintain cultural practices.

The proposed project aims to strengthen local capacity by supporting two community-based positions, improving small but important community infrastructure, and developing culturally led tourism opportunities that can create meaningful employment. Council recognises that these outcomes align with broader regional priorities for building economic resilience, supporting families living on country and increasing opportunities for young people.

West Arnhem Regional Council considers this initiative to be a positive step toward improving access to employment, strengthening community wellbeing and supporting long-term development in homelands. Council acknowledges Malbak Aboriginal Corporation as an appropriate community-led organisation to deliver this work.

We are pleased to provide our support for this funding application and the intended benefits it seeks to bring to the Marlkawo community.

Sincerely,

West Arnhem Regional Council

WEST ARNHEM REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 JANUARY 2026

Agenda Reference:	9.7
Title:	Local Government Association of the NT April 2026 Conference and General Meeting - Alice Springs
Author:	Katharine Murray, Chief Executive Officer

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's approval for West Arnhem Regional Council delegates to attend the Local Government Association of the NT (LGANT) 2026 April Conference and General Meeting in Alice Springs.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL:

1. Receives and notes the report titled *Local Government Association of the NT April 2026 Conference and General Meeting - Alice Springs*; and
2. Approves the costs associated with registration, accommodation and travel expenses for Mayor James Woods, Deputy Mayor Jacqueline Phillips, Cr ... and Chief Executive Officer, Katharine Murray to attend the Local Government Association of the NT 2026 April Conference and General Meeting which will be held in Alice Springs.

BACKGROUND

LGANT's annual conference is the premier gathering for local government leaders in the Northern Territory. Bringing together Mayors, Presidents, Elected Members, and CEOs the conference features themed programs, training, exhibitions, and keynote speakers, alongside critical discussions on policy and advocacy.

LGANT hold two General Meetings in approximately April and November each year. At the first General Meeting, members approve the LGANT annual budget, membership subscriptions and strategic plan.

The LGANT Annual Conference and General Meeting is a two-day event held in Alice Springs. The exact date is yet to be confirmed; however, it will be scheduled for the week beginning 13 April 2026.

In September 2025, Council appointed the Mayor and Deputy Mayor as West Arnhem Regional Council representatives to attend LGANT's General Meetings. Cr Ralph F Blyth was also appointed as substitute.

COMMENT

As per LGANT's Constitution, WARC is a Member Council with a population between 3001 – 2500 therefore are entitled to two votes. It is essential that at least two Elected Member representatives attend on behalf of Council.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY

Reasonable Expenses and Benefits (Council, Local Authority and Council Committee Members) Policy
Determination of Allowances for Members of Local Government Councils

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The following estimates are based on a cost per delegate:

Registration	\$660
Flight (DWN-ASP Return)	\$1200
Accommodation ASP (2 x nights)	\$700
Travel Expenses	\$400

Total costs are approximately \$3,000 per delegate. These costs do not include charters from each community to and from Darwin, accommodation whilst in Darwin and the provision of an Extra Meeting Allowances for the Deputy Mayor and Council Members (\$500/day).

An allocation has been included in the 2025/26 Budget.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report is aligned to the following pillars and goals of the *Regional Plan and Budget*:

PILLAR 1 PARTNERSHIPS, RELATIONSHIPS AND BELONGING

Investing in relationships and partnerships at all levels supports and strengthens community and belonging. We prioritise the value of partnerships and relationships as a key determinant of a happy, strong and thriving community.

Goal 1.1 Community Engagement

Seek out and support diverse perspectives and collaborations with community, community leaders, businesses, agencies and local service providers to enhance community life.

PILLAR 6 FOUNDATIONS OF GOVERNANCE

Integrity is at the heart of everything we do. We are leaders of best practice and excellence in governance, advocacy, consultation and administration. Our processes, procedures and policies are ethical and transparent.

Goal 6.3 Council and Local Authorities

Excellence in governance, consultation administration and representation.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

WEST ARNHEM REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 January 2026

Agenda Reference:	9.8
Title:	Vacancy - Finance Committee
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the membership of Finance Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL:

1. Receives and notes the report titled *Vacancy - Finance Committee*; and
2. Appoints Cr ... as a Council Committee Member of the Finance Committee.

BACKGROUND

At the Ordinary Council Meeting held on Tuesday, 23 September 2025 Council appointed three Elected Members as members of Council's Finance Committee:

- Cr Ralph McCoy
- Cr Micketja Onus
- Warruwi Ward Member

In November 2025 Council appointed Cr Ralph F Blyth as a temporary member to fill the vacancy from the Warruwi Ward Member.

In December 2025, the results from Local Government Supplementary Election were declared, Daniel Siebert was elected representing the Gunbalanya Ward and Kylie Lindner elected representing Kakadu Ward. Kylie Lindner has however recently resigned.

If there are no new nominations received, a further report will be forthcoming post the Warruwi and Jabiru By-Election.

STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT

Local Government Act NT 2019

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report aligns to the following pillars and goals as outlined in the *Regional Plan and Budget*:

PILLAR 6 FOUNDATIONS OF GOVERNANCE

Integrity is at the heart of everything we do. We are leaders of best practice and excellence in governance, advocacy, consultation and administration. Our processes, procedures and policies are ethical and transparent.

Goal 6.3 Council and Local Authorities

Excellence in governance, consultation administration and representation.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Finance Committee Terms of Reference [9.8.1 - 1 page]



Finance Committee Terms of Reference

1. Role of the Committee

The West Arnhem Regional Council Finance Committee (the Finance Committee) is an Executive Committee of Council. The Finance Committee's terms of reference comply with section 83 of the *Local Government Act 2019* and regulation 19 of the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2021*.

2. Membership

The Finance Committee is to consist of five Elected Members of which two are to be the Mayor and Deputy Mayor and the other Elected Members are to be appointed by Council resolution.

The Mayor is the designated Chair of Finance Committee meetings. In the Mayor's absence, the Deputy Mayor will be appointed as the Acting Chair of the meeting. If both the Mayor and Deputy Mayor are not present, the Finance Committee's other Elected Members shall elect an Acting Chair from amongst the members present for the duration of the meeting.

A quorum at a Finance Committee meeting is to consist of three or more Elected Members. Additionally, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or a delegated representative of the CEO, and one senior finance staff member must be present at the Finance Committee meeting.

3. Meeting Dates

The Finance Committee shall convene a meeting during the months that an Ordinary Council meeting is not scheduled to take place. A meeting may be rescheduled particularly where there is prior knowledge that a quorum will not be achieved on the meeting date. The Chair of the Finance Committee will approve a change of the meeting date after consultations with a majority of the Finance Committee's members and the CEO.

4. Finance Committee Functions

The Finance Committee has delegated authority from the Council to carry out the following functions, on behalf of the Council, in the months the Council does not schedule an Ordinary Council meeting:

- Review and approve the Council's financial report for the prior month.
- Review and approve ad-hoc council financial reports that measure actual performance against Council's approved budget and long-term financial plans.
- Consider the financial implications of Council's financial performance against Council approved financial plans to ensure that they meet the needs of the community.
- Review the financial status and progress of major projects and recommend changes or revisions to projects, if necessary.
- Review the council debtor and creditor balances, and ensure sufficient funds are available to pay council creditors as they fall due.
- Consider any other urgent financial related matters as required that do not require a Council resolution.

5. Committee's Decisions

The minutes of each Finance Committee meeting will be presented at the next Ordinary Council meeting.

Approved by Chief Executive Officer

Date: 16 January 2026

Page 1 of 1

WEST ARNHEM REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 January 2026

Agenda Reference:	9.9
Title:	Financial report for period ending 31 December 2025
Author:	Jocelyn Nathanael-Walters, Director Finance

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to:

1. Provide Council with the monthly Financial Management Report for the period ended 31 December 2025; and
2. Confirm that Council allocated funds in Council resolution OCM272/2024 can be used as general co-contribution support, rather than specifically for the original planned Jabiru dog park, for the Jabiru Lakeside Precinct Upgrade 2025-26 capital project which includes the Council's original dog park plans plus an outdoor gym and upgraded playground.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL

1. Receives and notes the report titled *Financial report for period ending 31 December 2025*;
2. Notes the additional financial report for Council's Jabiru Childcare Centre; and
3. Approves the previous Council's allocated Jabiru dog park funding of \$30,000, in Council resolution OCM272/2024, can be used as general co-contribution for the Jabiru Lakeside Precinct Upgrade 2025-26 capital project which includes the Council's original dog park plans.

BACKGROUND

Monthly Financial Report

The CEO must, in each month, give the Council (or Council's Finance Committee) a report setting out:

- The actual year to date income and expenditure of council;
- The most recently adopted annual budget; and
- Details of any material variances between the most recent actual income and expenditure, and the most recently adopted annual budget.

The report must be in the approved form.

The report must be accompanied by the CEO's certification in writing, to the Council, that to the best of the CEO's knowledge, information and belief:

- The internal controls implemented by Council are appropriate; and
- The Council's financial report best reflects the financial affairs of Council.

If the CEO cannot provide the certification, then written reasons for not providing the certification is to be submitted.

Council's Original Decision to Fund the Jabiru Dog Park

On 30 September 2024 a report was put to the Council on the specific funding required for fencing, gates and signage to establish a Jabiru dog park beside the Jabiru Lake. At that meeting the Council resolved [OCM274/2024] to:

1. Receive and note the report titled Proposed Dog Park – Jabiru
2. Approve the proposal to construct a Dog Park at the lake with a budget of \$30,000.

COMMENT

Month Financial Report Requirements

The *Local Government (General) Regulations 2021* requires the previous month's financial report to be given to the Council.

Request to Amend Council's Original Decision

After the Council's 30 September 2024 decision, a funding opportunity became available from the NT Government as part of the Rio Tinto Jabiru Social Infrastructure Funding to further upgrade the Jabiru Lakeside Precinct with the original planned dog park upgrade. To support the expanded Jabiru Lakeside Precinct Upgrade and the application for additional funding, a change in purposed of the Council's own \$30,000 contribution is required.

STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT

Regulation 17 of the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2021* outlines the requirements for the monthly financial report to Council.

The format of the monthly financial report follows the prescribed format set out in the CEO of the Department of Chief Minister and Cabinet's approved form published on the NT Government Local Government Unit's website.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The CEO is responsible for laying before the Council a monthly financial report and the Council is responsible for managing its resources.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report aligns to the following pillars and goals as outlined in the *Regional Plan and Budget*:

PILLAR 6 FOUNDATIONS OF GOVERNANCE

Integrity is at the heart of everything we do. We are leaders of best practice and excellence in governance, advocacy, consultation and administration. Our processes, procedures and policies are ethical and transparent.

Goal 6.1 Financial Management

Provision of strong financial management and leadership which ensures long term sustainability and growth.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Monthly Financial Report December 2025 Late Attachment [9.9.1 - 1 page]

Monthly Financial Report December 2025

LATE ATTACHMENT

WEST ARNHAM REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 JANUARY 2026

Agenda Reference:	9.10
Title:	Sponsorship Policy
Author:	Jocelyn Nathanael-Walters, Director of Finance

SUMMARY

This report is to provide a draft Sponsorship Policy for the Council to consider, amend as required and adopt.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL:

1. Receives and note the report titled *Sponsorship Policy*; and
2. Approves the Sponsorship Policy for the Council to apply going forward.

BACKGROUND

Under the prior CEO, Andrew Walsh, the Council asked for a Sponsorship Policy to be developed. In addition, at the Ordinary Council meeting on 11 December 2025 when reviewing the 2025-26 budget, the Council agreed to create a Sponsorship Reserve and to transfer to that reserve up to \$30,000 from savings in 2025-26 [SCM90/2025] to be available for outgoing sponsorships.

COMMENT

To comply with the Council's request, attached is a draft Council Sponsorship Policy which contains several matters for Council's input/instructions. Some highlighted matters include:

1. Seeking confirmation that an In-Kind Support framework is to be set and managed by the Council's CEO – managing Council's assets within Council's set budget is the responsibility of Council's CEO. It is suggested In-kind Support is part of the operations of council, is to follow Council's strategic goals and objectives, and the CEO's staff delegations (e.g. The CEO's framework may allow the CSM to consider an In-Kind Support request, book a council vacant facility and waiver hire fee up to their delegated amount where the applicant's booking request supports Council's objectives; and report support for later reporting – i.e. enable health worker training by Flying Doctors in Warruwi)
2. Incoming sponsorships can be accepted by the CEO following the policy general principles, but sponsorships valued over \$10,000 are to be reported to the Council at the next Ordinary Council meeting
3. Incoming sponsorship funds should be used for the purpose the funds were raised and not redirected to general revenue without a Council resolution
4. All outgoing sponsorships are to be decided by Council resolution – noting funds held in Reserves require a Council resolution to access
5. Propose the Council annually invite outgoing sponsorship applications and Council consider those applications in January/February (after the first budget review for that financial year) to best ensure funds are available.

6. Propose both incoming and outgoing sponsorships be reported in Council's Annual Report – possibly considering including In-Kind Support

Once a Sponsorship policy is adopted, council staff can prepare a Council Sponsorship Application Form to publish with the Policy on Council's website.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY

Local Government Act 2019

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council is responsible for managing its resources including funds held in reserve.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report is aligned to the following pillars and goals of the *Regional Plan and Budget*:

PILLAR 1 PARTNERSHIPS, RELATIONSHIPS AND BELONGING

Investing in relationships and partnerships at all levels supports and strengthens community and belonging. We prioritise the value of partnerships and relationships as a key determinant of a happy, strong and thriving community.

Goal 1.1 Community Engagement

Seek out and support diverse perspectives and collaborations with community, community leaders, businesses, agencies and local service providers to enhance community life.

Goal 1.4 Community Events

Deliver cultural, civic and sporting events which engage and unite the community.

PILLAR 6 FOUNDATIONS OF GOVERNANCE

Integrity is at the heart of everything we do. We are leaders of best practice and excellence in governance, advocacy, consultation and administration. Our processes, procedures and policies are ethical and transparent.

Goal 6.5 Planning and Reporting

Robust planning and reporting that supports Council's decision-making processes.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft Sponsorship Policy [9.10.1 - 3 pages]



Policy Name	Sponsorship
Publication Date:	
Council Decision (Reference):	
Classification:	Council Policy
Categorisation:	Council and Community Services
Review Frequency:	4 years
Review Date:	30/04/2030
Responsible Officer:	Director Council and Community Services
Version (Revision Number):	1.0

1. PURPOSE

West Arnhem Regional Council is committed to act in the best interests of the community and to uphold the principles of honesty, integrity, diligence, accountability and transparency.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the principles by which sponsorship will be:

- Provided by Council, to ensure access to sponsorship is open, transparent and equitable; and
- Accepted by Council, to ensure the Council achieves a high standard of integrity, accountability and transparency.

2. SCOPE

This policy covers both sponsorship support to organisations, community groups and individuals by West Arnhem Regional Council and sponsorship received by the Council.

This policy does not cover In-kind Support from West Arnhem Regional Council which is covered under the In-kind Support framework set and managed by the Council's Chief Executive Officer.

3. DEFINITIONS AND CONTEXT

In the context of this policy the following definitions apply:

Incoming sponsorship means financial and/or In-kind Support received by the Council from a commercial or external organisation to conduct an event, project or activity in return for specified benefits.

Outgoing sponsorship means cash sponsorship from the Council to an organisation to conduct an event, project or activity in return for specified benefits.

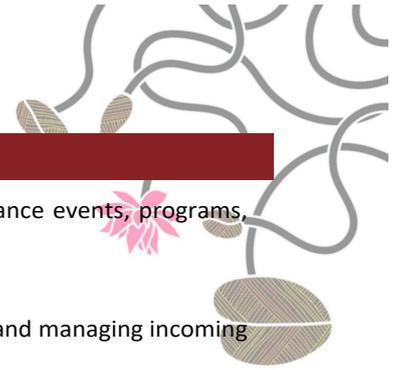
Sponsorship is not a donation; a grant or subsidy; an endorsement of a product or service; advertisement; or a purchase of service, where a reciprocal benefit (product/service) is expected other than a modest acknowledgement.



Approved by

Date:

Page 1 of 3



4. POLICY APPLICATION

Through the incoming and outgoing of sponsorship, the Council aims to enhance events, programs, projects and activities to provide the greatest benefit to its communities.

4.1 Incoming Sponsorship

The following general principles are to be considered when Council is seeking and managing incoming sponsorship:

- a. The sponsorship should align with Council's Strategic Pillars and Annual Regional Plan
- b. The sponsorship and any return benefits from the Council must not conflict or be seen to conflict with the objectives and policies of the Council or the Council's legislated obligations
- c. The cost of managing and evaluating smaller sponsorships should not outweigh the dollar value of the sponsorship
- d. The sponsorship must not endorse the sponsor or the sponsor's products
- e. All sponsorship must be in writing and agreed by Council's CEO and incoming sponsorships valued over \$10,000 are to be reported to the Council at the next Ordinary Council meeting
- f. Funds raised through sponsorship should be used for the purpose the funds were raised for and not redirected to general revenue without a Council resolution

4.1.2 Acceptable Types of Incoming Sponsorship

Eligible types of incoming sponsorship include:

1. Funding
2. Goods, services, vouchers and in-kind support
3. Discounts

4.2 Outgoing Sponsorship

Council sponsorship proposals should align with the Council's Strategic Pillars and Annual Regional Plan.

Generally, unless directly related to the Council's objectives, the following are not considered for outgoing Council sponsorships:

- a. Conferences, seminars and functions
- b. Fundraisers and political support
- c. Organisations, community groups or individuals involved with tobacco-related products; products or services that are harmful to the health and wellbeing of community members; and gambling products or services.

4.2.1 Application for Outgoing Sponsorship

Outgoing sponsorship will depend on funding being available and are to be decided by Council resolution.

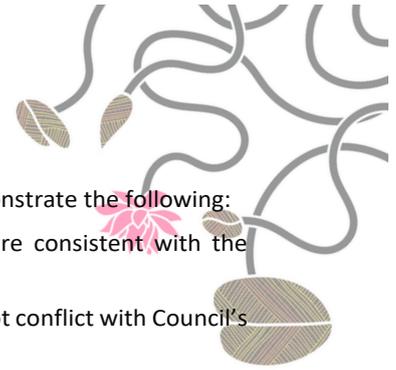
Applications will generally be considered by the Council annually in January/February each year but sponsorship for an event or project may be considered by Council outside that annual application process.



Approved by

Date:

Page 2 of 3



An applicant must complete a Council Sponsorship Application Form and demonstrate the following:

1. Their product, service (i.e. intended action/event) or public image are consistent with the Council's values, objectives and strategic focus
2. Their product, service (i.e. intended action/event) or public image do not conflict with Council's policies, community responsibilities and legislated obligations
3. The benefit the Council is expected to receive if the sponsorship application was successful (e.g. Council recognition, benefit to Council's communities like access and opportunities)

The Council's elected members, staff and contractors must not receive a personal benefit from a sponsor or free tickets to an event for non-work purposes. Elected members and staff however may attend functions to represent the organisation as part of a sponsorship arrangement.

4.3 Successful Incoming and Outgoing Sponsorship Applications

For transparency, successful sponsorships (both incoming and outgoing) are to be reported in Council's Annual Report.

5. ADMINISTRATION

The Director Council and Community Services is responsible for ensuring the overall review and operation of the Policy, including its compliance and consistency with related documents and legislation.

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS

Legislation and References

Local Government Act 2019

Local Government (General) Regulations 2021

Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2017

Policies

Code of Conduct (CEO) Policy

Code of Conduct (Employees) Policy

Code of Conduct (Council Local Authority and council Committee Members) Policy

Conflict of Interest (Elected, Local Authority and Council Committee Members) Policy

Conflict of Interest (Employees) Policy

Council's Delegations Manual

Procedures

Instructions, tools, processes, forms and templates

Council Sponsorship Application Form



Approved by

Date:

Page 2 of 3

WEST ARNHAM REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 January 2026

Agenda Reference:	9.11
Title:	Proposed 4WD Bus for Sporting Events - Usage Agreement
Author:	Kylie Gregson, Manager Technical Services

SUMMARY

This report is to provide the Council with a draft Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the use of the Council 4WD Bus for Sporting Events.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL:

1. Receives and notes the report titled *Proposed 4WD Bus for Sporting Events - Usage Agreement; and*
2. Endorses draft Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the use of the Council 4WD Bus for Sporting Events.

BACKGROUND

West Arnhem Regional Council (WARC) received a Grant from the Department of Health and Aged Care. Investing in Community, Sport Participation and Integrity in Sport. Increase participation in sport and recreation activities by removing transportation barriers.

COMMENT

At the July 2025 Ordinary Council Meeting, Tender Evaluation – Supply of Two Toyota Hiace Bus Super Long Wheel Base, was awarded to Katherine Toyota and Supply and Install Commuter 4WD Conversion to Two Toyota Hiace Buses was awarded to Vehicle Solutions NT.

The proposed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) is attached.

Overview of key responsibilities for the use of Council 4WD Bus for Sporting Events.

- The council provides all maintenance for the 4WD Bus.
- Any damage/repair to the vehicle is the responsibility of the nominated driver when the vehicle is returned to Council.
- The council does not provide drivers for the 4WD Bus.
- Bookings are requested by a community member who must provide a valid driver's licence and sign an MOA.
- The MOA requires the 4WD Bus to be returned in the same condition as when collected.
- In some instances, a community member may pick up the 4WD Bus several hours before traveling to carry out prestart of the vehicle.
- The Council Service Manager (CSM) provides regular (monthly) updates on usage through reporting channels.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY

Per the attached Memorandum of Agreement (MOA).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No financial implications required by the Maningrida and Gunbalanya Local Authority.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report aligns to the following pillars and goals as outlined in the *Regional Plan and Budget*:

PILLAR 1 PARTNERSHIPS, RELATIONSHIPS AND BELONGING

Investing in relationships and partnerships at all levels supports and strengthens community and belonging. We prioritise the value of partnerships and relationships as a key determinant of a happy, strong and thriving community.

Goal 1.1 Community Engagement

Seek out and support diverse perspectives and collaborations with community, community leaders, businesses, agencies and local service providers to enhance community life.

Goal 1.3 Communication

Deliver dynamic communication which is culturally informed and appropriate, engaging and relevant to the interests of Council.

Goal 1.4 Community Events

Deliver cultural, civic and sporting events which engage and unite the community.

Goal 1.5 Cultural Awareness Training

Develop increased understanding and observation of cultural protocols.

PILLAR 2 INCREASED LOCAL INDIGENOUS EMPLOYMENT

We are committed to investing in and supporting local Indigenous employment. We recognise the instrumental value that Indigenous staff bring to our organisation and the social force that occurs with employment opportunities.

Goal 2.2 Policy and Procedures

Research, review and develop policy to underpin and inform Council's intent and strategy to increase local Indigenous employment.

PILLAR 3 SAFETY AND WELLBEING

As an 'Employer of Choice', we provide and promote a positive culture of safety, inclusion and respect. Our people are skilled, informed and have opportunities to grow and develop within our organisation. Services provided to community are professional, impactful, engaging and appropriate to local needs.

Goal 3.1 Cultural Safety

Delivery of actions in the WARC 'Innovate' Reconciliation Action Plan.

Goal 3.2 Health and Safety

Staff and public safety is achieved via planning, education and training.

Goal 3.4 Community Service Delivery

Provision of high quality, culturally informed programs that support and enhance the safety and wellbeing of community members.

PILLAR 4 SERVICE DELIVERY AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

We provide high quality infrastructure and service delivery that meets the unique needs of each community, creates a sense of place and contributes towards promoting a sense of pride in community.

Goal 4.2 Fleet, Plant and Equipment

Provide a modern and well-maintained fleet of plant and vehicles capable of meeting service delivery requirements.

ATTACHMENTS

1. DRAFT Hire Agreement Proposed Maningrida Gunbalanya Sports Bus Usage 2025 (1) [9.11.1 - 8 pages]



Memorandum of Agreement

For the Use of Council 4WD Bus for Sporting Events – Hire Arrangement

AN AGREEMENT made this _____ day of _____, 20____
(Day) (Month) (Year)

BETWEEN: WEST ARNHEM REGIONAL COUNCIL, having its office at, 13 Tasman Place, Jabiru, NT, 0886.

AND _____ of _____
(External Party Full Name/Company) (Address)

For the purpose of using a West Arnhem Regional Council 4WD Bus for Sporting Events.

Asset Number: _____ Make & Model: _____
Rego No: _____ VIN No: _____

On the day of: _____ day of _____, 20____
(Day) (Month) (Year)





With the following Authorised Drivers

	Driver 1	Driver 2	Driver 3
Name			
Phone No.			
Driver License No.			
License Class:			
Expiry Date:			

All hire is to be used according to this agreement and in conjunction with West Arnhem Regional Council Motor Vehicle Policy and Procedure.

DRAFT





IT IS HEREBY AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

1. Terms of Agreement

- 1.1. The term of this agreement shall commence on the date listed and is a day hire only agreement.
- 1.2. The Council shall supply the driver/hirer with a 4WD Bus for Sporting events only once all requirements have been satisfied.
- 1.3. The vehicle will only be utilised for Sporting events and is subject to availability.
- 1.4. The vehicle is and shall at all times remain the property of West Arnhem Regional Council during the period of the Agreement.
- 1.5. Selected West Arnhem Regional Council vehicles are fitted with a GPS monitoring system. The GPS system is fitted primarily for OH&S requirements but may also be used to monitor both vehicle and operator behaviour.

2. Categories of Use

- 2.1. Sporting events use is for driver/hirer who hire a Council 4WD Bus during daylight hours on the day of hire, however the vehicle will remain on Council premises and not be taken home or used for private purposes after the event has been completed.

3. Use of Vehicle

- 3.1. The Authorised Driver must carry out a prestart check on the vehicle prior to the first trip of the day and submit it to the responsible officer before use.
- 3.2. Where the vehicle is unavailable for an extended time due to accident, emergency or act of God. Council has no liability to supply a replacement vehicle; however every attempt will be made to ensure that the vehicle is in suitable operating order at all times.

4. Drivers of Vehicle

- 4.1. The Vehicle may ONLY be operated by:
 - the authorised driver.
 - an authorised Council employee.
 - in case of an emergency, another licensed driver.
- 4.2. Written permission must be obtained from West Arnhem Regional Council for any other person to use the vehicle that is not nominated as an Authorised Driver.





- 4.3. The vehicle may not be driven by a person who does not hold the relevant licence or provisional licence issued by the Road Transport Authority or its equivalent.
 - 4.4. The Authorised Driver will be expected to obey all road and traffic regulations and maintain a full driver's licence. If fined for any infringement for any parking or traffic offence, the Authorised Driver will be liable for such fine from his/her own funds.
 - 4.5. The vehicle must not be driven by a person who is intoxicated or under the influence of drugs.
 - 4.6. The vehicle is not to be used under any circumstance for commercial purposes, competition or rally, which might contravene the insurance policy or result in voidance of the insurance cover and/or the vehicle manufacturer's warranty.
 - 4.7. The Authorised Driver shall ensure that the vehicle is driven for an appropriate use and in a responsible manner at all times, being mindful of community perception.
 - 4.8. Keys must not be left in the ignition of the vehicle when unattended and must be securely locked when left unattended. If fitted with an alarm system, the Authorised Driver shall ensure that it is enabled.
 - 4.9. Driver/Hirer must notify West Arnhem Regional Council immediately if their licence is suspended or cancelled. If it is a requirement of the Authorised Driver to operate a motor vehicle, the suspension or cancellation of the Authorised Driver's licence may end the Agreement.
- 5. Service, Maintenance and Insurance**
- 5.1. The Authorised Driver shall be responsible for the proper care of the vehicle including cleaning inside and out and ensuring that any faults or accidents are reported.
 - 5.2. Costs relating to scheduled maintenance will be met by the West Arnhem Regional Council Fleet Department.
 - 5.3. West Arnhem Regional Council Fleet Department will be responsible for registration of the Vehicle and full comprehensive insurance in respect of the vehicle and its use.
 - 5.4. The Authorised Driver should ensure that the provisions of any insurance policy relating to the vehicle are observed.
 - 5.5. Any service difficulty, fault, damages and accidents must be reported to West Arnhem Regional Council who will arrange for the maintenance to be carried out. When required by law, immediately report any accidents involving the vehicle to the police.
 - 5.6. The Fleet Manager may inspect the motor vehicle at any time without notice.
- 6. Safety**
- 6.1. It is the responsibility of the Authorised Driver to ensure that the first aid kit provided with the vehicle is kept fully stocked and that items in that kit which have a 'used by' date are replaced after that date.





6.2. The first aid kit shall be always kept with the vehicle.

7. Extras

7.1. No operational modifications or additions are to be made to the vehicle without the prior approval of West Arnhem Regional Council.

7.2. Damages, Accidents or Breakdown must be reported to the Fleet Manager as soon as possible.

7.3. An Authorised Driver convicted of drink-driving associated with an accident, or where the accident occurs and the accident is the fault of the Authorised Driver and it involves Council's vehicles, may be expected to pay the cost of associated repairs or the full amount in the event that Council's insurers disclaim responsibility. Further he/she shall indemnify Council against all damages caused to a third party should the insurance company decline liability.

8. Termination

8.1. West Arnhem Regional Council considers the provision of a motor vehicle as a significant privilege. West Arnhem Regional Council reserves the right to withdraw use of the motor vehicle upon:

- a breach by the Authorised Driver of a term of this agreement.
- a breach of the Use of Council Vehicles Policy or a breach of the Code of Conduct. Any Authorised Driver who is in breach of this Policy will be held liable for any cost resulting from damage.

8.2. The Authorised Driver may terminate this agreement immediately upon giving Council written notice of intention to do so.

9. Surrender of Vehicle

9.1. The vehicle shall be surrendered to Council:

- upon termination of this Hire Agreement.

9.2. The vehicle must be returned in a condition that is reasonably reflective of what would be expected considering vehicle age and mileage as that particular point of time.

9.3. The Authorised Driver is responsible for any damage resulting from modifications, misuse or negligence of the vehicle.

9.4. An inspection will be carried out by the responsible officer or delegated West Arnhem Regional Council employee upon the return of the vehicle.

9.5. All keys must be returned to Council.

10. Level of Usage Permitted

The Responsible Officer has been granted:

- Sporting Events
- Other





Signed in agreement of the terms set out above by the Chief Executive Officer of West Arnhem Regional Council

Council Services Manager Name

Signature

_____/_____/_____
Date

Director Name

Signature

_____/_____/_____
Date

Chief Executive Officer Name

Signature

_____/_____/_____
Date

Signed in agreement of the terms set out above

Authorised Driver Name

Signature

_____/_____/_____
Date





COMMUNITY	VEHICLE INFORMATION			
MANINGRIDA	TYPE			
	REGO #		ODOMETER	
	FUEL LEVEL	1/4	1/2	3/4
		FULL		
	HIRE START		TIME	
	HIRE RETURN		TIME	
	DAILY CHARGE		TOTAL HIRE AMOUNT	

VEHICLE CONDITION

DRIVER (HIRER)			
DRIVERS NAME:		DRIVERS LICENSE	
SIGNATURE:		DATE:	

AUTHORISATION			
AUTHORISORS S NAME:			
SIGNATURE:		DATE:	





TERMS OF AGREEMENT	
<p>DRIVER</p> <p>You agree and acknowledge that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) only you will drive the vehicle; and b) you are currently licensed to drive the vehicle and have been so licensed to drive for a period of 12 months or longer (excluding any time under a learner's permit or a provisional license). <p>WHERE YOU CAN AND CANNOT DRIVE THE VEHICLE</p> <p>You agree to only use the vehicle on a road, which is properly formed and constructed as a sealed or gravel road. You agree not to drive the vehicle on beaches or through streams, dams, rivers or floodwater.</p> <p>USE OF THE VEHICLE</p> <p>You agree not to use the vehicle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) for any illegal purpose, race, contest or performance test of any kind. b) to tow or push anything, unless authorised by the West Arnhem Shire Council. c) to carry more passengers than may be properly accommodated by the seat belt restraints provided in the vehicle or carry a greater load than that for which it was built. d) while under the influence of alcohol, drugs or have a blood alcohol content that exceeds the legal limit in the Northern Territory. e) to carry passengers for payment of any kind. f) when it is damaged or unsafe. g) to transport goods, except in compliance with all laws and statutory regulations. h) for the conveyance or towing of any load which is incorrectly loaded or secured or is in excess of that for which the Vehicle was constructed. i) without the West Arnhem Regional Council's prior written consent, to carry any inflammable substance which has a flash point under 22.8°C or any other explosive or corrosive substances; and j) in contravention of any law. k) you agree to pay for any unauthorised repairs to the vehicle and for all parking and traffic infringements in respect of the vehicle during the rental period. <p>MAINTENANCE, SECURITY & SAFETY</p> <p>You agree to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> l) maintain all of the vehicle's engine oils and engine coolant levels to the manufacturer's specifications. m) keep the vehicle locked and the keys under your personal control at all times; and c) comply with any applicable seat belt and child restraint laws. <p>You agree not to undertake or cause to be undertaken repairs to the vehicle carried out unless the West Arnhem Regional Council (hereunder referred to as the Council) authorises you to do so. You agree to pay for any unauthorised repairs to the vehicle.</p>	<p>If you fail to return the vehicle in accordance with this rental agreement then you agree to pay the Council reasonable compensation for any expense, loss and/or inconvenience it has incurred.</p> <p>You agree to promptly return the vehicle at any time and without prior notice upon the Council's request.</p> <p>LOSS DAMAGE WAIVER, DAMAGE AND LOSS OF PROPERTY</p> <p>You agree to indemnify the Council against liability for any loss of, or damage to, any property stolen from the vehicle or otherwise lost during the rental; or left in the vehicle after its return.</p> <p>You agree to be liable for the loss of, and all damage to, the vehicle and for all damage to the property of any person which is caused or contributed to by you; or which arises from the use of the vehicle by you.</p> <p>The vehicle is insured under the Council's comprehensive insurance policy. If there is loss or damage to the vehicle and the Council's insurer approves to pay for a claim to repair/replace the vehicle then you agree that you will pay all excesses, deductibles and charges required by the Council's insurer. If the Council's insurer does not approve to pay for any such claim, then you agree to pay for all costs associated with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) repair/replacement of the vehicle. b) any lost opportunities; and/or. c) obtaining and utilising a temporary replacement vehicle while the Council's vehicle is being repaired. <p>You agree to promptly report to the Council, any accident in which the vehicle is involved or implicated in any way.</p> <p>TERMINATION</p> <p>Either party may terminate this rental agreement at any time and for any other reason. Unless otherwise agreed in writing the Council, if the rental agreement is terminated early for any reason other than a breach by the Council, then you agree to pay the Council all monies it would have been entitled to charge if the rental agreement had continued for the entire term. Clauses within this agreement that govern monies owed to the Council by you or to you by the Council shall survive termination of this rental agreement.</p> <p>RETURN OF VEHICLE</p> <p>You agree to return the vehicle to the Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) to the place the place where the vehicle was picked up, on the date shown on this rental agreement during normal business hours. b) in the same condition as it was at the commencement of the rental period.



WEST ARNHEM REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 JANUARY 2026

Agenda Reference:	9.12
Title:	West Arnhem Region - Community Flag Poles
Author:	Grant Mckenzie, Director Technical Services

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an audit of the current flag poles within the communities, prices to upgrade / install flag poles and the protocol obligations in relation to flying flags.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL:

1. Receives and notes the report titled *West Arnhem Region - Community Flag Poles*;
2. Provides the Local Authority the opportunity to review the flag poles within their community, consider the cost to repair, upgrade, installation of poles and the purchase of additional flags; and
3. Continues to maintain the poles, replace the flags when required and provide the resources to comply with the relevant protocols.

BACKGROUND

At the November 2025 Ordinary Council Meeting the Gunbalanya Ward Councillor requested flag poles and flags within their community. It was suggested that the matter be referred to the Local Authority. Council also requested to know the number of flags and poles within the region.

Currently flags and poles within each community are as follows:

Community	Number of poles	Location	Flags
Jabiru	4	Tasman Crescent	Aust, NT, Aboriginal, TSI
Maningrida	3	Council office	Aust, Aboriginal, NT
Minjilang	4 *	Council office	Aust, NT, Aboriginal, TSI
Gunbalanya	0 *		
Warruwi	2 *	Between the store and clinic	Aust, NT

- * Minjilang requested their flag poles be relocated due to constant damage. Only 3 poles currently work.
- * Gunbalanya requested 4 flag poles outside the Council office with flags and lights.
- * Warruwi requested an additional 2 flag poles together with the additional flags.

If the Local Authority agree to fund new poles, the Council will be responsible for the ongoing maintenance, the replacement cost of new flags and the resources to manage the flags according to the protocols. Replacement flags cost approximately \$300 each.

Flag Protocols from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet are attached.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY

State protocols.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Costs vary across each community.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report is aligned to the following pillars and goals of the *Regional Plan and Budget*:

PILLAR 6 FOUNDATIONS OF GOVERNANCE

Integrity is at the heart of everything we do. We are leaders of best practice and excellence in governance, advocacy, consultation and administration. Our processes, procedures and policies are ethical and transparent.

Goal 6.3 Council and Local Authorities

Excellence in governance, consultation administration and representation.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Flag protocols [9.12.1 - 2 pages]

Flying the NT flag

You are encouraged to fly the Northern Territory (NT) flag at your workplace or your home.

The NT flag should be used with respect and dignity.

When flying the NT flag you should:

- raise the flag quickly
- raise the flag no earlier than dawn and no later than dusk
- when the flag is raised/lowered/carried in a parade everyone should be silent
- people in uniform should salute when the flag is raised or lowered
- flag should be flown freely and close to the top of the flagpole
- flag rope should be tightly secured
- illuminate the flag if flown at night.

You should not let the flag fall or lie on the ground. The flag should not be used as a cover, unless it is to be used to cover a coffin at a funeral.

How not to fly the flag

You should not fly the NT flag:

- with another flag on the same flag pole
- upside down even as a signal of distress
- if it is damaged or faded
- at night if it is not illuminated.

Flying the NT flag with other flags

Australian flag

The Australian national flag takes precedence over all other national flags when it is flown in Australia.

The following rules should be followed:

- it should be raised first and lowered last unless all flags are raised and lowered at the same time
- it should be the same size as other flags or ensigns
- it should be flown on a flagpole the same size as other national flags
- when flying with one other national flag it should fly on the left
- it should not be flown in an inferior position to flags or ensigns.

Flag order by priority

You should prioritise flags in the following order:

1. Australian national flag.
2. National flag of other nations in alphabetical order.
3. State and territory flags as follows:
 - New South Wales
 - Victoria
 - Queensland
 - South Australia
 - Western Australia
 - Tasmania
 - Australian Capital Territory
 - Northern Territory.
4. Other flags approved under the [Flags Act 1953](#) including:
 - Aboriginal flag and Torres Strait Islander flag (in either order)
 - Defence ensigns as follows:
 - Australian Defence Force
 - Australian White
 - Royal Australian Air Force
5. Ensigns and pennants including:
 - local government
 - Commonwealth, state and territory agencies
 - non-government organisations.

The order of priority can vary on some military occasions or establishments.

The Australian national flag can be followed in the order of priority by defence ensigns and military pennants ahead of other flags, ensigns and pennants.

WEST ARNHEM REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 JANUARY 2026

Agenda Reference:	9.13
Title:	Expenditure of WaRM Grant Funding
Author:	Meredith Newall, Waste and Resource Coordinator

SUMMARY

This report is to seek Council's approval expenditure of the annually allocated Waste Resources Management funding pool (WaRM Grant).

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL:

1. Receives and notes the report titled Expenditure of WaRM Grant 2025/2026 period; and
2. Approves the expenditure of up to \$148,800 from WaRM Grant Funding as follows:
 - Landfill Operator Training
 - Waste data software licences and tablets
 - Purchase of materials for each Waste Management Facility
 - Engagement of Keep Australia Beautiful Council
 - Purchase of a woodchipper for the Jabiru Waste Management Facility

BACKGROUND

Council receives an annual allocation of funding from the office of Chief Minister and Cabinet for use in Waste and Resource Management. Funding of \$148,800 (exclusive of GST) has been allocated for the financial year 2025/26. A condition of the funding grant is that Council provides a resolution on the operational projects that will be funded by this grant, with expenditure to be completed within two years.

COMMENT

The NT EPA conducted inspections at all three mainland Waste Management Facilities 29 and 30 October 2025. A number of non-compliance issues were identified by the NT EPA at the Gunbalanya and Maningrida sites, and these same issues are present at Minjilang and Waruwi Waste Management Facilities as well.

Based on preliminary cost estimates, the following projects will be completed:

1. Landfill Operator Training for all Council Service Managers, Senior Works Officers, Team Leaders Works and Landfill Officers. Training will cover a range of issues raised in the NT EPA Inspection reports including but not limited to:
 - Daily cover
 - Stormwater management
 - Leachate management
 - Environmental obligations
 - Litter management

Any other identified training to assist with site compliance. \$32,000

2. Waste data software licenses and tablets for Jabiru, Gunbalanya and Maningrida \$20,000
3. Purchase of materials for each Waste Management Facility including:
 - Signage
 - Spill kits

- Waste oil bunds, frames and covers (except Jabiru)
- Used car battery storage and transport containers (except for Jabiru)
- Fire-fighting equipment
Total cost of \$25,000
- 4. Community Education:
 - Engagement of Keep Australia Beautiful Council NT to deliver litter reduction programs
 - Development of educational materials for the community re: risks associated with burning of waste materials
Total cost of \$30,000
- 5. Purchase of equipment to assist with processing of green waste at Jabiru \$41,800

These operational projects will be projected by the Waste and Resources Coordinator, who will limit the total cost to the allocated funding of \$148,800.

The above allocation was made considering the compliance inspections conducted by the NT EPA in October 2025 and Council's operational and strategic needs including the Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Strategy 2024-2034.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY

Local Government Act 2019

West Arnhem Regional Council Waste Strategy 2021-2026

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Strategy 2024-2034

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

\$148,800 Waste and Resource Management Funding.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report is aligned to the following pillars and goals of the *Regional Plan and Budget*:

PILLAR 1 PARTNERSHIPS, RELATIONSHIPS AND BELONGING

Investing in relationships and partnerships at all levels supports and strengthens community and belonging. We prioritise the value of partnerships and relationships as a key determinant of a happy, strong and thriving community.

Goal 1.1 Community Engagement

Seek out and support diverse perspectives and collaborations with community, community leaders, businesses, agencies and local service providers to enhance community life.

Goal 1.3 Communication

Deliver dynamic communication which is culturally informed and appropriate, engaging and relevant to the interests of Council.

PILLAR 4 SERVICE DELIVERY AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

We provide high quality infrastructure and service delivery that meets the unique needs of each community, creates a sense of place and contributes towards promoting a sense of pride in community.

Goal 4.1 Strategic Infrastructure and Asset Management

Strategically manage, maintain and enhance community infrastructure.

Goal 4.3 Waste and Water Management

Deliver environmentally and economically sound solid waste, water and sewerage services.

PILLAR 5 SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE ACTION

Leading by example, we commit to developing a culture of sustainable practice. We recognise and champion the importance of safe-guarding our environment for future generations by working collectively with community, private enterprises and all tiers of government.

Goal 5.1 Recycling and Waste

Develop recycling and waste initiatives which protect and preserve community natural resources and the local environment.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

WEST ARNHem REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 JANUARY 2026

Agenda Reference:	10.1
Title:	Incoming and Outgoing Correspondence
Author:	Violette Stehlin, Acting Executive Assistant to Mayor and CEO

SUMMARY

This report is to table items of correspondence received and sent since the last Ordinary Council Meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL receives and notes the attached items of incoming and outgoing correspondence.

BACKGROUND

In June 2025, Council requested that incoming and outgoing correspondence be made available in hard copy for Council Members to view at each meeting separate to the agenda. Correspondence available is as follows:

COMMENT

#	Type	Date	Sender/Receiver	Reference
1	Letter	20.11.2025	Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation Jabiru Town	WARC By-Laws
2	Letter	21.11.2025	Kristy McBain MP	Local Government funding and Fiscal Sustainability
3	Letter	24.11.2025	NTG Law Reform Committee	Statutory Immunity from Criminal Liability Provisions (draft submissions included)
4	Adjournment Speech	25.11.2025	Jinson Charls MLA	Hansard extract Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory
5	Letter	19.11.2025	Anne Webster MP	Local Government Sustainability Inquiry
6	Letter	02.12.2025	Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation Jabiru Town	UCV for Jabiru Community Hall and Carpark
7	Letter	03.12.2025	Marrawuddi Arts & Culture	Letter of Support Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support program
8	Letter	03.12.2025	Department of Logistics and Infrastructure	Black Spot Program 2026-27 Nominations
9	Submissions	11.12.2025	Local Government Association Northern Territory	Draft submissions, Infill Development and Subdivisions
10	Letter	12.12.2025	Maningrida Consortium Region	Maningrida Masterplan and Major Projects
11	Letter	14.12.2025	Minister of DHLGCD	Declaration of Jabiru Town Cemetery
12	Letter	16.12.2025	Jabiru Golf Club	Request for Rates Support 2025-26.
13	Letter	16.12.2025	Northern Territory Electoral Commission	2025 Local Government Supplementary Election Results
14	Letter	17.12.2025	Cr. Daniel Siebert	Letter of Congratulations

15	Letter	17.12.2025	Cr. Kylie Lindner		Letter of Congratulations
16	Email	05.01.2026	Local Association Territory	Government Northern	NT Council Discretionary Trust Advisory Committee
17	Email	06.01.2026	Local Association Territory	Government Northern	Place Names Committee Endorsement of Nominations
18	Letter	16.01.2026	Department of Logistics and Infrastructure		Abandoned Vehicle Changes

LEGISLATION AND POLICY

Nil.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report is aligned to the following pillars of the *Regional Plan and Budget 2023-2024*:

PILLAR 6 FOUNDATIONS OF GOVERNANCE

Integrity is at the heart of everything we do. We are leaders of best practice and excellence in governance, advocacy, consultation and administration. Our processes, procedures and policies are ethical and transparent.

Goal 6.3 Council and Local Authorities

Excellence in governance, consultation administration and representation.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

WEST ARNHem REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 JANUARY 2026

Agenda Reference:	10.2
Title:	Meetings and Events attended by the Mayor
Author:	Violette Stehlin, Acting Executive Assistant to Mayor and CEO

SUMMARY

This report provides information to Council on meetings and events attended by the Mayor since the last Ordinary Council Meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL receives and notes the report titled *Meetings and Events attended by the Mayor*.

BACKGROUND

The meetings and events listed involve discussions that influence or may affect the operations of the Council or relationships with external agencies.

COMMENT

Date(s)	Location	Reason for Meeting	Person(s) met with
26.11.2025	Darwin	NT Major Projects Conference (Day 1)	Various Stakeholders
27.11.2025	Darwin	NT Major Projects Conference (Day 2)	Various Stakeholders
28.11.2025	Darwin	Discuss AFL NT Support and Engagement in Maningrida	AFL NT
01.12.2025	Darwin	Council Office and Public Facilities	Hayden Wolfe
02.12.2025	Darwin	NTG Agribusiness 2030 Strategy Briefing	Local Government Association Northern Territory and Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
03.12.2025	Brisbane	4 th National Justice Forum (Day 1)	Various Stakeholders
08.12.2025	Teams	Meet and Greet	Power and Water Corporation
10.12.2025	Teams	Closing the Gap Place-Based Partnership Community of Practice	National Indigenous Australian Agency
12.12.2025	Teams	Tranche 2 Local Government Amendments	Local Government Association Northern Territory
15.12.2025	Teams	Board Meeting and Induction	Local Government Association and Northern Territory
17.12.2025	Maningrida	Closing the Gap Place-Based Partnerships	Northern Territory Government Aboriginal Partnerships and Reform

17.12.2025	Teams	Local Government Act 2019 Amendments Briefing	Department of Housing, Local Government and Community Development
14.01.2026	Teams	RAP Working Group	Local Government Association Northern Territory
15.01.2026	Maningrida	Heads of Agency Meeting	Various Stakeholders
16.01.2026	Maningrida	Maningrida Community Meeting	Various Stakeholders
19.01.2026	Jabiru	Australian Citizenship Ceremony	Members of the Public
19.01.2026	Jabiru	Future of Jabiru Airport	Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation and Northern Land Council

LEGISLATION AND POLICY

Nil.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report is aligned to the following pillars and goals of the *Regional Plan and Budget*:

PILLAR 1 PARTNERSHIPS, RELATIONSHIPS AND BELONGING

Investing in relationships and partnerships at all levels supports and strengthens community and belonging. We prioritise the value of partnerships and relationships as a key determinant of a happy, strong and thriving community.

Goal 1.1 Community Engagement

Seek out and support diverse perspectives and collaborations with community, community leaders, businesses, agencies and local service providers to enhance community life.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

WEST ARNHAM REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 JANUARY 2026

Agenda Reference:	10.3
Title:	Meetings and Events attended by the CEO
Author:	Violette Stehlin, Acting Executive Assistant to Mayor and CEO

SUMMARY

This report provides information on meetings and events attended by the CEO since the last Ordinary Council Meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL receives and notes the report titled *Meetings and Events attended by the CEO*.

BACKGROUND

The meetings listed involve discussions that influence or may affect the operations of the Council or relationships with external agencies.

COMMENT

Date(s)	Location	Reason for Meeting	Person(s) met with
25.11.2025	Minjilang	Seeing Aftermath of Cyclone Fina	West Arnhem Regional Council Staff
26.11.2025	Darwin	NT Major Projects Conference (Day 1)	Various Stakeholders
27.11.2025	Darwin	NT Major Projects Conference (Day 2)	Various Stakeholders
28.11.2025	Darwin	Discuss AFL NT Support and Engagement in Maningrida	AFL NT
28.11.2025	Teams	Meet and Greet	Red Lily
01.12.2025	Teams	Council Office and Public Facilities	Hayden Wolfe
01.12.2025	Darwin	Audit Meeting	Nexia Edwards Marshall
02.12.2025	Darwin	Monthly Meeting	Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation Jabiru Town
02.12.2025	Teams	NTG Agribusiness 2030 Strategy Briefing	Local Government Association Northern Territory and Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
03.12.2025	Darwin	Toad Hall	JLT Risk Solutions
03.12.2025	Darwin	Quarterly meeting	Department of Logistics and Infrastructure
03.12.2025	Darwin	Industry Mentor & Partner Celebration Evening (CDU)	Various Stakeholders
04.12.2025	Darwin	General Discussion	Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation Jabiru Town
04.12.2025	Darwin	Meet and Greet	Legal Aid

08.12.2025	Darwin	Meet and Greet	Power and Water Corporation
10.12.2025	Jabiru	2025 Annual Awards	Jabiru Area School
10.12.2025	Teams	Closing the Gap Place-Based Partnership Community of Practice	National Indigenous Australian Agency
12.12.2025	Darwin	Tranche 2 Local Government Amendments	Local Government Association Northern Territory
17.12.2025	Darwin	Local Government Act 2019 Amendments Briefing	Department of Housing, Local Government and Community Development
19.12.2025	Darwin	Stakeholder Engagement	Red Lily
19.12.2025	Darwin	Post Election Review Meeting	Northern Territory Electrical Commission
08.01.2026	Teams	Training Facilitator	L.H & P Gouldson
12.01.2026	Teams	Maningrida Power Planning	Indigenous Energy Australia
13.01.2026	Teams	Leadership and Crisis Prepare Support	BICRISIS
14.01.2026	Teams	Training Facilitator	3P Organisation Development
14.01.2026	Darwin	Maningrida Airport and Barge Landing	Department of Logistics and Infrastructure
15.01.2026	Maningrida	Heads of Agency Meeting	Various Stakeholders
16.01.2026	Teams	Grant Management	SurePact
19.01.2026	Jabiru	Australian Citizenship Ceremony	Members of the Public
19.01.2026	Jabiru	Future of Jabiru Airport	Gundjehmi Aboriginal Corporation, Northern Land Council and Department of Housing, Local Government and Community Development
21.01.2026	Darwin	Monthly Meeting	Gundjehmi Aboriginal Corporation Jabiru Town

LEGISLATION AND POLICY

Nil.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report is aligned to the following pillars and goals of the *Regional Plan and Budget*:

PILLAR 1 PARTNERSHIPS, RELATIONSHIPS AND BELONGING

Investing in relationships and partnerships at all levels supports and strengthens community and belonging. We prioritise the value of partnerships and relationships as a key determinant of a happy, strong and thriving community.

Goal 1.1 Community Engagement

Seek out and support diverse perspectives and collaborations with community, community leaders, businesses, agencies and local service providers to enhance community life.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

WEST ARNHAM REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 January 2026

Agenda Reference:	10.4
Title:	Local Government Association NT - Local Government Act Amendments
Author:	Katharine Murray, Chief Executive Officer

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on LGANT's draft submission regarding the Consultation Bill Local Government Act 2019.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL receives and notes the report titled *Local Government Association NT - Local Government Act Amendments*.

BACKGROUND

Timeline:

3 June 2025	LGANT sought feedback from councils in relation to their 'high-level outline' in response to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Community Development (DHLGCD) <i>Proposed Amendments to the Local Government Act 2019</i> . WARC supported LGANT's outline and had nothing further to add.
29 July 2025	LGANT's final submission was provided to Council for information.
2 December 2025	WARC received <i>DRAFT Consultation Bill Local Government Act 2019</i> – DHLGCD seeking "compressed face-to-face consultation" 5-15 December 2025
7 December 2025	WARC received <i>Additional Information: Explanatory Statement – Local Government Act Amendments</i>
8 December 2025	WARC invited DHLGCD to Special Council Meeting, 11 December 2025 - unavailable
12 December 2025	LGANT Meeting – Tranche 2 Local Government Act Amendments
7 January 2026	<i>DRAFT Consultation Bill Local Government Act 2019</i> submission by LGANT
February 2026	Proposed date by DHLGCD document to be endorsed by Cabinet

STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT

Local Government Act 2019

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report aligns to the following pillars and goals as outlined in the *Regional Plan and Budget*:

PILLAR 6 FOUNDATIONS OF GOVERNANCE

Integrity is at the heart of everything we do. We are leaders of best practice and excellence in governance, advocacy, consultation and administration. Our processes, procedures and policies are ethical and transparent.

Goal 6.3 Council and Local Authorities

Excellence in governance, consultation administration and representation.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 2025-12-17 DRAFT FOR SUBMISSION Consultation Bill Local Government Act 2019 [**10.4.1** - 51 pages]
2. Proposed code of conduct decision tree [**10.4.2** - 2 pages]

Serial
Local Government Legislation Amendment (Code of Conduct and Other
Matters) Bill 2025
Mr Edgington

A Bill for an Act to amend the *Local Government Act 2019*, the *Local
Government (Electoral) Regulations 2021* and the *Local Government
(General) Regulations 2021*

CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT
Prepared by the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel
Date: 21 November 2025 13:48

Ref: 20bILL018 d10

NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA

LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (CODE OF CONDUCT AND OTHER MATTERS) ACT 2025

Act No. [] of 2025

Table of provisions

Part 1 Preliminary matters

1	Short title.....	1
2	Commencement.....	1

Part 2 General amendments

Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

3	Act amended.....	2
4	Section 11 amended (Public notice for matters in relation to elections).....	2
5	Section 40 amended (Delegation).....	3
6	Section 45 replaced.....	3
	45 Training requirements for council members	
7	Section 59 amended (Role and functions of principal member and deputy or acting principal member).....	4
8	Section 73 amended (Offences for conflict of interest).....	4
9	Section 160 amended (Minister's powers in relation to election).....	4
10	Chapter 21, Part 4 inserted.....	5
	Part 4 Transitional Matters for Local Government Legislation Amendment (Code of Conduct and Other Matters) Act 2025	
372	Definition	
373	Application of section 40(3A)(b)	

Division 2 Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2021

11	Regulations amended.....	5
12	Regulation 35 amended (Lodgement of candidate statement).....	5
13	Regulation 54 replaced.....	6
54	Postponement and adjournment of voting	

14	Regulation 65 amended (Scrutiny of postal voting papers)	7
15	Regulation 72 repealed (Extension or change of time)	7

Division 3 Local Government (General) Regulations 2021

16	Regulations amended.....	7
17	Regulation 36 amended (Tenders by council or local government subsidiary).....	7
18	Regulation 43A inserted	8
	43A Information about contract to be given by delegate	
19	Part 9 inserted	9
	Part 9 Transitional matter for Local Government Legislation Amendment (Code of Conduct and Other Matters) Act 2025	
141	Application of amendments to regulation 36(8)	

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters

Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

20	Act amended.....	10
21	Section 7 amended (Definitions).....	10
22	Section 47 amended (Disqualification)	11
23	Section 95 amended (Procedure at meeting).....	11
24	Chapter 7, Part 7.4 replaced.....	11
	Part 7.4 Code of conduct for members	
	Division 1 Preliminary matters	
119	Definitions	
120	Prescribed code of conduct	
	Division 2 Administrative matters	
121	Pool of independent assessors	
122	Functions of independent assessors	
123	Pool of code of conduct panel members	
124	Functions of code of conduct panel	
125	Meetings of code of conduct panel	
126	Secretariat function	
	Division 3 General Procedures	
127	Application	
128	Evidence	
129	Procedural fairness	
130	Timeliness of determinations, decisions and actions	
	Division 4 Complaints	
131	Making complaint to CEO	
132	Making complaint to secretariat	
132A	Limitation period	
132B	Withdrawal of complaint	

	Division 5	Investigation and resolution by council	
	132C	Dealing with complaint by council	
	132D	Further investigation or resolution	
	132E	Action by council	
	Division 6	Independent assessment	
	132F	Assignment of independent assessor	
	132G	Action by independent assessor	
	132H	Request for review of determination or decision by independent assessor	
	132J	Review of determination or decision by independent assessor	
	Division 7	Code of conduct panel hearings and determinations	
	132K	Establishing a code of conduct panel	
	132L	Assignment of members of code of conduct panel	
	132M	Conduct of hearing and making determinations	
	132N	Action by code of conduct panel	
	Division 8	Other sanctions	
	132P	Compliance with sanction	
	132Q	Power to suspend or dismiss	
25	Chapter 10 heading amended (Financial management)		27
26	Chapter 10, Part 10.11 inserted.....		28
	Part 10.11	Governance advisor	
	216A	Governance advisor	
27	Chapter 17, Part 17.2 replaced.....		28
	Part 17.2	Financial and governance controllers	
	317	Definition	
	317A	Financial controller	
	317B	Governance controller	
	317C	Financial and governance controller appointments	
28	Section 336 amended (Misleading information)		31
29	Section 374 inserted		32
	374	Application of provisions relating to conduct of members	
30	Schedule 1 repealed (Code of conduct).....		32
31	Schedule 2 replaced		32
	Schedule 2	NTCAT reviewable decisions and affected persons	
32	Schedule 3 amended (Information to be publicly available).....		33
	Division 2	Local Government (General) Regulations 2021	
33	Regulations amended.....		33
34	Part 3, Division 7 replaced.....		34
	Division 7	Code of conduct	
	71	Prescribed code of conduct	
35	Schedule 1A inserted.....		34

Schedule 1A Code of Conduct

Part 4 Amendments relating to financial matters

36	Act amended.....	39
37	Section 7 amended (Definitions).....	39
38	Section 109A inserted.....	39
	109A Superannuation	
39	Section 222 amended (Exempt land).....	40
40	Section 250 amended (Public benefit concessions)	40

Part 5 Repeal of Act

41	Repeal of Act	41
----	---------------------	----



NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA

Act No. [] of 2025

An Act to amend the *Local Government Act 2019*, the *Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2021* and the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2021*

[Assented to [] 2025]
[Introduced [] 2025]

The Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory enacts as follows:

Part 1 Preliminary matters

1 Short title

This Act may be cited as the *Local Government Legislation Amendment (Code of Conduct and Other Matters) Act 2025*.

2 Commencement

- (1) This Act, except Parts 3 and 4, commences on the day after the day on which the Administrator's assent to this Act is declared.
- (2) Subject to subsection (3), Parts 3 and 4 commence on the day fixed by the Administrator by *Gazette* notice.
- (3) If a provision of Part 3 or 4 does not commence before 31 January 2028, it commences on that day.

Commented [SZ1]: Issues:

1. Inconsistent with explanatory statement.
2. Bill refers to commencement of Part 3 and 4 on 31 January 2028 if the Administrator does not issue a gazettal prior to this date (as it will not occur on the day after the Administrator's assent as applies to the remainder of the Bill).
3. This is an extended transition period that is not in line with common practice. 6-12 months for major amendments may be found to be reasonable but 31 January 2028 outlines an almost 24-month transition period.
4. Suggest that this is an error in drafting, particularly due to inconsistency with explanatory statement.

Commented [SZ2R1]: Recommendation:

1. Amend transition period date for Parts 3 and 4 to 30 June 2026. [is this reasonable?]

Part 2 General amendments
 Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

Part 2 General amendments

Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

3 Act amended

This Division amends the *Local Government Act 2019*.

4 Section 11 amended (Public notice for matters in relation to elections)

(1) Section 11(1)

omit

about a matter in relation to an election, notice about the matter must be published as follows:

insert

of information relating to an election, the returning officer for the election:

(2) Section 11(1)(a)

omit, insert

(a) may publish the information in any way the returning officer considers appropriate; and

(3) Section 11(1)(b)

omit

the returning officer for the election

(4) Section 11(3) and (4)

omit, insert

(3) If under this Act a specified period after the giving of public notice of information relating to an election is required or allowed for a matter, the period starts on the date the information is published on the council's website.

Commented [AJ3]: Issue:
 11(1)b Omitting 'the returning officer for the election' leaves it undefined in the Act who is responsible for directing a council to publish the information .

Recommendation:
 This is not omitted.

It must be clearly defined who holds this responsibility.

As the returning officer is the official responsible for managing the conduct of the election in compliance with the Local Government Act and the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations the responsibility for directing councils to publish information must sit with the returning officer.

Part 2 General amendments
 Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

5 Section 40 amended (Delegation)

- (1) After section 40(2)(a)
insert
 (ab) a council senior staff member; or
- (2) After section 40(3)
insert
- (3A) Despite subsection (2):
 (a) power to enter into a contract for the supply of goods or services may only be delegated to the CEO; and
 (b) the CEO must, at the next council meeting after exercising the delegation mentioned in paragraph (a), table a report in relation to the contract containing the information prescribed by regulation.
- (3) After section 40(6A)
insert
- (6B) Despite this section, the regulations may provide that a power or function of the council under the regulations:
 (a) may not be delegated; or
 (b) may only be delegated to certain persons or bodies or on certain conditions.

6 Section 45 replaced

- Section 45
repeal, insert
- 45 Training requirements for council members**
- (1) The CEO of the Agency may determine training requirements for members of a council or a class of members of a council.
 - (2) A member of a council must comply with a determination under subsection (1).
 - (3) The CEO of the Agency must publish a determination under subsection (1) on the Agency's website.

Commented [SZ4]: Issue:
 1. s 40(2)(ab) not flagged as a potential amendment in the discussion paper. Delegation should be to from CEO to staff rather than side-stepping the CEO. This does not reflect best practice.

Commented [SZ5R4]: Recommendation:
 1. Reject the insertion of (ab) after section 40(2)(a).

Commented [SZ6]: Issue:
 2. s 40(3A)(a) this should not restrict the CEO from sub-delegating as appropriate. The assumption is that, despite this amendment, internal council policies may set out sub-delegation processes.

Commented [SZ7R6]: Recommendation:
 2. Confirm assumption that the wording of this provision does not limit councils from sub-delegating in a manner consistent with internal council policies.

Commented [SZ8]: Issues:
 3. s 40(3A)(b) 'next council meeting' requirement too onerous. Councils all set different meeting cadences, with some holding meetings bi-monthly.
 4. s 30(3A)(b) the CEO should not have to report on transactions that are below a certain threshold. I.e. catering contracts, etc. that represent relatively small expenditure. This is too onerous.

Commented [SZ9R8]: Recommendations:
 3. Set minimum reporting requirement as opposed to 'next council meeting'. i.e. quarterly
 4. Set minimum reporting requirements. i.e. for transactions valued at +\$. Department to consult further to determine a fair and reasonable transaction amount.

Commented [AJ10]: Issue:
 45 Training requirements for council members Discussion Paper - Part C page 11 Proposed Code of Conduct Framework included targeted training for the Chair and Deputy Chair and the LGU consultation summary report stated stakeholder support for this ... [1]

Commented [AJ11]: Issue:
 45 Training requirements for council members There is no requirement for the NTG Local Government Unit to keep signed training records for individual participants. ... [2]

Commented [AJ12]: Issue:
 45(1) 45 Training requirements for council members allows for training to be removed as a legislated requirement. ... [3]

Commented [AJ13]: Issue:
 45(1) 'determine training requirements' is too broad and does not clarify that this is training that will be delivered by the NTG Local Government Unit without training fees. ... [4]

Commented [AJ14]: Issue:
 45(2) There are no penalties defined for non-compliance. ... [5]

Recommendation: ... [5]

Commented [MW15R14]: And responsibility not shifted to councils through dealing with via Code of Conduct breaches

Part 2 General amendments
 Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

- (4) The CEO of the Agency may, if the CEO of the Agency considers it appropriate:
- (a) exempt a member of a council from a training requirement; or
 - (b) grant a member of a council an extension of time for completing a training requirement.

7 Section 59 amended (Role and functions of principal member and deputy or acting principal member)

Section 59(1)(a)

omit, insert

- (a) to chair meetings of the council, including by:
 - (i) ensuring any procedures applicable to the meetings are upheld; and
 - (ii) maintaining order at the meetings;

8 Section 73 amended (Offences for conflict of interest)

Section 73(1)(c), before "member"

insert

staff

9 Section 160 amended (Minister's powers in relation to election)

Section 160, after "limit,"

insert

change or

Commented [AJ16]: Issue:
 45(4)(a) there is no valid reason for a member of a council to be exempted from training.

Recommendation:
 Omit 45(4)(a)

Reasonable adjustments should ensure that every elected member can complete training.

Exemption should not be available on the grounds of previous completion. Discussion Paper - Part C 1.2 highlighted the need for professional development training that emphasised the need for councillors to work together in the interests of the whole council - in order for this to be achieved and to foster collective leadership and grow the sense of unity ALL council members must be required to complete the training.

Commented [AJ17]: Issue:
 45 Training requirements for council members
 No time frame for the completion of training has been included in the amendments.

Recommendation:
 A member of a council must complete a training course within 6 months of each general election

Under the current ACT a member of council must complete a training course within 12 months of each general election. However, 12 months is an unacceptable amount of time for un-trained elected members to be approving financial reports and making council decisions.

Part 2 General amendments
 Division 2 Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2021

10 Chapter 21, Part 4 inserted

After section 371

insert

Part 4 Transitional Matters for Local Government Legislation Amendment (Code of Conduct and Other Matters) Act 2025

372 Definition

In this Part:

amending Act means the *Local Government Legislation Amendment (Code of Conduct and Other Matters) Act 2025*.

373 Application of section 40(3A)(b)

Section 40(3A)(b) applies only in relation to a contract entered into after the commencement of section 5 of the amending Act.

Division 2 Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2021

11 Regulations amended

This Division amends the *Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2021*.

12 Regulation 35 amended (Lodgement of candidate statement)

After regulation 35(10)

insert

(11) The returning officer must give a copy of a **candidate statement** lodged under this regulation, other than a statement that is rejected under subregulation (7) or (8), to the following as soon as reasonably practicable after the statement is lodged:

- (a) the council for the local government area for which the candidate is nominated;
- (b) the Electoral Commission.

(12) As soon as practicable after receiving a **statement under subsection (11)**:

- (a) the **council must publish** the statement on the council's

Commented [MW18]: LGANT's recommendation of a requirement for completion of candidate pre-nomination training not included (like Vic and Qld) - even though LGU summary report noted strong support.

Commented [MW19]: Insert: and photo?

Commented [MW20]: Insert: and photo

Commented [AJ21]: Issue: Regulation 35(12)(a) Publication of candidate statements must be the responsibility of NTEC as the agency responsible for the conduct of local government elections.

Recommendation:
 Omit: the council
 Insert: the NTEC

It is important that there is one easily identified source of truth for information about candidates. As NTEC is the agency responsible for the conduct of local government elections and the agency that receives the candidate information statement as part of the submission of candidate nominations it is logical that NTEC should publish the candidate statements to ensure correct and consistent information.

Councils can publish a link to the NTEC website.

Part 2 General amendments
 Division 3 Local Government (General) Regulations 2021

- (b) no later than 21 days after the original election day.
- (6) The returning officer must, as soon as practicable in the circumstances, give notice of a postponement or adjournment under this regulation and any nomination under subregulation (4).
- (7) In this regulation:
emergency means any of the following:
- (a) a cyclone, bushfire, flood or other natural disaster;
 - (b) rioting or serious violence;
 - (c) any other event that affects the safety of voters or obstructs the proper conduct of voting.

14 Regulation 65 amended (Scrutiny of postal voting papers)

Regulation 65(4)(b)

omit, insert

- (b) if the election is a mandatory postal vote election and the postal voting papers were issued to a person other than a person who applied for postal voting papers under regulation 37(1) – the number on the postal vote certificate corresponds with the number of the person on the electoral roll.

15 Regulation 72 repealed (Extension or change of time)

Regulation 72

repeal

Division 3 Local Government (General) Regulations 2021

16 Regulations amended

This Division amends the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2021*.

17 Regulation 36 amended (Tenders by council or local government subsidiary)

- (1) After regulation 36(6)

insert

(6A) The report mentioned in subregulation (6)(b) must contain the

Commented [SZ22]: Issue:
 1. The report requirements are too onerous. This is a process that is better managed by internal council process.

Commented [SZ23R22]: Recommendation:
 1. Preferred - omit.
 OR 2. (6A) should require councils to resolve an internal procedure that sets out the information that must be contained in a tender report.

Part 2 General amendments
 Division 3 Local Government (General) Regulations 2021

following information:

- (a) a description of the supply for which tenders were sought;
- (b) the name of each supplier who submitted a tender;
- (c) each tender price;
- (d) an evaluation of each tender, having regard to the procurement policy adopted under regulation 33;
- (e) a recommendation as to which tender should be accepted and the reasons for that recommendation;
- (f) any other information the panel considers relevant to the acceptance of a tender.

(2) Regulation 36(8)

omit, insert

(8) After receiving a report under subregulation (6)(b), the CEO or chief executive must:

- (a) in relation to a council – table the report at the next meeting of the council; or
- (b) in relation to a local government subsidiary – provide the report to the subsidiary.

Commented [SZ24]: Issue:
 2. 'next council meeting' requirement too onerous. Councils all set different meeting cadences, with some holding meetings bi-monthly.

Commented [SZ25R24]: Recommendation:
 2. Set minimum reporting requirement as opposed to 'next council meeting'. i.e. quarterly

18 Regulation 43A inserted

After regulation 43, in Part 2, Division 12, Subdivision 1

insert

43A Information about contract to be given by delegate

For section 40(3A)(b) of the Act, the following information is prescribed:

- (a) a description of the supply obtained under the contract;
- (b) the name of the supplier;
- (c) the cost of the supply;
- (d) if quotations or tenders were obtained in relation to the supplies:
 - (i) the name of each supplier who submitted a quotation or

Commented [SZ26]: Issue:
 1. The report requirements are too onerous. This is a process that is better managed by internal council process. This also pulls elected members into the operational space.

Commented [SZ27R26]: Recommendation:
 1. Should require councils to resolve an internal procedure that sets out the information that must be provided.

Part 2 General amendments
Division 3 Local Government (General) Regulations 2021

tender; and

- (ii) each quotation or tender price; and
- (iii) the reason for the acceptance of the successful quotation or tender;
- (e) if regulation 34(3) applies in relation to the supply – the reasons recorded under that provision;
- (f) if regulation 38(1) or 39(1) applies in relation to the supply – the provision of that regulation that relates to the supply;
- (g) if the supply is mentioned in regulation 38(1)(f), (g) or (h) – the grounds for the delegate's belief under that provision;
- (h) if the supply is mentioned in regulation 38(1)(j) – the reason why the particular supplier was the only feasible option;
- (i) if the supply is mentioned in regulation 38(1)(k) – the reason why obtaining quotations or tenders would cause major operational inconvenience or have other serious consequences.

19 Part 9 inserted

After regulation 140

insert

**Part 9 Transitional matter for Local Government
Legislation Amendment (Code of Conduct and
Other Matters) Act 2025**

141 Application of amendments to regulation 36(8)

- (1) Regulation 36(8) as in force immediately after the commencement applies only in relation to a report received after the commencement.
- (2) Regulation 36(8) as in force immediately before the commencement continues to apply in relation to a report received before the commencement.
- (3) In this regulation:

commencement means the commencement of section 17 of the *Local Government Legislation Amendment (Code of Conduct and Other Matters) Act 2025*.

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
 Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters

Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

20 Act amended

This Division amends the *Local Government Act 2019*.

21 Section 7 amended (Definitions)

(1) Section 7, definitions ***council panel*** and ***prescribed corporation panel***

omit

(2) Section 7

insert

code of conduct, for members of a local government council, see section 119.

code of conduct panel, for Chapter 7, Part 7.4, see section 119.

complainant, for Chapter 7, Part 7.4, see section 119.

financial controller means a financial controller appointed under section 317A.

governance advisor means a governance advisor appointed under section 216A.

governance controller means a governance controller appointed under section 317B.

gross misconduct, for Chapter 7, Part 7.4, see section 119.

independent assessor, for Chapter 7, Part 7.4, see section 119.

local government body, for Chapter 17, Part 17.2, see section 317.

misconduct, for Chapter 7, Part 7.4, see section 119.

sanction, see section 119.

serious misconduct, for Chapter 7, Part 7.4, see section 119.

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
 Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

22 Section 47 amended (Disqualification)

After section 47(1)(f)

insert

(fa) ... was dismissed from office as a member by the Minister under section 132Q within the previous 4 years; or

Commented [MW28]: In line with LGANT's recommendation for dismissal by minister following code of conduct breaches. However why (fa) and not (p)? And 132Q(5) talks to 8 years - should these 2 clauses be consistent?

23 Section 95 amended (Procedure at meeting)

Section 95(2)

omit

meeting.

insert

meeting, who are not suspended, disqualified or dismissed.

24 Chapter 7, Part 7.4 replaced

Chapter 7, Part 7.4

repeal, insert

Part 7.4 Code of conduct for members

Commented [MW29]: Need to see a parallel commitment to prevention through investment in the LG Learning and Development Framework and better mandatory training provisions (but section 45 deletes the latter).

Division 1 Preliminary matters

119 Definitions

In this Part:

code of conduct means the code of conduct for members prescribed under section 120.

code of conduct panel means a panel established under this Part by the secretariat in accordance with section 132K.

complainant means a person who makes a complaint under section 131 or 132.

gross misconduct means conduct by a member that breaches the code of conduct that if the conduct consists of any of the following:

- (a) corruption;
- (b) a criminal offence;

Commented [MW30]: See separate preferred code of conduct decision tree for preferred high-level model.

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
 Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

- (c) repeated serious misconduct;
- (d) behaviour demonstrating the member's unfitness for office.

independent assessor means a member of the pool of persons appointed under section 121.

misconduct means conduct by a member that breaches the code of conduct.

sanction means any action taken by a council, an independent assessor or a code of conduct panel to resolve a complaint, other than to take no further action, under this Part.

*Note for definition **sanction***
 See sections 132E(1), 132G and 132N

serious misconduct means conduct by a member that breaches the code of conduct if the conduct:

- (a) causes a serious and imminent risk to the reputation, viability or resources of a local government council; or
- (b) consists of bullying, intimidation, sexual harassment, assault or physical or verbal abuse; or
- (c) consists of theft or fraud; or
- (d) consists of being impaired by alcohol or drugs while exercising the powers or performing the duties of the member; or
- (e) consists of refusing to carry out a reasonable direction of council consistent with the member's duties under this Act; or
- (f) consists of non-compliance with a sanction imposed by an independent assessor or a code of conduct panel.

120 Prescribed code of conduct

- (1) Every member must comply with the code of conduct prescribed by regulation.
- (2) The code of conduct must be published on each council's website.

Division 2 Administrative matters

121 Pool of independent assessors

- (1) The Minister may, by appointment, establish a pool of at least 3 persons as independent assessors.

Commented [SZ31]: Issue:
 1. 'impaired' is too broad and difficult to ascertain.
 2. Context is too vague.

Commented [SZ32R31]: Recommendation:
 2. Amend wording to read 'consists of having a diminished ability to perform official tasks in a professional capacity as a result of alcohol and/or drugs'.

Commented [SZ33]: Issue:
 1. The Bill is silent on whether IA pool members will be paid sitting fees, and if this cost will be borne by the Department. If the cost is to be borne by councils, councils are unlikely to take up this option.

Commented [SZ34R33]: Recommendation:
 1. Set a requirement in the Act that payment for use of IA (and all Code of Conduct referrals) will be determined by the Agency in policy in consultation with councils.

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
 Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

- (2) To be eligible to be appointed as an independent assessor, a person must be of high standing in the community.
- (3) A person's appointment is for a period of 5 years.
- (4) A person may be reappointed, if still eligible, for one further period of 5 years.
- (5) The appointment of a person to the pool is taken to be terminated if the person:
 - (a) ceases to be eligible for appointment; or
 - (b) resigns the person's appointment by giving written notice to the Minister; or
 - (c) becomes bankrupt, applies to take the benefit of any law for the relief of bankrupt or insolvent debtors, compounds with the person's creditors or makes an assignment of remuneration for their benefit; or
 - (d) becomes mentally incapacitated or is being treated under the *Mental Health and Related Services Act 1998*; or
 - (e) is found guilty of an offence that is punishable by imprisonment for 12 months or more.
- (6) The Minister may terminate the appointment of a person as an independent assessor for incompetence or misbehaviour.

Commented [SZ35]: Issue:
 2. There is no eligibility criteria but for a subjective qualifier that does not correspond with the functions of the IA at s 122.

Commented [SZ36R35]: Recommendation:
 2. The eligibility criteria must correspond to the functions of the IA at s 122. For e.g., experience in investigations, workplace/industrial relations law, governance etc. for a minimum of X number of years. They may be from the Code of Conduct panel pool.
 2. If they were the IA, they are ineligible to be on the corresponding Code of Conduct panel on a matter.
 3. A person must be ineligible to be an IA if they are an elected member.

122 Functions of independent assessors

- (1) An independent assessor has the following functions:
 - (a) to investigate complaints referred to it;
 - (b) to make determinations of fact in relation to those complaints;
 - (c) to report on the assessor's investigations and determinations;
 - (d) to recommend sanctions in relation to those complaints when appropriate.
- (2) An independent assessor has the powers necessary to perform the assessor's functions under this Part.

Commented [SZ37]: Recommendation:
 3. Include 'and/or conflict of interest'

Commented [SZ38]: Issue:
 1. Discussion paper and LGANT submission talked to a triage function being one of the primary objectives of the IA. This is unclear in the list of functions described at (1).

Commented [SZ39R38]: Recommendation:
 1. Refer to Code of Conduct decision tree by LGANT.

Commented [SZ40]: Issue:
 2. Mixed views for IA to issue monetary penalties.

Commented [SZ41R40]: Recommendation:
 2. Further discussion with councils about appropriate sanctions once eligibility criteria is determined for the IA.

123 Pool of code of conduct panel members

- (1) The Minister may, by appointment, establish a pool of at least 3 persons to be members of a code of conduct panel.

Commented [MW42]: Do they have enforcement powers?

Commented [SZ43]: As per Issue 1 and Recommendation 1 at s 121.

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
 Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

- (2) To be eligible to be appointed to the pool, the persons must be:
 - (a) a legal practitioner with 10 years or more of legal practice; or
 - (b) a person with expertise in governance or public administration.
- (3) A member's appointment is for a period of 5 years.
- (4) A person may be reappointed to the pool of members for a code of conduct panel, if still eligible.
- (5) The appointment of a person to the pool of members for a code of conduct panel is taken to be terminated if the person:
 - (a) ceases to be eligible for appointment; or
 - (b) resigns the person's appointment by giving written notice to the Minister; or
 - (c) becomes bankrupt, applies to take the benefit of any law for the relief of bankrupt or insolvent debtors, compounds with the person's creditors or makes an assignment of remuneration for their benefit; or
 - (d) becomes mentally incapacitated or is being treated under the *Mental Health and Related Services Act 1998*; or
 - (e) is found guilty of an offence that is punishable by imprisonment for 12 months or more.
- (6) The Minister may terminate the appointment of a person to the pool of members for a code of conduct panel for incompetence or misbehaviour.

Commented [SZ44]: Issue:
 1. Vastly different to requirement at 2(a) and with no relevant measure except that the person has that experience.

Commented [SZ45R44]: Recommendation:
 1. Set minimum requirement at 10 years of expertise in governance or public administration.

124 Functions of code of conduct panel

- (1) A code of conduct panel has the following functions:
 - (a) to investigate complaints referred to it by the Code of Conduct Secretariat;
 - (b) to make determinations of fact in relation to those complaints;
 - (c) to review decisions of independent assessors;
 - (d) to deal with non-compliance by a member with a sanction.
- (2) A code of conduct panel has the powers necessary to perform the panel's functions under this Part.

Commented [SZ46]: Recommendation:
 2. Include 'and/or conflict of interest'

Commented [SZ47]: Recommendation:
 1. Refer to Code of Conduct decision tree by LGANT

Commented [MW48]: Added this as putting complaints to the panel should not be the first option.

Commented [MW49]: Do they have enforcement powers?

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
 Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

125 Meetings of code of conduct panel

- (1) A code of conduct panel must select a chairperson from among their members.
- (2) The chairperson of a code of conduct panel may determine the procedure for the calling of meetings of the panel and for the conduct of business at those meetings.
- (3) The quorum for a meeting of a code of conduct panel is all 3 members of the panel.
- (4) A code of conduct panel must keep full and accurate minutes of its meetings and other proceedings.
- (5) If a member of a code of conduct panel is unable or unavailable to perform the functions or exercise the powers of a member, or the member's appointment is terminated under section 123(6), the remaining members of the panel may:
 - (a) continue as a panel of 2 members; or
 - (b) request the secretariat to assign a replacement member from the pool established under section 123.
- (6) If a code of conduct panel continues as a panel of 2 members under subsection (5)(a), the decisions of the panel must be unanimous.

Commented [MW50]: A provision about conflicts of interest should be added here as they are very real in the NT.

126 Secretariat function

- (1) The Minister may appoint one or more public sector employees to perform the functions of a secretariat to the pool of independent assessors and the pool of members for a code of conduct panel.
- (2) The persons appointed under subsection (1) have the following functions:
 - (a) receiving complaints made under this Part;
 - (b) assigning independent assessors from the pool to investigate and determine complaints and assisting them in the performance of their functions;
 - (c) receiving and maintaining information related to complaints and the conduct of independent assessors and code of conduct panels in relation to complaints and the determination of complaints;
 - (d) assigning members of the pool established under section 123

Commented [MW51]: This should be 'must' as it appears the Independent assessors and code of conduct panels can't convene without them.

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

to be the members of a code of conduct panel to deal with the complaint and assisting a code of conduct panel in the performance of its functions;

- (e) any other functions conferred on the person under this or any other Act.
- (3) The persons appointed under subsection (1) must keep information they receive and maintain under this Part confidential and not disclose it except:
 - (a) for a purpose connected with the administration of this Act, including a legal proceeding arising out of the operation of this Act; or
 - (b) to a person who is otherwise entitled to the information; or
 - (c) for information that is anonymised for statistical purposes.
- (4) The persons appointed under subsection (1) must act impartially and must not, in the performance of their functions under this Act, in any way influence or interfere with an independent assessor or a code of conduct panel.

Commented [MW52]: Suggest provision of a public register of complaints lodged with the independent assessor and the code of conduct panel be included here.

Division 3 General Procedures

127 Application

This Division applies to the following exercising powers and performing functions under this Part:

- (a) councils;
- (b) any third parties assisting a council;
- (c) independent assessors;
- (d) a code of conduct panel and its members.

128 Evidence

- (1) The persons and bodies referred to in section 127:
 - (a) are not bound by the rules of evidence; and
 - (b) may inform themselves in any manner they consider appropriate; and
 - (c) may do whatever they consider necessary or expedient for the fair and expeditious investigation, determination and resolution

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
 Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

of a complaint.

- (2) A decision that alleged misconduct occurred must be based on evidence from which it may be concluded that it is more likely that the misconduct occurred than that it did not occur.
- (3) An independent assessor and a code of conduct panel may require a person appearing before them to give evidence on oath.

129 Procedural fairness

- (1) The exercise of a power or performance of a function under this Part must comply with the principles of procedural fairness.
- (2) The person to whom a complaint relates must be given a reasonable opportunity to be heard before a decision or determination is made in relation to the complaint.
- (3) The complainant and the person to whom the complaint relates must be given written notice of the decisions made under this Part and the reasons for those decisions.

130 Timeliness of determinations, decisions and actions

- (1) Determinations and decisions made and actions taken under this Part must be made and taken expeditiously.
- (2) Independent assessors and code of conduct panels must take all reasonable steps to complete their investigation and determination of a complaint within 60 days after receiving the complaint.
- (3) The CEO of the Agency may grant an extension to the time limit in subsection (2).
- (4) Failure to complete the investigation and determination within the time allowed under subsection (2) or (3) does not affect the validity of the investigation or determination.

Division 4 Complaints

131 Making complaint to CEO

- (1) A person who believes that a member of a council contravened the code of conduct may lodge a complaint with the CEO of the council.
- (2) A complaint to the CEO may be made in writing or orally.
- (3) The CEO must refer the complaint to the council for consideration under section 132C.

Local Government Legislation Amendment (Code of Conduct and Other Matters) Act 2025 17
 21/11/25 13:48 Ref: 20bill018 d10 **CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT**

Commented [SZ53]: Issue:
 1. Impractical to enable complaints to be made orally when these may be referred.

Commented [SZ54R53]: Recommendation:
 1. If 'orally' was included to accommodate for complainants with low or limited written skills, this can be handled by internal council process, i.e. bring in a third party who can take dictation.
 2. Amend to read 'A complaint to the CEO must be recorded in writing'.

Commented [MW55]: Clarity on how this is done to be included eg. to OCM in confidential?

Commented [MW56R55]: The elected member/s subject to a complaint should not be a party to a 'report to council' about the complaint.

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
 Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

132 Making complaint to Code of Conduct secretariat

- (1) A person who believes that a member contravened the code of conduct may lodge a complaint with the secretariat if:
 - (a) the complaint involves more than one member or the principal member or deputy principal member; or
 - (b) the complaint alleges serious misconduct or gross misconduct.
- (2) A complaint to the secretariat must be in the approved form and include the following information:
 - (a) the name and contact information of the complainant;
 - (b) the name or identity of the member/s who is/are the subject of the complaint;
 - (c) the grounds for the complaint;
 - (d) a summary of the facts relevant to the complaint;
 - (e) any other information prescribed by regulation.
- (3) The complaint must be signed by the person making the complaint.
- (4) The secretariat must refer a complaint received under this section to one of the following, as the secretariat considers appropriate:
 - (a) an independent assessor;
 - (b) a code of conduct panel to be established under section 132K.
- (5) The secretariat must notify the relevant council CEO of the complaint.

Commented [SZ57]: Issue:
 1. Cost of process is not clear in the drafting of the Bill.

Commented [SZ58R57]: Recommendation:
 1. Set a requirement in the Act that payment, if any, for all Code of Conduct referrals will be determined by the Agency in policy in consultation with councils.

Commented [SZ59]: Recommendation:
 2. There should be a cost imposed on complainants who make frivolous or vexatious complaints. This should be identified in the policy recommended at rec. 1.

Commented [SZ60]: Refer to Code of Conduct decision tree by LGANT.

Commented [MW61]: What is the trigger for this as not clear in 132K? Is it similar to what's outlined in 132G(3)

Formatted: Not Expanded by / Condensed by

Formatted: Indent: Left: 1 cm, No bullets or numbering

Commented [MW62]: Should the CEO then notify the council similar to 131(3)?

Formatted

132A Limitation period

No complaint may be made or received under this Part more than 12-3 months after the last of the facts related to the alleged misconduct occurred.

132B Withdrawal of complaint

- (1) A complainant may withdraw their complaint at any time before a determination or decision is made about whether misconduct occurred or not in relation to the complaint.
- (2) The withdrawal of a complaint must be:

Commented [MW63]: Or not?

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

- (a) in writing; and
- (b) given to the [Code of Conduct](#) secretariat.

Local Government Legislation Amendment (Code of Conduct and Other Matters) Act 2025 19
21/11/25 13:48 Ref: 20bill018 d10 **CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT**

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
 Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

Division 5 Investigation and resolution by council

132C Dealing with complaint by council

- (1) After receiving a complaint, the council must determine whether:
 - (a) Misconduct occurred; or
 - (b) the complaint requires further investigation by the council or a third party under section 132D; or
 - (c) the complaint should be referred to ~~an~~the Code of Conduct secretariat for consideration by an independent assessor.
- (2) The council may decide to refer the complaint to ~~an~~the Code of Conduct secretariat for consideration by an independent assessor if:
 - (a) the complaint appears to be frivolous or vexatious; or
 - (b) the alleged misconduct would be more appropriately investigated and resolved by an independent assessor.
- (3) The council must refer a complaint that appears to be frivolous or vexatious to an independent assessor within 5 days after the council makes a decision under subsection (2).
- (4) The council may dismiss a complaint if it determines that:
 - (a) misconduct has not occurred; or
 - (b) the misconduct to which the complaint relates occurred at a council or committee meeting and either:
 - (i) the misconduct was dealt with by the person presiding at the meeting; or
 - (ii) the person responsible for the misconduct took remedial action in accordance with the council's meeting procedures.
- (5) If the council decides to refer a complaint to ~~an~~the Code of Conduct secretariat for consideration by an independent assessor under this section, the CEO must:
 - (a) notify the secretariat; and
 - (b) provide the secretariat with all relevant materials related to the complaint.

Commented [MW64]: Add a provision for keeping a register of complaints where misconduct has occurred for annual reporting to the LGU (for trend tracking as opposed to a compliance focus)

Commented [MW65]: Is the full council less the member/s the complaint is about? Or a panel less the member/s the complaint is about? This needs to be made clear here

Commented [MW66]: Definitions of both these words should be added to the definition section

Commented [MW67]: Why not all matters referred under (2)?

Commented [MW68]: Is there a review option here for complainant's?

Commented [MW69]: In what form (particularly given oral option at 131(3))?

132D Further investigation or resolution

- (1) The council may conduct a further investigation or alternative

Local Government Legislation Amendment (Code of Conduct and Other Matters) Act 2025 20
 21/11/25 13:48 Ref: 20bill018 d10 **CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT**

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

resolution of the complaint with the assistance of a third party

Local Government Legislation Amendment (Code of Conduct and Other Matters) Act 2025 21
21/11/25 13:48 Ref: 20bill018 d10 **CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT**

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
 Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

chosen by the council if:

- (a) the complaint involves the principal member or the deputy principal member; or
- (b) the council considers the alleged **breach is misconduct is more than trivial** but is not serious misconduct or gross misconduct; or
- (c) the complaint alleges misconduct that caused psychological harm.

Example of third parties for subsection (1)

- 1 A mediator.
- 2 An alternate dispute resolution specialist.

- (2) Any third party assisting the council under subsection (1) must provide the council **(through the CEO)** with their findings and recommendations as to resolution of the complaint, including any **sanctions**.

- (3) After the investigation is completed and the council receives any findings and recommendations of a third party assisting the council, **the council must determine whether misconduct occurred.**

132E Action by council

- (1) If the council determines that misconduct occurred, the council may take one or more of the following actions, as it considers appropriate:

- (a) take no further action;
- (b) **reprimand** the member;
- (c) require the member to issue a public apology;
- (d) require the member to submit to mediation with the complainant, even if mediation was conducted under section 132D(1);
- (e) prepare and implement a plan to address the behaviour of the member to whom the complaint relates;
- (f) **refer the complaint to ~~an~~ the Code of Conduct secretariat for consideration by an independent assessor;**
- (g) **in the case of corrupt or criminal conduct – refer the complaint to the ICAC or the police.**

- (2) When preparing a plan under subsection (1)(e), the council must consult with the member to whom the complaint relates.

Local Government Legislation Amendment (Code of Conduct and Other Matters) Act 2025 22
 21/11/25 13:48 Ref: 20bill018 d10 **CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT**

Commented [MW70]: Can misconduct be trivial (given the definition of misconduct is a breach of the code of conduct)

Commented [MW71]: In confidential?

Commented [MW72]: Further to comments at 132© is this the full council less the member/s the complaint is about?

Commented [MW73]: Do councils have any enforcement powers? Suggest non-compliance for actions made by councils be added to section 132P

Commented [MW74]: Is this different to sanction? If yes, a definition should be added to the definition section.

Commented [MW75]: To be heard again or to penalise?

Commented [SZ76]: This is redundant - mandatory under ICAC rules

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
 Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

- (3) A plan under subsection (1)(e) may include a requirement for the member/s to whom the complaint relates to do one or more of the following:
 - (a) engage in mediation;
 - (b) undertake counselling;
 - (c) undertake training;
 - (d) take other action the council considers appropriate.
- (4) If the council decides to refer a complaint to ~~an~~ the Code of Conduct secretariat for consideration by an independent assessor under this section, the CEO must:
 - (a) notify the secretariat in writing; and
 - (b) provide the secretariat with all relevant materials related to the complaint.

Commented [AJ77]: Insert 132E (5) a requirement for councils to report a summary of complaints to LGU for the purposes of data collection to inform training needs

Commented [MW78]: See comment at 132e(f)

Commented [MW79]: In what form?

Division 6 Independent assessment

132F Assignment of independent assessor

- (1) If the secretariat decides to refer a complaint to an independent assessor under section 132(4) or receives notice of a referral of a complaint under Division 5, the secretariat must:
 - (a) assign an independent assessor to deal with the complaint; and
 - (b) provide the independent assessor with:
 - (i) in the case of a complaint made under section 132 – the complaint; or
 - (ii) in the case of a complaint referred to an independent assessor under Division 5 – the relevant materials provided by the CEO under section 132C(5) or 132E(4).
- (2) An independent assessor may:
 - (a) be assigned more than one complaint; and
 - (b) deal with multiple complaints together if they relate to the same facts, persons or circumstances.

Commented [MW80]: Does the secretariat have the discretionary power to decide given 132(4)? What's the trigger for them referring to the IA versus the code of conduct panel?

Commented [MW81]: 132C and 132E© only?

Commented [MW82]: 132C and 132E© only?

Commented [MW83]: See notes in these sections asking about what form these notifications take?

132G Action by independent assessor

- (1) After investigating a complaint, an independent assessor must

Local Government Legislation Amendment (Code of Conduct and Other Matters) Act 2025 23
 21/11/25 13:48 Ref: 20bill018 d10 **CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT**

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
 Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

determine whether misconduct, serious misconduct, or gross misconduct occurred.

- (2) The independent assessor may dismiss the complaint if the assessor determines that
 - (a) Misconduct, serious misconduct or gross misconduct has not occurred; or
 - (b) the complaint is frivolous or vexatious or not made in good faith; or
 - (c) the complaint is trivial.
- (3) If an independent assessor determines that misconduct, serious misconduct or gross misconduct occurred, the assessor may take one or more of the following actions, as the assessor considers appropriate:
 - (a) in the case of a complaint made under section 132 – refer the complaint to the relevant council for resolution;
 - (b) in the case of a complaint referred by a council under section 132C(2) or 132E(1)(f) – refer the complaint back to council for resolution;
 - (c) take any other action a council may take under section 132E;
 - (d) impose a monetary penalty not exceeding 20 penalty units;
 - (e) in the case of serious misconduct or gross misconduct – refer the complaint to a code of conduct panel, ICAC or the police.
- (4) If an independent assessor decides to refer a complaint to a code of conduct panel, the ICAC or the police, the independent assessor must:
 - (a) notify the secretariat; and
 - (b) provide the secretariat with all relevant materials related to the complaint.
- (5) On receiving notice of a referral under subsection (4), the secretariat must provide a code of conduct panel, the ICAC or the police, as the case may be, with the relevant materials provided by the independent assessor.

132H Request for review of determination or decision by independent assessor

- (1) A complainant or a member subject to a complaint may request a code of conduct panel to review a determination or decision of an

Local Government Legislation Amendment (Code of Conduct and Other Matters) Act 2025 24
 21/11/25 13:48 Ref: 20bill018 d10 **CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT**

Commented [MW84]: Which section specifically - 132(1), 132© - and what is the intent? Is council resolving about the complaint and then dealing with it in house (or referring straight back to the code of conduct secretariat for consideration by the independent assessor? Or is this referring the sanction back to the council for resolution? Same for the next paragraph.

Commented [MW85]: Paid to who and enforced by who?

Commented [MW86R85]: 132P

Commented [MW87]: This is not a small penalty so goes back to the IA having the right skills and experience to make determinations.

Commented [MW88]: In what form?

Commented [MW89]: As mentioned above, how does a complainant review a decision/determination made by a council? This should probably be explained in a new section (eg. 132F)

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

independent assessor on the grounds that it was not made in

Local Government Legislation Amendment (Code of Conduct and Other Matters) Act 2025 25
21/11/25 13:48 Ref: 20bill018 d10 **CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT**

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
 Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

conformity with the principles of procedural fairness.

- (2) The request must be lodged with the secretariat within 14 days after the person received notice of the decision.
- (3) The request must be in the approved form and must include the following information:
 - (a) the name and contact information of the person making the request;
 - (b) the grounds for the request;
 - (c) a summary of the facts relevant to the request;
 - (d) any other information prescribed by regulation.
- (4) The request must be signed by the person making the request.
- (5) On receiving a request under subsection (2), the secretariat must:
 - (a) establish a code of conduct panel in accordance with section 132K to conduct the review; and
 - (b) provide the panel with the request and any relevant materials.
- (6) To avoid doubt, a decision includes the taking of action by an independent assessor.

Commented [MW90]: Does this include that the complainant does not think the determination or decision (by the council or the IA) is not reflective of the seriousness of the breach?

Commented [SZ91]: How does the complainant reach the secretariat directly? Is it better to refer via the council CEO? Its unlikely the Dept will want to publicise the contact details of the secretariat.

Commented [SZ92]: Issue:
 1. Unclear how complaints reach the secretariat. Council CEOs should have the option to direct complainants directly to the secretariat.

Commented [SZ93R92]: Recommendation:
 2. More work needs to be done with councils to determine appropriate mechanism for referral.

132J Review of determination or decision by independent assessor

- (1) If a code of conduct panel receives a request under section 132H, it must conduct a review of the determination or decision of the independent assessor to determine whether it was made in conformity with the principles of procedural fairness.
- (2) The code of conduct panel may stay the determination or decision pending its review.
- (3) After reviewing the determination or decision, the code of conduct panel may:
 - (a) affirm the determination or decision; or
 - (b) dismiss the request for review; or
 - (c) set aside the determination or decision and remit the matter to the independent assessor with directions for a new determination or decision; or
 - (d) quash the determination or decision and substitute its own

Commented [MW94]: Should this be I?

Commented [MW95]: Suggest a provision limiting the number of times a complaint can be reviewed (particularly given the option provided to send back to the IA)

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
 Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

decision or sanction.

Division 7 Code of conduct panel hearings and determinations

132K Establishing a code of conduct panel

If the secretariat is required to establish a code of conduct panel to deal with a matter under this Part, the secretariat must assign 3 members of the pool established under section 123 to be the members of the panel, ensuring that:

- (a) at least one member of the panel is a legal practitioner mentioned in section 123(2)(a); and
- (b) at least one member of the panel is a person with expertise mentioned in section 123(2)(b).

Commented [AJ96]: Insert 132K (1) to clarify when the panel should be established

132L Assignment of members of code of conduct panel

- (1) If the secretariat decides to refer a complaint to a code of conduct panel under section 132(4) or receives notice of a referral of a complaint under section 132G(4) that requires a code of conduct panel, the secretariat must:
 - (a) establish a code of conduct panel in accordance with section 132K to deal with the complaint; and
 - (b) provide the panel with:
 - (i) in the case of a complaint made under section 132 – the complaint; or
 - (ii) in the case of a complaint referred to a code of conduct panel under section 132G(4) – the relevant materials provided to the secretariat under that section.
- (2) A code of conduct panel may:
 - (a) be assigned more than one complaint; and
 - (b) deal with multiple complaints together if they relate to the same facts, persons or circumstances.

Commented [MW97]: Does the secretariat have the power to decide given 132(4)? What's the trigger that the secretariat uses to determine if it goes to an IA or the panel? This process need to be very clear.

Commented [SZ98R97]: Recommendation:
1. Refer to Code of Conduct decision tree by LGANT

132M Conduct of hearing and making determinations

- (1) A code of conduct panel must conduct a hearing into any complaint assigned to the panel by the secretariat under section 132L.
- (2) Before conducting a hearing, a code of conduct panel may

Commented [SZ99]: Issue:
1. Unclear what form this hearing takes, i.e. can it be decided that a public hearing is appropriate?

Commented [SZ100R99]: Recommendation:
1. Clarify if the hearing is closed, public, etc.

Local Government Legislation Amendment (Code of Conduct and Other Matters) Act 2025 27
 21/11/25 13:48 Ref: 20bill018 d10 **CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT**

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
 Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

investigate the complaint.

- (3) After investigating a complaint and conducting a hearing, a code of conduct panel must determine whether misconduct occurred.
- (4) A code of conduct panel may dismiss the complaint if the panel determines that:
 - (a) Misconduct serious misconduct or gross misconduct has not occurred; or
 - (b) the complaint is frivolous or vexatious or not made in good faith; or
 - (c) the complaint is trivial.

132N Action by code of conduct panel

- (1) If a code of conduct panel determines that misconduct serious misconduct or gross misconduct occurred, the panel may take one or more of the following actions, as it considers appropriate:
 - (a) in the case of a complaint received under section 132G that does not involve serious misconduct or gross misconduct – refer the complaint back to the independent assessor for resolution;
 - (b) take no further action;
 - (c) take any other action a council may take under section 132E;
 - (d) impose a monetary penalty not exceeding 50 penalty units;
 - (e) disqualify the member/s from holding the position of principal member or deputy principal member for up to 12 months;
 - (f) suspend the member/s for up to 12 months;
 - (g) order that the member's allowances be withheld until compliance with a sanction;
 - (h) in the case of gross misconduct – recommend that the Minister suspend or dismiss the member subject to the complaint under section 132Q.
- (2) All decisions and determinations of a code of conduct panel are final.

Commented [SZ101]: Refer to Code of Conduct decision tree by LGANT

Commented [MW102]: Add removal of position as council representative on external committees eg. Heritage Council

Commented [MW103]: 132G(4)?

Commented [MW104]: If referred back, there needs to be reason why not deemed serious misconduct or gross misconduct. This clause could create circularity of complaints and it could be better dealt with through consideration of a trigger as suggested at section 132(4).

Commented [MW105]: To who and who enforces?

Commented [SZ106]: Issue:
 2. No appeal mechanism is not good practice. This also runs the risk of complainants repeating complaints, thereby enlivening the Code of Conduct decision process again.

Commented [SZ107R106]: Recommendation:
 2. Review this to ensure that proper appeal mechanisms are in place.

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
 Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

Division 8 Other sanctions

132P Compliance with sanction

- (1) A member who is subject to a sanction under this Part must comply with the sanction.
- (2) An independent assessor or the secretariat may refer to a code of conduct panel any non-compliance by a member who is subject to a sanction.
- (3) If an independent assessor refers a member to a code of conduct panel under subsection (2), the independent assessor must:
 - (a) notify the secretariat; and
 - (b) provide the secretariat with the information specified in subsection (4).
- (4) The referral must include the following information:
 - (a) the name and contact information of the member subject to the sanction;
 - (b) a summary of the facts relevant to the non-compliance;
 - (c) any other information prescribed by regulation.
- (5) If the secretariat decides to make a referral under subsection (2) or receives notice of a referral from an independent assessor under subsection (3), the secretariat must:
 - (a) establish a code of conduct panel to deal with the matter in accordance with section 132K; and
 - (b) provide the panel with the information specified in subsection (4).
- (6) After considering the referral, the code of conduct panel may:
 - (a) issue a direction to comply with the sanction imposed, specifying the action to be taken, the time to take the action and the evidence of compliance; or
 - (b) vary or substitute the original sanctions or add sanctions on the member; or
 - (c) in the case of repeated or significant non-compliance refer the complaint to the Minister to be dealt with under section 132Q; or

Commented [MW108]: Why would an independent assessor be referring non-compliance - does the independent assessor have the enforcement power or is the secretariat (eg. the Dept)? Is there an avenue for a council to go to an independent assessor if compliance not occurring? Why does not compliance need to be referred to panel as opposed to the enforcer? There are some steps missing in this section...

Commented [MW109]: This is subjective and should be clear on what the threshold

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
 Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

- (d) order the payment of a monetary penalty, not exceeding 50 penalty units, enforceable by the council as a civil debt.
- (7) A monetary penalty is a debt due to the council.
- (8) A member must pay any monetary penalty imposed on the member within 28 days, or any longer period allowed by the council, after notice of the penalty is given to the member.
- (9) To avoid doubt, the monetary penalty is a civil penalty for the purposes of the *Penalty Units Act 2009*.

Commented [MW110]: However councils don't have the ability to impose a monetary penalty under 132E?

Commented [MW111]: Is this the case for sections 132G(3)d and 132N(1)d?

Commented [MW112]: Only for directions under non-compliance?

132Q Power to suspend or dismiss

- (1) The Minister may suspend or dismiss a member if the Minister:
 - (a) receives a recommendation from a code of conduct panel that the member has engaged in gross misconduct or repeated or significant non-compliance with a sanction imposed under this Part; and
 - (b) the Minister is satisfied that suspension or dismissal is appropriate in the circumstances.
- (2) A member who is suspended under subsection (1) is not entitled to any allowance while under suspension.
- (3) The suspension of a member may have effect for any period during the member's term of office.
- (4) The dismissal of a member under section (1) may have effect for a period not exceeding 8 years.
- (5) The Minister must give the member suspended or dismissed under subsection (1) written notice of the suspension or dismissal and the reasons for it.
- (6) The Minister must cause notice of any suspension or dismissal made under this section to be published on the Agency's website.

Commented [SZ113]: Issue:
1. This is not consistent with common law presumption of innocence.

Commented [SZ114R113]: Recommendation:
1. Align with:
Remuneration Tribunal: Suspension 12.32
Electorate Office staff may be suspended on full pay and for a reasonable period to conclude a fair and proper investigation relating to serious misconduct

Commented [SZ115]: Issue:
1. No appeal mechanism.

Commented [SZ116R115]: Recommendation:
1. Outline proper appeal mechanism.

Commented [MW117]: Also to the relevant council and NTEC?

25 Chapter 10 heading amended (Financial management)

Chapter 10, heading, after "**Financial**"

insert

and governance

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
 Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

26 Chapter 10, Part 10.11 inserted

After section 216

insert

Part 10.11 Governance advisor

216A Governance advisor

- (1) The CEO of the Agency may appoint a governance advisor for a council or local government subsidiary if the council or subsidiary requests the CEO of the Agency, in writing, to make the appointment.
- (2) A governance advisor for a council or local government subsidiary has the following functions:
 - (a) monitoring and evaluating the governance procedures and practices of the council or subsidiary;
 - (b) advising the council or subsidiary in relation to:
 - (i) its governance responsibilities; and
 - (ii) the effectiveness of its governance procedures and practices; and
 - (iii) any improvements it should make to its governance procedures and practices;
 - (c) assisting the council or subsidiary to understand and comply with laws applicable to the council or subsidiary.

Commented [SZ118]: Issues:
 1. This describes the role of the relevant Agency for local government. If both are providing support to councils, clear roles and responsibilities for both need to be set out. This appears to be an attempt to abrogate Dept' responsibility.
 2. This aligns with our recommendation in our submission with respect to Governance Controller.
 3. Unclear what entitles a person to be a governance advisor, i.e. no eligibility criteria.
 4. It must be clear that the cost is to be borne by the Dept (whether in the Act or policy) otherwise this will not be an option taken up - councils will refer to the Dept to carry out their current support.

Commented [SZ119R118]: Recommendations:
 1. Set out eligibility criteria.
 2. Include that the CEO of the Agency may make a recommendation to a council or local government subsidiary that a Governance Advisor be requested if issues are identified early. This will avoid immediate escalation to the Governance Controller where issues are identified early.

Commented [MW120R118]: The introduction of a governance advisor and/or controller could be seen as diminishing elected members role in governance oversight if not done well.

27 Chapter 17, Part 17.2 replaced

Chapter 17, Part 17.2

repeal, insert

Part 17.2 Financial and governance controllers

317 Definition

In this Part:

local government body means:

- (a) a council; or

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
 Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

- (b) a prospective council; or
- (c) a local government subsidiary.

317A Financial controller

- (1) The CEO of the Agency may, by Gazette notice, appoint a financial controller for a local government body if the CEO of the agency considers the body is not:
 - (a) performing its financial responsibilities appropriately; or
 - (b) complying with this Act.
- (2) A financial controller is responsible for:
 - (a) implementing financial controls as directed by the CEO of the Agency; and
 - (b) performing other related duties as directed by the CEO of the Agency.
- (3) The local government body must:
 - (a) cooperate fully with the financial controller; and
 - (b) comply with a direction given by the financial controller.
- (4) If a financial controller is appointed for a local government body, the body must obtain the financial controller's authorisation before undertaking any of the following:
 - (a) a transaction from an account kept with a financial institution;
 - (b) any other type of expenditure;
 - (c) any future financial commitments.
- (5) If the financial controller believes on reasonable grounds that a decision, resolution or order to make a payment is financially unsound, the financial controller must:
 - (a) refuse to make a payment; and
 - (b) advise the CEO of the Agency and the local government body about why the decision, resolution or order is financially unsound.
- (6) In this section:

financially unsound, in relation to a decision, resolution or order,

Commented [SZ121]: Issue:
 1. Not supported. It is inappropriate for a financial controller to be appointed to a prospective council. A prospective council should be supported appropriately prior to being declared to be established. A prospective council should only have reached the stage of being a prospective council as a result of a feasibility study and risk assessment that determines that it will be viable. This runs contrary to that.
 2. The public perception of a prospective council being under financial control.

Commented [SZ122R121]: Recommendation:
 1. Omit the insertion of prospective council.

Commented [MW123]: Who pays for a financial controller, Dept or council, this should be clear.

Commented [SZ124]: Issues:
 3. 1(b) could be anything, and overlaps with other mechanisms in this Act, i.e. governance controller.
 4. Unclear objective of the financial controller, i.e. at what point can a council reasonably expect the financial controller to have ceased their function? This is too open-ended.

Commented [SZ125R124]: Recommendation:
 Clarify the scope and the objective of the financial controller. These should be clear and measurable.

Commented [MW126]: Could be interpreted as anything in the act, hence remove governance controller

Commented [SZ127]: Issue:
 5. Unclear what happens if there is non-compliance with the direction. Does that fall on the CEO of the council or the council?

Commented [SZ128R127]: Recommendation:
 5. Outline what happens in the event of non-compliance.

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
 Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

means the decision, resolution or order:

- (a) may cause the local government body to become insolvent; or
- (b) would result in unlawful expenditure by the local government body; or
- (c) would result in a disbursement from a fund that is not provided for in the local government body's budget; or
- (d) would result in expenditure from grant moneys for a purpose other than the purpose for which the grant was given.

317B Governance controller

- (1) The CEO of the Agency may, by *Gazette* notice, appoint a governance controller for a local government body if the CEO considers that the body is not:
 - (a) effectively carrying out its governance responsibilities; or
 - (b) complying with this Act.
- (2) A governance controller for a local government body has the following functions:
 - (a) monitoring and evaluating the governance procedures and practices of the body;
 - (b) advising the body in relation to:
 - (i) its governance responsibilities; and
 - (ii) the effectiveness of its governance procedures and practices; and
 - (iii) any improvements it should make to its governance procedures and practices;
 - (c) ensuring the body understands and complies with laws applicable to the body.
- (3) A governance controller has the powers necessary to perform the governance controller's functions.
- (4) A governance controller for a local government body may give the body directions relating to the carrying out of its governance responsibilities.

Commented [SZ129]: Issue:
 1. Not supported. Omit.
 2. We were not supportive of the title of the role given the implications of 'controller'. The role was described in limited terms and with limited supporting information as a support tool for councils. This entire provision is not consistent with that and goes further, embedding powers to exercise control over councils by issuing directions, etc. The objectives are unclear and overlap with powers held by the financial controller, i.e. 'complying with this Act'.
 3. No eligibility criteria.

Commented [SZ130R129]: Recommendation:
 1. Omit.

Commented [SZ131]: These are Department responsibilities that are being outsourced.

Commented [SZ132]: The Local Government Unit is currently tasked with providing councils with support to meet their compliance requirements.

Commented [MW133R132]: The consultation summary report (pg 9) states that there was broad agreement that a GA should not have enforcement powers or the ability to impose penalties and that its authority should not override council autonomy. The report goes on to say that the feedback highlighted the importance of framing any governance support role as collaborative, trust-building and tailored to the needs of councils rather than directive or punitive.

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
 Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

- (5) The local government body must:
- (a) cooperate fully with the governance controller; and
 - (b) **comply** with a direction given by the governance controller.
- (6) If a governance controller is appointed for a local government body, the body must obtain the governance controller's authorisation before:
- (a) obtaining any quotations or tenders; or
 - (b) entering into any contract.
- (7) A governance controller for a local government body must inform the CEO of the Agency if the governance controller believes on reasonable grounds that:
- (a) there are serious deficiencies in the body's governance procedures and practices; or
 - (b) the body has not complied with a direction given by the governance controller; or
 - (c) the body has taken an action mentioned in subsection (6) without the governance controller's authorisation.

Commented [MW134]: What happens if the council doesn't comply? Is compliance the responsibility of the CEO or the elected members?

317C Financial and governance controller appointments

Nothing in this Act prevents a person from being appointed as:

- (a) both financial controller and governance controller for a local government body; or
- (b) **financial controller or governance controller for more than one local government body.**

Commented [SZ135]: Issue:
 4. This represents gross interference. Councils are independent and locally elected. Having one person undertake these roles over more than one local government body, including a prospective council and potentially the council from which it split is a blatant attempt to exercise control over both so that they can make decisions on behalf of councils and satisfy election commitments with respect to de-amalgamation.

28 Section 336 amended (Misleading information)

Section 336(4), definition **local government officer**, paragraph (g)

omit, insert

- (g) a governance advisor; or
- (h) a financial controller; or
- (i) a governance controller.

Commented [SZ136R135]: Recommendation:
 4. Not supported. Omit.

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
 Division 1 Local Government Act 2019

29 Section 374 inserted

After section 373

insert

374 Application of provisions relating to conduct of members

- (1) Part 7.4 and Schedules 1 and 2, as in force immediately before the commencement, continue to apply in relation to the conduct of members that occurred before the commencement.
- (2) Any acts done and matters under consideration in relation to Schedule 1 or a complaint made in relation to the conduct of a member that were not determined before the commencement are to be determined in accordance with this Act as in force immediately before the commencement.
- (3) Part 7.4 and any other provision of this Act related to the code of conduct or the conduct of members, as in force immediately after the commencement, apply in relation to the conduct of members occurring after the commencement.
- (4) In this section:

commencement means the commencement of section 24 of the amending Act.

30 Schedule 1 repealed (Code of conduct)

Schedule 1

repeal

31 Schedule 2 replaced

Schedule 2

repeal, insert

Commented [SZ137]: Issue:
 1. Not supported. No mechanism for appeal of code of conduct decisions.

Commented [SZ138R137]: Recommendation:
 1. Retain NTCAT appeals with respect to Code of Conduct.

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
 Division 2 Local Government (General) Regulations 2021

Schedule 2 NTCAT reviewable decisions and affected persons

section 327

Item no.	NTCAT reviewable decision	Affected person
1	A decision of an administrative review committee to summarily reject an application under section 324(2)	A person adversely affected by the reviewable decision mentioned in section 323(1)
2	A decision from the review of a reviewable decision made by a council under section 325(1)	A person adversely affected by the reviewable decision mentioned in section 323(1)
3	A reviewable decision under section 326	A person adversely affected by the reviewable decision mentioned in section 323(1)

32 Schedule 3 amended (Information to be publicly available)

Schedule 3

omit

The council's code of conduct (section 119(2)).

insert

The code of conduct prescribed under section 120.

Division 2 Local Government (General) Regulations 2021

33 Regulations amended

This Division amends the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2021*

Local Government Legislation Amendment (Code of Conduct and Other Matters) Act 2025 36
 21/11/25 13:48 Ref: 20bill018 d10 **CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT**

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
 Division 2 Local Government (General) Regulations 2021

34 Part 3, Division 7 replaced

Part 3, Division 7

~~repeal~~, *insert*

Commented [MW139]: So 71-81 have been released with only 71 inserted - what about the summary of decision notice detail etc?

Division 7 Code of conduct

71 Prescribed code of conduct

For section 120 of the Act, the code of conduct in Schedule 1A is prescribed.

35 Schedule 1A inserted

After Schedule 1

insert

Schedule 1A Code of Conduct

regulation 71

1 Definitions

In this code:

local government employee means a person who is:

- (a) ~~employed by a local government council~~; or
- (b) engaged by a local government council under a contract for services; or
- (c) a staff member of a local government subsidiary.

Commented [MW140]: Including the CEO?

publish includes to publish on a social media platform.

2 Application

This code applies to the conduct of members:

- (a) in the exercise of their powers and the performance of their functions under the Act; and
- (b) in relation to the local government council of which they are a member.

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
Division 2 Local Government (General) Regulations 2021

3 Personal integrity

A member must:

- (a) act with reasonable care and diligence; and
- (b) act with honesty and integrity; and
- (c) act lawfully; and
- (d) identify and appropriately manage any conflict of interest; and
- (e) avoid damage to the reputation of the local government council of which they are a member; and
- (f) act in accordance with the trust placed in members by the public; and
- (g) participate in decision-making in an honest, fair, impartial and timely manner; and
- (h) actively seek out and engage in training and development opportunities to improve the performance of their functions; and
- (i) attend and participate, within the required time, in briefings, workshops and training sessions:
 - (i) required under section 45 of the Act; or
 - (ii) provided or arranged by the local government council in relation to the performance of their functions.

4 Relationship with others

A member must:

- (a) ~~must~~ treat others with respect, courtesy and fairness; and
- (b) ~~must~~ respect and value diversity in the community; and
- (c) ~~must~~ maintain and contribute to a harmonious, safe and productive work environment; and
- (d) ~~must~~ not bully or harass another person in any way; and
- (e) ~~must~~ deal with the media in an appropriate manner and in accordance with any relevant policy of the local government; and
- (f) ~~must~~ not use offensive or derogatory language when referring

Local Government Legislation Amendment (Code of Conduct and Other Matters) Act 2025 38
21/11/25 13:48 Ref: 20bill018 d10 **CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT**

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
 Division 2 Local Government (General) Regulations 2021

to another person; and

- (g) ~~must~~ not disparage the character of another member or a local government employee in connection with the performance of their official duties; and
- (h) ~~must~~ not without reasonable evidence impute dishonest or unethical motives to another member or a local government employee in connection with the performance of their official duties.

Commented [MW141]: Add a definition of official duties.

5 Accountability

A member must:

- (a) base decisions on relevant and factually correct information; and
- (b) make decisions on merit, in the public interest and in accordance with statutory obligations, council policies and principles of good governance and procedural fairness; and
- (c) read all agenda papers given to the member in relation to council or committee meetings; and
- (d) be open and accountable to, and represent, the community in the local government area for the local government council of the member.

6 Social media

A member must:

- (a) ~~must~~ ensure that their use of social media and other forms of communication complies with this code; and
- (b) ~~must~~ not publish material that they know, or could reasonably be expected to know, is factually incorrect.

7 Other obligations

- (1) A member must not be impaired by alcohol or drugs.
- (2) A member must comply with all policies, procedures and resolutions of the local government.

Commented [SZ142]: Issue:
1. Too broad and difficult to ascertain.

Commented [SZ143R142]: Recommendation:
1. Amend wording to read 'a member must not have a diminished ability to perform official tasks in a professional capacity as a result of alcohol and/or drugs'.

8 Perceived misconduct

A member who believes on reasonable grounds that another member has engaged in misconduct must make a complaint in accordance with Part 7.4 of the Act.

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
 Division 2 Local Government (General) Regulations 2021

9 Council or committee meetings

When attending a council or committee meeting, a member:

- (a) must not act in an abusive or threatening manner towards another person; and
- (b) must not make a statement that the member knows, or could reasonably be expected to know, is false or misleading; and
- (c) must not repeatedly disrupt the meeting; and
- (d) must comply with any by-laws relating to the procedures and conduct of the meeting; and
- (e) must comply with any direction given by the person presiding at the meeting; and
- (f) must immediately cease to engage in any conduct that is ruled out of order by the person presiding at the meeting.

10 Misuse of local government council resources

- (1) A member must not, directly or indirectly, use the resources of a local government council for an electoral purpose or other purpose unless authorised under the Act, or by the council or the CEO, to use the resources for that purpose.

- (2) In this clause:

electoral purpose means the purpose of persuading electors to vote in a particular way at an election, referendum or other poll held under the Act, the *Electoral Act 2004* or the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* (Cth);

resources of a local government council includes:

- (a) property of a local government council; and
- (b) services provided, or paid for, by a local government council.

Commented [MW144]: Add local government employee?

Commented [MW145R144]: Social media pages

11 Securing personal advantage or disadvantaging others

A member must not make improper use of their office to:

- (a) gain, directly or indirectly, an advantage for the member or any other person; or
- (b) cause detriment to the local government council or any other person.

Part 3 Amendments relating to code of conduct and governance matters
 Division 2 Local Government (General) Regulations 2021

12 Prohibition against involvement in administration

- (1) A member must not undertake a task that contributes to the administration of the local government council unless authorised by the council or the CEO to undertake that task.
- (2) Subclause (1) does not apply to anything that a member does as part of the deliberations at a council or committee meeting.

Commented [MW146]: Insert: by resolution

13 Relationship with local government employees

- (1) A member must not:
 - (a) direct or attempt to direct a local government employee to do or not to do anything in their capacity as a local government employee; or
 - (b) attempt to influence, by means of a threat or the promise of a reward, the conduct of a local government employee in their capacity as a local government employee; or
 - (c) act in an abusive or threatening manner towards a local government employee.
- (2) Subclause (1)(a) does not apply in relation to:
 - (a) anything that a member does as part of the deliberations at a council or committee meeting; or
 - (b) a direction given by a council member to the CEO of the council.
- (3) If a member, in their capacity as a member, is attending a council or committee meeting or other organised event (for example, a briefing or workshop), the member must not orally, in writing or by any other means:
 - (a) make a statement that a local government employee is incompetent or dishonest; or
 - (b) use an offensive or objectionable expression when referring to a local government employee.

Commented [SZ147]: That doesn't make sense - i.e. anything you do within a meeting doesn't apply

Commented [MW148]: Including online posts etc?

14 Compliance with sanction

A member must comply with any sanction imposed under Part 7.4 of the Act.

Part 4 Amendments relating to financial matters

Part 4 Amendments relating to financial matters

36 Act amended

This Part amends the *Local Government Act 2019*.

37 Section 7 amended (Definitions)

Section 7

insert

social or affordable housing includes housing:

- (a) leased under a prescribed housing scheme under the *Housing Act 1982*; or
- (b) leased at below-market rates to low or medium income earners, essential workers or people with complex needs.

Commented [SZ149]: Issue:
1. While this definition includes 'social housing', this includes housing provided by NTG. It is important that any amendment not enable NTG to be the recipient of a concession that is otherwise intended for not for profit affordable housing providers.

Commented [SZ150R149]: Recommendation:
1. Consider the term not-for-profit affordable housing.

38 Section 109A inserted

After section 109, in Chapter 7, Part 7.1

insert

109A Superannuation

- (1) A council **may, by resolution,** decide to make superannuation contribution payments to its members.
- (2) Subject to subsection (5), a council may make a superannuation contribution payment to a superannuation account nominated by a member if the council has passed a resolution under subsection (1).
- (3) The amount of a superannuation contribution payment made to a member is the amount the council would have been required to contribute under the *Superannuation Guarantee (Administration) Act 1992* (Cth) as superannuation if:
 - (a) the member were an employee of the council; and
 - (b) the **allowance** payable to the member under section 106 were salary or wages of the member for the purposes of that Act.
- (4) A superannuation contribution payment is payable to a member with, and at the same intervals as, the allowance payable to the member under section 106.

Commented [AJ151]: Issue:
109A(1) Payment of superannuation to elected members should not be optional.

Recommendation:
Omit: may by resolution decide to
Insert: must

Discussion paper - Part B page 9 identified that getting a unanimous resolution may be difficult, and that there are political sensitivities around a council resolving to pay itself superannuation contributions.

The consultation summary report (pg7) states that there was widespread support for allowing super payments to be made to elected members by way of a mandatory provision in legislation.

MLAs in the NT receive superannuation as a matter of course. Local government elected members must not be viewed as second tier elected representative.

Commented [MW152R151]: Doing by resolution means the elected members are inherently conflicted.

Commented [MW153]: Annual allowance only or extra meeting/activity allowance, prof dev allowance etc too?

Part 4 Amendments relating to financial matters

- (5) A council must not make a superannuation contribution payment to a member under this section if:
 - (a) the member does not nominate a superannuation account for the payment; or
 - (b) the member requests the council in writing not to make the payment.
- (6) The Remuneration Tribunal or the Minister must not take superannuation contribution payments into account when determining the allowance or allowances to be paid to members under section 106.
- (7) A person is not, for the purposes of any Act, taken to be an employee of a council and is not disqualified from holding any office merely because the person is paid a superannuation contribution payment under this Act.
- (8) A superannuation contribution payment does not constitute salary for the purposes of any Act.
- (9) A superannuation contribution payment is not payable for any period during which a member's allowance is suspended or withheld under this Act.
- (10) In this section:

superannuation account means an account for superannuation or retirement benefits from a scheme or fund to which the *Superannuation Guarantee (Administration) Act 1992* (Cth) applies.

superannuation contribution payment means a payment as a contribution to a superannuation account nominated by the member receiving the payment.

39 Section 222 amended (Exempt land)

Section 222(1)(g), after "purpose"

insert

, other than the provision of social or affordable housing,

40 Section 250 amended (Public benefit concessions)

After section 250(1)(e)

insert

(ea) providing social or affordable housing;

Commented [AJ154]: Issue: 109(5)(b) There is no direction for a member who wishes to opt back in

Recommendation: Insert 109(5)(c) to include that the onus of providing the required documentation and any necessary follow-up to opt back into superannuation payments must sit with the individual elected members.

Councils must not be held liable for failing to pay superannuation if an elected member has previously opted out of payments but then decides to opt back in.

This is important as the penalties for failure to pay SGC are significant and start from day one.

Commented [MW155]: Why not? Could the remuneration committee determinations not list allowances and the super entitlement so everyone is clear what is being paid?

Commented [MW156]: Guidelines should to be developed to ensure clear information on workers comp and PAYG implications, if any.

Commented [MW157]: Public/social housing is the responsibility of the NTG (even if management/ownership transferred to a CHP or NTG partners with a CHP because they cant keep up). Recommendation: remove 'social or' so it is clear the NTG cannot abrogate its responsibility to pay rates for social/public housing and is therefore not subject to rates concessions.

Commented [SZ158R157]: Recommendation 2: amendment that exempts NTG from eligibility for public benefit concessions.

Part 5 Repeal of Act

Part 5 Repeal of Act

41 Repeal of Act

This Act is repealed on the day after it commences.

Local Government Legislation Amendment (Code of Conduct and Other Matters) Act 2025 44
21/11/25 13:48 Ref: 20bill018 d10 **CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT**

Page 3: [1] Commented [AJ10] Andrea James Thursday, 18 December 2025 3:26:00 PM

Issue:

45 Training requirements for council members

Discussion Paper - Part C page 11 Proposed Code of Conduct Framework included targeted training for the Chair and Deputy Chair and the LGU consultation summary report stated stakeholder support for this training but it has not been identified as mandatory in the draft amendments to the Act.

Recommendation:

Targeted training for Chairs and Deputy Chairs must be defined in the Act as mandatory, as it is in the Local Government Acts in Victoria and New South Wales.

https://www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0016/211237/Guidance-on-the-mandatory-training-for-mayors,-deputy-mayors-and-councillors-2024.pdf

The lack of training for Chairs and Deputy Chairs has been well documented as a significant contributing factor to code of conduct and mismanagement issues within councils - refer to Barkly Regional Council Investigation Report, Coomalie Community Council Investigation Report, MCA Report). Completion of this training must be mandatory under the Act.

Page 3: [2] Commented [AJ11] Andrea James Thursday, 18 December 2025 3:38:00 PM

Issue:

45 Training requirements for council members

There is no requirement for the NTG Local Government Unit to keep signed training records for individual participants.

Recommendation:

Inclusion of the requirement for the NTG LGU to keep signed training records for individual participants.

Code of Conduct and other employment related investigation outcomes can be defended on the basis of lack of training. Without training records signed by individual participants it be difficult to prove that training was completed.

Page 3: [3] Commented [AJ12] Andrea James Thursday, 18 December 2025 3:57:00 PM

Issue:

45(1) 45 Training requirements for council members allows for training to be removed as a legislated requirement.

Recommendation:

Omit: may

Insert: will

Mandated training for elected members must be legislated.

Page 3: [4] Commented [AJ13] Andrea James Thursday, 18 December 2025 4:01:00 PM

Issue:

45(1) 'determine training requirements' is too broad and does not clarify that this is training that will be delivered by the NTG Local Government Unit without training fees.

Recommendation:

Omit: determine training requirements

Insert: determine Agency provided training

Page 3: [5] Commented [AJ14] Andrea James Thursday, 18 December 2025 4:06:00 PM

Issue:

45(2) There are no penalties defined for non-compliance.

Recommendation:

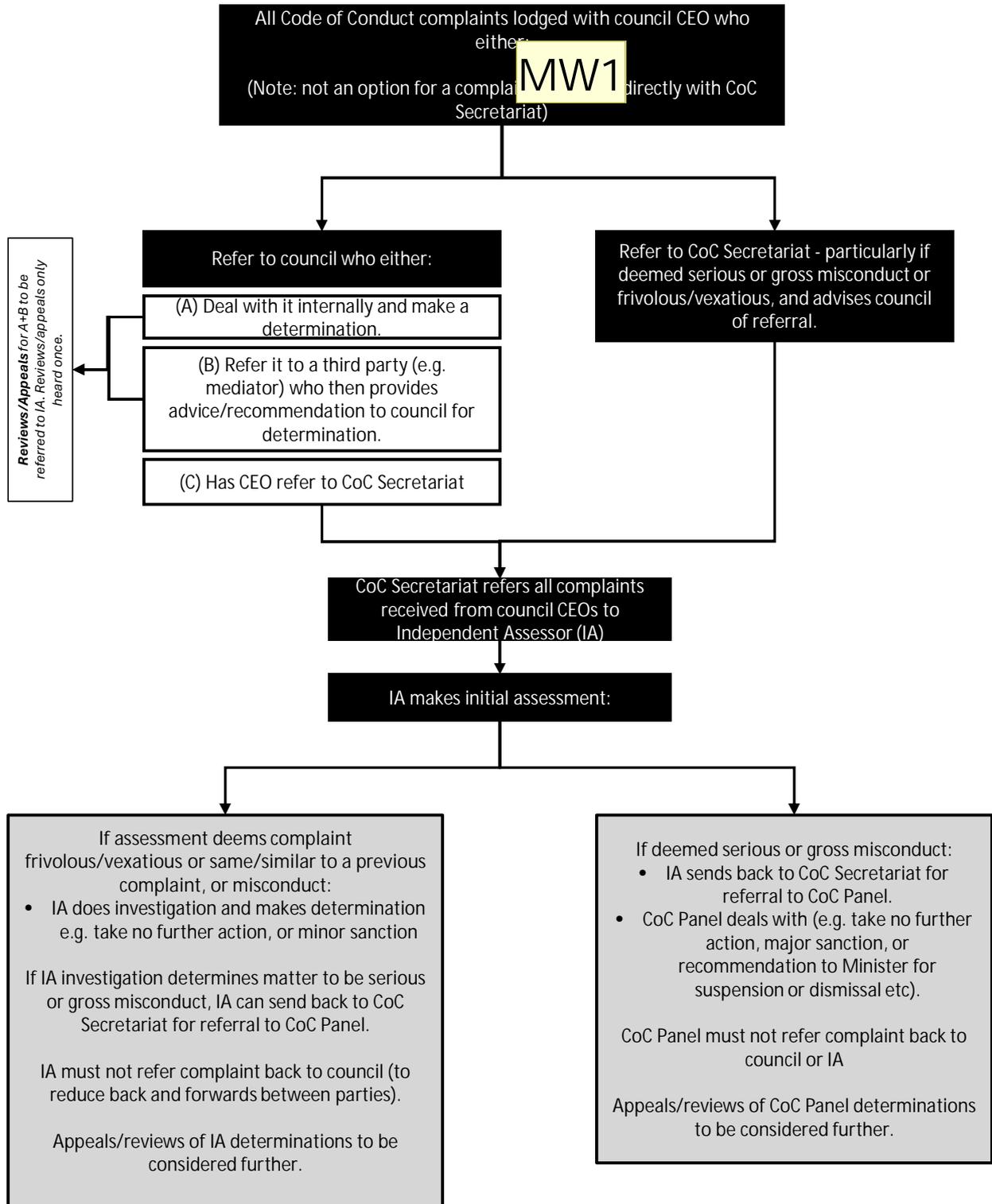
Insert clear penalties for non-compliance of mandated training. As there is in the Local Government Acts in Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia

Responsibility for enforcing penalties must sit with the Agency as the regulator of the Act and the provider of mandated training.

|



Proposed Code of Conduct flowchart/decision tree



Slide 1

MW1 Councils to have a policy on how to determine which choice to make here

Mary Watson, 2025-12-18T23:47:44.734

WEST ARNHEM REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 January 2026

Agenda Reference:	10.5
Title:	LGANT Draft Submission - Senate Inquiry into Regional Aviation
Author:	Katharine Murray, Chief Executive Officer

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a draft submission from the Australian Local Government Association in relation to the Senate Regional Aviation Inquiry.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL receives and notes the report titled *LGANT Draft Submission - Senate Inquiry into Regional Aviation*.

BACKGROUND

The Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) have developed a draft submission to the Senate Inquiry into the *State of Australia's Aviation Sector and its Ability to Deliver Reliable and Affordable Services to Rural, Regional and Remote Communities* which has been circulated to the other state and territory associations for comment. The Local Government Association of the NT (LGANT) have provided feedback (attached).

Noting the attached submission is an early draft and has not been approved by the ALGA Board as final.

STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT

N/A

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report aligns to the following pillars and goals as outlined in the *Regional Plan and Budget*:

PILLAR 4 SERVICE DELIVERY AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

We provide high quality infrastructure and service delivery that meets the unique needs of each community, creates a sense of place and contributes towards promoting a sense of pride in community.

Goal 4.1 Strategic Infrastructure and Asset Management

Strategically manage, maintain and enhance community infrastructure.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 2025-12-5 DRAFT - ALGA Submission Senate Regional Aviation Inquiry LGANT [10.5.1 - 19 pages]



ALGA Submission

Senate Inquiry into the State of
Australia's Aviation Sector and its
Ability to Deliver Reliable and
Affordable Services to Rural, Regional
and Remote Communities

P 02 6122 9400

E alga@alga.asn.au

Building Better
Communities.

ALGA Submission

Introduction

The Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) is the national voice of local government in Australia, representing 537 councils across the country. ALGA advocates for sustainable funding, appropriate recognition of local government's role, and policies that support the economic, environmental and social wellbeing of councils and communities.

ALGA welcomes the opportunity to provide this submission to the Senate inquiry into the state of Australia's aviation sector and its ability to deliver reliable and affordable services to rural, regional and remote communities.

This submission builds on ALGA's previous advocacy on aviation matters, including our submissions to the Aviation Green Paper (2023), the Aviation White Paper consultation (2024), and the Aviation Customer Rights Charter consultation (2025).

Summary

Local governments collectively operate more than 200 regional airports and aerodromes across Australia. These facilities are critical infrastructure for regional, rural and remote communities, providing essential connectivity for business, health services, education, emergency response, and social connection. Aviation services are particularly vital during natural disasters when road access may be cut off for extended periods.

Noting the critical nature of aviation to Australian communities, aviation facilities should be recognised as critical transport infrastructure akin to roads, where government investment is accepted as a public responsibility. Just as we don't expect rural roads to be commercially viable on user-pays principles, regional airports serving essential community needs require similar recognition as public infrastructure deserving ongoing federal support.

Key points:

- Council-owned regional airports face significant financial pressures, with many operating at break-even or at a loss.
- The fundamental economics of regional aviation create unavoidable cost disparities contributing to regional airfares being 52% higher per kilometre than flights between capital cities.
- The number of regional and remote routes have declined dramatically, with many remaining routes now serviced by monopoly operators.
- Recent airline decisions, including Qantas's closure of regional staff bases in Canberra, Hobart and Mildura, demonstrate weakening airline commitment to regional communities.
- Current funding mechanisms are inadequate to address the structural cost challenges facing regional airports.

ALGA Submission

Recommendations

ALGA makes the following recommendations to the Committee:

Financial Support and Cost Recovery

1. Investigate the establishment of a uniform national levy system to equitably distribute aviation security costs across all airports, rather than placing disproportionate burdens on regional airports and passengers.
2. Implement a dedicated, ongoing federal funding program for regional and remote airports, recognising these facilities as essential national infrastructure.
3. Provide exemptions or direct financial support to council-owned airports to offset compliance costs associated with federal regulations, including the Aviation Customer Rights Charter and Disability Transport Standards.
4. Improve transparency and assessment of the full costs (capital and ongoing) imposed on regional airports by federal legislation and regulations before implementation.

Commented [SZ1]: And as key, strategic points in the event of medical and disaster evacuations for remote communities.
Consider including that the federal funding program prioritise need over population as part of the funding formula. This will help accommodate for the elevated costs of doing infrastructure maintenance in remote areas that is not experienced with all regional airports.

Regulatory Reform

5. Review the application of federally mandated security requirements to regional airports, implementing risk-based, tiered approaches that reflect actual security threats and passenger volumes.
6. Streamline regulatory compliance processes to reduce the administrative and financial burden on small council-operated airports.
7. Ensure adequate consultation with local government before implementing new federal aviation regulations that will impact council-owned airports.

Service Delivery and Competition

8. Develop policy mechanisms to ensure airlines maintain long-term commitments to regional communities, not just fly-in fly-out service provision.
9. Implement measures to increase competition on regional routes, including through targeted route development programs and consideration of regulated services where market failure exists.
10. Require airlines to demonstrate community consultation and impact assessment before closing regional bases or significantly reducing services.

Data and Planning

11. Establish comprehensive national data collection on regional aviation costs, including disaggregated data on fees, levies, taxes and charges by airport type and location.
12. Develop a national regional aviation strategy that recognises the essential role of aviation in regional development and community wellbeing.

ALGA Submission

Response to Terms of Reference

1. Costs, fees, levies, taxes and charges that are core components to the pricing of airfares and associated services

The cost structure of regional aviation is fundamentally different from metropolitan aviation, yet the regulatory and charging framework often fails to recognise these differences.

Council-owned regional airports face multiple cost challenges:

Airport Operation and Maintenance Costs: Local governments bear significant costs in maintaining airport infrastructure to meet federal safety and operational standards. This burden is compounded by an infrastructure deficit that councils cannot address without external support, (according to the 2024 National State of the Assets report, 12% of local government airport assets are in poor condition). Unlike major privately-owned airports that generate revenue from a variety of sources, council-operated airports generally must fund their operations from already stretched municipal budgets.

Security Costs: The implementation of enhanced security screening requirements at regional airports has created financial imbalances. Evidence provided by the Regional Aviation Association of Australia (RAAA) to the Senate Select Committee on Commonwealth Bilateral Air Service Agreements in 2023 indicated that security screening costs in regional airports can reach \$20-40 per passenger, compared to just cents per passenger at capital city airports. This disparity exists because:

- Regional airports have lower passenger volumes over which to spread fixed security infrastructure costs.
- Smaller airports cannot achieve the economies of scale available at major metropolitan airports.
- Security equipment and staffing requirements are mandated by federal regulation but costs fall on airports and ultimately passengers.

These costs are directly passed through to regional airfares, contributing to the 52% higher per-kilometre cost of regional flights identified in the Aviation White Paper.

Airservices Australia Charges: While the Airservices Australia Enroute Charges Payment Scheme provides some relief by subsidising en-route charges for regional services, this addresses only one component of the cost structure burden facing regional aviation.

Regional airlines and airports remain exposed to the full suite of Airservices Australia terminal navigation charges, Aviation Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) levies, and other aviation safety infrastructure costs that are proportionally more expensive when spread across lower passenger volumes. Unlike their metropolitan counterparts that benefit from economies of scale, regional operators must absorb these fixed regulatory costs across smaller revenue bases, creating a structural disadvantage that undermines the viability of thin regional routes.

The en-route subsidy, while welcome, does not extend to these terminal-based charges or address the capital and operational costs associated with maintaining certified airport infrastructure to regulatory standards.

Passenger Movement Charge: The \$70 Passenger Movement Charge (PMC) levied on international flights generates approximately \$1.3 billion annually for consolidated revenue, yet only around half of this amount is allocated to border management activities including customs,

Commented [MW2]: Should references in the submission to council-owned be expanded to 'council owned or managed/operated'?

Commented [SZ3]: And the elevated costs of carrying out necessary maintenance in remote areas.

ALGA Submission

immigration, and biosecurity services. The remainder is directed to general revenue, effectively operating as an aviation-specific tax rather than a user-pays mechanism.

This funding model creates inequities for regional airports that facilitate international services or provide regional connections to international gateways. Despite their role in the broader aviation network, including facilitating tourist distribution to regional destinations and supporting emergency international medical evacuations, regional airports receive minimal direct benefit from PMC revenue. The federal government does not reinvest PMC surpluses into regional airport infrastructure, security screening facilities, or border processing capability at emerging international airports.

This represents a missed opportunity to strengthen Australia's distributed aviation network and support the government's own regional development objectives. As regional centres like Cairns, Townsville, and Darwin seek to expand their international connectivity, the absence of targeted PMC reinvestment in their infrastructure and border processing capabilities creates a structural barrier to network diversification and increases reliance on already-congested capital city gateways.

Federal Compliance Costs: Compliance with federal regulations, including disability access standards, environmental requirements, and safety regulations, imposes costs that are proportionally much higher for small council-operated airports than for major privatised airports with commercial revenue streams.

ALGA Position: The current system of cost recovery for federally mandated requirements is inequitable and places unsustainable burdens on regional communities. A more equitable approach would involve:

- A uniform national levy to distribute security costs across all passengers, rather than concentrating costs on regional travellers.
- Direct federal funding to offset compliance costs for small regional airports.
- Recognition of regional airports as essential public infrastructure deserving of ongoing federal investment.

Commented [S24]: Refer to my first point in the recommendations section.

ALGA Submission

2. The decision made by Qantas to close its regional staff bases in Canberra, Hobart and Mildura on 1 October 2025

On 1 October 2025, Qantas announced its decision to proceed with closing pilot and cabin crew bases in Canberra, Hobart and Mildura from April 2026, affecting approximately 70 staff members.

ALGA shares the concerns expressed by Transport Minister Catherine King, who stated: "It's not enough for Australia's airlines to just fly in and out of regional communities, they should be a strong community partner and a reliable employer as well."

Impact on Regional Communities

From a local government perspective, the closure of these bases represents more than an internal airline restructuring decision. Local councils are responsible for maintaining the social and economic fabric of their communities, and airline base closures create cascading impacts that fall disproportionately on local government to manage and mitigate.

Reducing Local Employment – Economic Multiplier Effects

The loss of stable, skilled aviation employment undermines local government economic development efforts and community sustainability. When airlines close regional bases:

- **Economic multiplier effects are reversed:** Aviation professionals typically earn above-average incomes that circulate through local economies. A joint survey by the Transport Workers' Union (TWU), the Australian Federation of Air Pilots (AFAP), and the Australian and International Pilots Association (AIPA) of Qantas pilots affected by proposed base closures in Canberra and Hobart indicated that 68% would consider alternative employment if bases closed, with a further 25% undecided. The loss of these households means reduced revenue for local businesses, declining commercial property values, and diminished rate bases for councils.
- **Skilled workforce flight:** Regional centres struggle to attract and retain professional workers. Aviation bases represent highly skilled employment that helps diversify regional economies beyond traditional industries. Their loss makes regional centres less attractive to other skilled professionals and industries.
- **Youth retention:** Aviation careers provide pathways for young people to remain in or return to regional communities. Base closures eliminate these opportunities, accelerating youth migration to capital cities, a trend local governments are actively working to reverse.
- **Reduced economic resilience:** Councils invest significantly in economic diversification to protect communities from industry downturns. The concentration of aviation employment in capital cities increases regional vulnerability and reduces the return on local government investment in economic development.

Weakening Community Connections

Local governments understand that community cohesion depends on businesses being genuine stakeholders, not merely service providers who fly in and out. Airlines with locally based staff develop institutional knowledge and genuine commitment that fly-in fly-out arrangements cannot replicate.

Commented [SZ5]: Base closures also lead to less work for those employed to carry out infrastructure maintenance, reducing already limited employment opportunities in remote/regional areas.

ALGA Submission

- **Civic participation:** Locally based airline staff become school parents, volunteers, sporting club members, and community leaders. This creates a vested interest in service quality and reliability that extends beyond commercial considerations.
- **Responsive service delivery:** Local crews understand regional weather patterns, seasonal demands, community events, and the critical nature of connections for medical, business, and social purposes. This knowledge improves operational decision-making and service reliability.
- **Corporate citizenship:** Airlines with physical presence in communities are more likely to participate in local chambers of commerce, support community initiatives, and respond to local concerns. Fly-in fly-out operations eliminate this accountability.
- **Trust and social licence:** Communities that host airport infrastructure expect airlines to be partners, not extractive operators. The shift to fly-in fly-out arrangements erodes the social licence that underpins community support for aviation operations.

Potentially Compromising Service Reliability

Regional communities depend on reliable air services for access to essential services, economic opportunities, and social connections:

- **Medical evacuations and specialist appointments:** Regional communities rely on predictable air services for time-critical medical care. Cancellations and delays can mean missed specialist appointments, postponed procedures, and compromised health outcomes.
- **Economic activity:** Business viability in regional centres depends on reliable connections to markets, suppliers, and customers. Service disruptions impose direct costs on local businesses and undermine councils' efforts to attract and retain commercial activity.
- **Emergency response:** During bushfires, floods, and other emergencies, local governments coordinate with airlines for evacuations and essential supply delivery. Without locally based crews familiar with regional airports and emergency protocols, response effectiveness is compromised.
- **Operational cascades:** The airline's argument that consolidation improves reliability by having crews available in major hubs fails to account for the operational reality that disruptions in Sydney, Melbourne, or Brisbane create cascading delays and cancellations in regional centres. Locally based crews provide redundancy and faster recovery from disruptions.

Implications for Aviation Policy

The Qantas base closures highlight several policy gaps that directly affect local government's ability to fulfill its responsibilities:

- **Lack of Community Engagement Mechanisms:** There were no pathways for meaningful dialogue between the airline and affected communities before this decision. Local governments, which invest in airport infrastructure and regional economic development, could contribute valuable insights to airline planning processes. Voluntary consultation mechanisms could help airlines better understand community impacts while maintaining operational flexibility.

ALGA Submission

- **Absence of Service Standards:** While the Aviation White Paper introduced customer rights provisions, there are no specific standards around airline commitments to regional communities. Local governments need predictability and minimum service standards to effectively plan infrastructure investment and economic development.

ALGA Position

The Committee should consider policy mechanisms that:

- Require airlines providing vital Regular Public Transport (RPT) services to conduct community impact assessments before closing regional bases or significantly altering regional operations. These assessments should include consultation with affected local governments, economic impact analysis, and identification of mitigation measures.
- Establish service standards that include commitments to regional employment and community engagement. Airlines receiving federal support or operating from government funded infrastructure should demonstrate genuine partnership with regional communities.
- Link federal aviation support programs to airlines' demonstrated commitment to regional communities. Government funding for regional aviation should be conditional on airlines maintaining appropriate regional presence and service standards.
- Ensure that decisions affecting regional aviation are subject to appropriate consultation and transparency requirements. Local governments, as democratically elected representatives of affected communities, should be consulted on decisions that significantly affect regional aviation services.

These measures would not prevent legitimate business restructuring but would ensure that decisions affecting regional communities are made with appropriate consideration of community impacts and with meaningful input from those who will bear the consequences. For local governments in regional Australia, aviation is not merely commercial infrastructure, it is essential community infrastructure that requires appropriate governance and accountability frameworks.

Commented [SZ6]: As well as part of disaster response planning and preparedness. In most, if not all jurisdictions, councils have responsibilities with respect to planning and preparedness and participate in various committee models

ALGA Submission



3. Disparities in costs across rural, regional and remote airports and the basis for the disparities

Significant cost disparities exist across different types of airports in Australia. These disparities are driven by structural factors that disadvantage smaller regional airports.

Economies of Scale: Major metropolitan airports handle millions of passengers annually and can spread fixed costs across high passenger volumes. Regional airports serving small communities may handle only thousands (perhaps only hundreds) of passengers annually, resulting in much higher per-passenger costs for security infrastructure and staffing, terminal facilities and maintenance, ground handling equipment, navigation and safety systems, and regulatory compliance administration.

Infrastructure Deficits: Regional airports, particularly those in remote areas, often operate with aging infrastructure. Many airstrips are unsealed. Limited funding for upgrades means infrastructure deteriorates faster than it can be replaced. Climate change impacts also disproportionately affect remote airports with limited resilience.

Service Provision Costs: Geographic remoteness increases costs for attracting and retaining skilled aviation personnel, equipment maintenance and parts delivery, training and professional development, and emergency response capability.

Revenue Generation Constraints: Unlike major airports that generate substantial non-aeronautical revenue from retail, parking, property development and advertising, small regional airports have limited, if any, commercial revenue opportunities, inability to develop complementary businesses, dependence on aeronautical charges for cost recovery, and limited ability to cross-subsidise between profitable and essential services.

Regulatory Compliance Costs: Federal regulations apply uniformly regardless of airport size, but the proportional impact is far greater on small airports. A small regional airport may need the same security screening infrastructure as a major airport but with 1% of the passenger throughput.

ALGA Position: The cost disparities between metropolitan and regional airports are structural and cannot be resolved through operational efficiency alone. They require federal funding recognition that regional airports provide essential public services beyond commercial viability considerations, tiered regulatory approaches that recognise different risk profiles and operational scales, and transparent mechanisms for assessing and addressing cost impacts of federal requirements.

ALGA Submission

4. Mechanisms for recovering federally mandated security and regulatory costs and options for achieving greater financial equity, including the merits of a uniform national levy

Federally mandated security and regulatory requirements currently fall primarily on airports and airlines, who then pass costs through to passengers. This creates significant inequities.

Problems with Current Approaches

The current cost recovery system creates several problems:

- **Inequity:** Regional passengers pay significantly more for federally mandated security requirements than metropolitan passengers, as outlined above, despite security being a national responsibility.
- **Unpredictability:** Councils operating regional airports face uncertainty about future compliance costs and limited capacity to factor these into long-term financial planning.
- **Barrier to Service:** High costs contribute to reduced aviation services, route closures, and in some cases, closure of regional airports entirely.

Case for a Uniform National Levy

ALGA recommends consideration of a uniform national levy, similar to the Passenger Movement Charge in practice, to cover security arrangements and other federally mandated costs. Benefits would include:

- **Equity:** All passengers would contribute equally to national aviation security requirements, rather than placing disproportionate burdens on those living in or travelling to regional areas.
- **Simplicity:** A single levy would be simpler to administer than the current patchwork of charges and subsidies.
- **Predictability:** Airports would have greater certainty about security cost recovery, supporting better financial planning.
- **Fairness:** Security is a national responsibility and should be funded as such, not treated as a user-pays cost that varies dramatically by location.

ALGA Position: ALGA strongly supports the development of more equitable cost recovery mechanisms for federally mandated aviation requirements. A uniform national levy merits serious consideration as part of a broader reform of aviation sector funding that recognises regional airports as essential national infrastructure.

ALGA Submission

5. Competitiveness of the aviation sector to service regional, rural and remote communities and the implications of reducing or withdrawing services

The regional aviation market has experienced significant structural deterioration over recent decades, with profound implications for Australia's regions.

Market Structure and Competition

Australia's regional aviation sector faces severe market concentration challenges that distinguish it from comparable international markets:

- **Route Consolidation:** The number of regional routes declined from 458 to 291 between 1989 and 2021, representing a 36% reduction. Remote routes decreased even more dramatically, from 264 to 163 (38% reduction).
- **Market Concentration and Pricing Power:** When a route is serviced by a monopoly carrier, consumers pay approximately 40 cents per kilometre, falling to 28 cents when two airlines are present, and 19 cents when three airlines, demonstrating that monopoly pricing is more than double competitive pricing. The Aviation White Paper found the average ticket price per kilometre was 52 per cent higher for flights involving regional airports than for flights between two capital cities.
- **Regulated Monopolies:** Some state governments (NSW, Queensland, and Western Australia) actually guarantee monopolies on thin regional routes through licensing arrangements, granting exclusive operating rights to single carriers for fixed periods. While intended to ensure service continuity on marginal routes, this eliminates any competitive pressure on pricing or service quality.
- **Airline Failures and Consolidation:** The collapse of Bonza in 2024 and Rex's entry into voluntary administration have further reduced competition and route options. Domestic aviation is one of the most concentrated industries in Australia other than natural monopolies, with Qantas Group and Virgin Australia consistently accounting for around 95% of the market.

Implications of Service Reductions

The withdrawal or reduction of aviation services to regional communities has profound and cascading impacts:

- **Population Settlement and Regional Viability:** Reliable, affordable connections to larger metropolitan centres shape the attractiveness of regional cities [and towns](#). Professionals considering regional relocations - whether doctors, teachers, engineers, or business managers - evaluate connectivity to metropolitan centres as a critical factor in their decisions. When aviation services decline, regions face a vicious cycle - reduced connectivity deters skilled workers and professionals, which weakens local economies, which further reduces the viability of air services. This threatens the federal government's objectives for regional development and population decentralisation.
- **Access to Essential Services:** Patients in regional areas often need to travel to metropolitan centres for specialist medical treatment, or complex surgical procedures. Reduced flight options and monopoly pricing create financial and practical barriers to accessing potentially life-saving care. Students from remote areas require affordable air travel to access higher education and vocational training opportunities that determine their career prospects and earning potential.

Page 10 of 18

ALGA Submission

- **Economic Development:** Aviation connectivity is not peripheral to regional economic development, it is fundamental. Reduced services directly limit tourism potential, as visitors face higher costs and fewer scheduling options. Business investment is actively discouraged when reliable, affordable connections with larger centres are unavailable - executives cannot easily visit operations, clients cannot readily access services, and supply chains become more complex and costly. [Councils and industry also struggle to attract and retain staff with limited connectivity.](#) Regional economies become progressively less competitive and more isolated, unable to attract or retain businesses that could diversify local employment.
- **Emergency Response:** Aviation is critical infrastructure for emergency services including medical evacuations (where minutes matter), disaster response coordination, [cyclone, flood and other evacuations](#), and firefighting support deployment. Reduced commercial services may affect the availability of aviation services and infrastructure for emergency deployment, with potentially life-threatening consequences.

ALGA Position: The decline in regional aviation competition and services represents a market failure that requires policy intervention. Regional routes face structural disadvantages - lower passenger volumes, higher per-passenger costs, and greater distances - that make them inherently less attractive to commercial operators compared to high-volume metropolitan routes. This creates a disconnect between commercial viability and community need.

More structural policy approaches are recommended, which may include:

- **Regulated service obligations** on certain essential routes, similar to universal service obligations in telecommunications, ensuring baseline connectivity for communities where commercial services alone are insufficient
- **Route development programs** that provide transitional support for new or expanded services, helping overcome the initial barriers to establishing viable operations
- **Mechanisms ensuring long-term airline commitments** commensurate with public infrastructure investment, so that airports developed with ratepayer and taxpayer funds are not abandoned when market conditions shift, leaving communities stranded with expensive infrastructure but no services

Commented [S7]: More of an anecdote than something you need to consider adding but prior to Cyclone Fina in the Top End NT, residents/visitors were talking about having to spend upwards of \$1000 for a flight out of Darwin to avoid the event. This limits access to safety to those that can afford it. That scale shifts in municipal areas where there is more competition and so more people have access to evacuate if they need to based on their circumstances.

ALGA Submission

6. Adequacy of government fees and levies to equitably address costs for airline services incurred due to federal legislation and regulations

The current system of government fees and levies creates significant inequities, with regional aviation bearing disproportionate cost burdens relative to metropolitan operations.

Passenger Movement Charge (PMC)

The Passenger Movement Charge generates approximately \$1.1-1.38 billion annually, yet less than half of this revenue is allocated to border management activities for which the charge was originally designed. The remainder flows to consolidated revenue for general government purposes. This raises equity concerns relevant to regional aviation: international passengers subsidise general revenue while opportunities are missed to reinvest PMC revenue in aviation infrastructure that benefits regional connectivity, such as upgrades to regional airports serving international services (Cairns, Townsville, Darwin), enhanced customs and biosecurity facilities at regional gateways, or improved ground infrastructure supporting tourism and trade in regional areas.

Security Screening Cost Recovery

Security screening costs at regional airports are estimated at \$20-40 per passenger, compared to as low as a few cents per passenger at capital city airports. This dramatic disparity arises from economies of scale issues: fixed security infrastructure costs divided across far fewer passengers, lower throughput at regional airports, and the reality that even small regional airports require similar security technology and minimum staffing levels as larger facilities. These higher costs are passed through to airlines and ultimately to passengers, making regional air travel significantly more expensive and creating a regressive outcome where residents of regional areas - often with lower average incomes - pay substantially more per flight for federally mandated security than metropolitan passengers.

The federal government's Regional Airports Security Screening Fund provides grants to help regional airports implement security requirements, but this competitive grant program provides only partial, inconsistent coverage and does not address the ongoing operational cost disparities.

Airservices Australia Charges

Airservices Australia operates the En-route Charges Payment Scheme, which subsidises en-route navigation charges for regional operators. However, the scheme covers only en-route charges, not terminal navigation services or Aviation Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) levies. Regional operators still face higher per-passenger costs for terminal services and ARFF due to lower aircraft utilisation and smaller passenger volumes. These unsubsidised cost components disproportionately burden the financially marginal routes that are often most critical for regional connectivity.

Broader Equity Principles

The current fee and levy structure violates basic equity principles. User-pays models work reasonably well in high-volume environments but break down in low-volume regional contexts where fixed costs dominate. Metropolitan routes with natural competitive advantages and economies of scale pay lower per-passenger government charges, while struggling regional routes pay premium rates for the same federal services. When government imposes requirements such as security screening, navigation services, and disability access standards, the cost burden falls disproportionately on regional airports and communities with the least capacity to absorb them.

Page 12 of 18

ALGA Submission

ALGA Position:

Government fees and levies are currently inadequate and inequitable in addressing costs incurred on regional routes due to federal requirements. The current approach treats regional aviation purely as a commercial market when it is actually essential infrastructure serving communities where market forces alone cannot deliver adequate or affordable services. ALGA supports:

- **Reformed security cost recovery mechanisms** that recognise the structural cost disadvantages of regional airports, such as expanding and regularising the Regional Airports Security Screening Fund with formula-based ongoing operational support rather than competitive project grants, or implementing a national security levy that pools costs across the aviation network
- **Extension of the Airservices Australia subsidy scheme** to cover terminal navigation and ARFF levies, not just en-route charges
- **Hypothecation or redirection of PMC revenue** to support aviation infrastructure that benefits regional connectivity and international access through regional gateways, ensuring the charge serves its stated purpose rather than functioning as general taxation
- **Recognition that regional aviation involves essential service obligations** similar to telecommunications or postal services, where cross-subsidisation or direct government support is accepted as necessary to maintain equitable national connectivity

ALGA Submission

7. Effectiveness of government processes and mechanisms to identify and quantify capital and ongoing costs due to federal legislation and regulations

The effectiveness of government processes to identify and quantify costs imposed on regional airports by federal legislation and regulations has been inadequate.

The introduction of enhanced security screening requirements is a case study in inadequate cost assessment. As noted by the Regional Aviation Association of Australia, "suitable assessment of set up and ongoing costs of these screening systems was non-existent when introduced and now, with funding disappearing, small airports will struggle to be able to afford these systems."

Improvements Needed

To improve identification and quantification of costs, ALGA recommends:

- **Mandatory Regional Impact Assessment:** All new federal aviation legislation and regulations should include specific assessment of capital costs for different airport types, ongoing operational costs, differential impacts across regions, capacity of council-owned airports to absorb costs, and timeframes and transition support needed.
- **Cost Data Collection:** Establish systematic national data collection on actual costs incurred by regional airports for federal compliance, variation across airport types and regions, and effectiveness of grant programs in meeting cost needs.
- **Funding Linked to Regulation:** New federal requirements should be accompanied by identified funding mechanisms, either through direct appropriations for implementation support, exemptions for small airports where appropriate, or modified requirements for regional airports based on risk and scale.

ALGA Position: Current government processes to identify and quantify costs of federal aviation requirements on regional airports are inadequate. Significant improvements are needed to ensure regulations are accompanied by realistic cost assessment and appropriate funding mechanisms.

Commented [MW8]: or managed/operated?

ALGA Submission



8. Policy and practical measures in place, or that could be established, to assist the aviation sector to provide services to rural, regional and remote communities

Existing Measures

Several federal programs currently support regional and remote aviation, including the Regional Aviation Access Program, Regional Airports Program, Remote Airstrip Upgrade Program, and Airservices Australia Enroute Charges Payment Scheme.

Additional Measures to Consider

ALGA suggests the Committee consider the following additional policy and practical measures:

- **Ongoing Regional Airport Infrastructure Fund:** Establish a permanent, formula-based funding program for essential regional airports, rather than time-limited competitive grants.
- **Compliance Cost Offset Program:** Provide direct funding to offset costs of compliance with federal requirements (security, disability access, environmental standards) for council-owned regional airports.
- **Route Development Programs:** Establish programs to support new route development and route sustainability, providing transitional subsidies for airlines serving thin routes.
- **National Regional Aviation Strategy:** Develop a comprehensive national strategy that articulates the federal government's long-term vision and commitments to regional aviation, providing certainty for councils, airlines and communities.

ALGA Position: While current measures provide valuable support, a more comprehensive and sustained approach is recommended. This would include permanent, predictable funding mechanisms, balance between infrastructure funding and operational support, service standards and obligations, and an integrated national strategy that recognises regional aviation as essential infrastructure.

Commented [SZ9]: With a formula that incorporates need as a priority - not just population based

Commented [SZ10R9]: Need should consider remoteness, prevalence of disaster events necessitating fit-for-purpose evacuation means

Commented [MW11]: and Remote?

ALGA Submission

9. Review of government responses to recommendations from previous relevant inquiries and the status of associated actions

Several previous parliamentary inquiries have examined regional aviation issues. The Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee inquiry in 2019 on "Operation, regulation and funding of air route service delivery to rural, regional and remote communities" made several recommendations, many of which remain only partially implemented.

Gaps in Implementation

Several patterns emerge from review of government responses:

- **Incremental Approach:** Government responses tend to provide incremental increases to existing programs rather than addressing structural issues.
- **Study-Heavy:** Many responses involve commissioning further reviews or studies rather than concrete action (e.g., a 2024 Productivity Commission review into regional airfares extends its analysis timeline to 2027).
- **Time-Limited Funding:** Program extensions are typically for 3-year periods, preventing long-term planning and investment.

Status of Key Issues from Previous Inquiries

- **Aviation security costs for regional airports:** Remains unaddressed. Disparity between regional and metropolitan security costs continues.
- **Regional route decline and service adequacy:** Routes continue to decline (458 to 291 regional routes between 1989-2021). Recent airline failures have worsened the situation.
- **Regional airport funding sustainability:** Some improvement through program extensions but no systematic funding mechanism established.

ALGA Position: While there has been some progress on regional aviation issues through successive inquiries and the Aviation White Paper process, many issues remain unaddressed. The current inquiry represents another opportunity to advance these long-standing issues. ALGA recommends the Committee to make strong, specific recommendations with clear implementation mechanisms, [budget allocations](#), and timeframes.

ALGA Submission

Conclusion

Aviation is essential infrastructure that enables access to health care, education, business connectivity, emergency services, [liveability](#) and social connection for regional communities. Unlike metropolitan areas with alternative transport options, many regional communities depend entirely on aviation for their [safety](#), viability and prosperity.

Local governments own and operate more than 200 regional airports across Australia, investing substantial community resources to maintain these facilities. However, the current policy and funding framework does not adequately recognise or support the essential role these airports play.

Key challenges requiring urgent attention include:

- Structural cost inequities that place disproportionate burdens on regional communities for federally mandated requirements.
- Inadequate and unpredictable funding mechanisms that leave councils unable to maintain infrastructure to required standards.
- Declining services and competition on regional routes, with many communities now served by monopoly operators.
- Airline decisions that prioritise efficiency over long-term commitment to regional communities.
- Regulatory impact assessment processes that fail to adequately identify and address costs imposed on small regional airports.

The policy status quo is not sustainable. Without reform, regional aviation will continue to decline, services will be further withdrawn, and regional communities will face increasing isolation and disadvantage.

ALGA calls on the Committee to make strong recommendations for:

- Equitable cost recovery mechanisms, including consideration of uniform national levies for security and other federal requirements.
- Permanent, predictable funding for regional airport infrastructure.
- Service standards and obligations to ensure airlines maintain long-term regional commitments.
- Enhanced competition policy and market structure reforms.
- Improved regulatory impact assessment with identified funding mechanisms.
- Development of a comprehensive national [regional aviation strategy](#).

Commented [MW12]: and remote?oc

Regional aviation is a policy priority that requires sustained commitment and investment from the federal government. The Committee's inquiry presents a critical opportunity to drive reform that will secure aviation connectivity for regional Australia into the future.

ALGA welcomes the opportunity to provide further information or evidence to support the Committee's inquiry.

Sincerely,

Page 17 of 18

ALGA Submission

Amy Crawford
Chief Executive Officer

Contact details

Robert Knight
Policy Director

0421 033 549
robertk@alga.asn.au

Page 18 of 18

WEST ARNHEM REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 January 2026

Agenda Reference:	10.6
Title:	LGANT - Gamba Eradication and Biodiversity Conservation (GEBC) Project
Author:	Katharine Murray, Chief Executive Officer

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to update Council on the Gamba Eradication and Biodiversity Conservation (GEBC) Project 2024 - GGEB Steering Committee and WARC's representative.

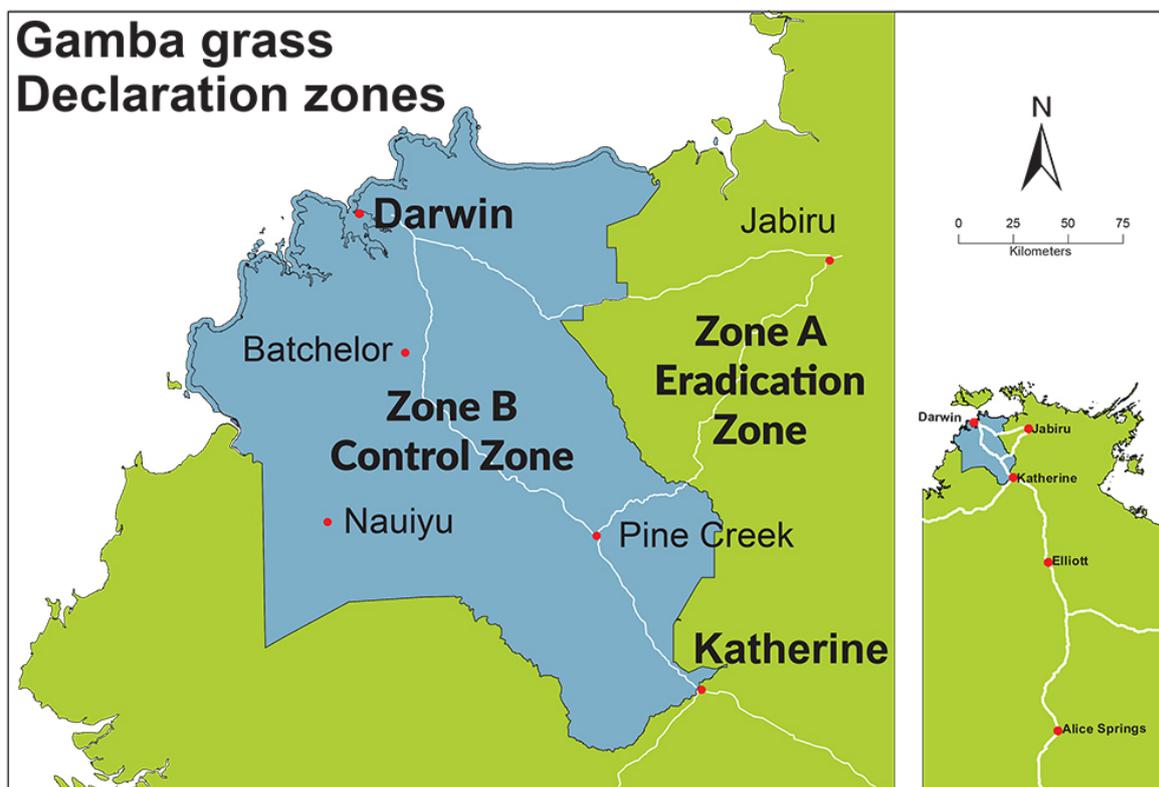
RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL receives and notes the report titled *LGANT - Gamba Eradication and Biodiversity Conservation (GEBC) Project*.

BACKGROUND

The Local Government Association of the NT (LGANT) CEO, Mary Watson, the LGANT representative of the Gamba Grass Eradication and Biodiversity Conservation (GEBC) Project Steering Committee, and Wesley van Zanden (Groote Archipelago Regional Council), is seeking to strengthen communication and coordination with all councils within the Zone A eradication zone. Please see images of the zones below:





To support this, LGANT requested that each council nominate a suitable contact person to liaise with Wesley.

West Arnhem Senior Council Services Manager, Rick Mitchell was appointed as Council’s contact.

Rick will play an important role in helping the GEBC Project Team understand each council’s specific weed management needs and help with the coordination of future engagement activities.

Over the next six months, the GEBC Project Team will be working with councils to:

- Identify training needs and schedule formal weed management training where required
- Determine what support councils require for gamba management more broadly, including equipment, herbicides, and other resources
- Plan the rollout of this assistance on a broader scale across the eradication zone

STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT

Nil

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report aligns to the following pillars and goals as outlined in the *Regional Plan and Budget*:

PILLAR 1 PARTNERSHIPS, RELATIONSHIPS AND BELONGING

Investing in relationships and partnerships at all levels supports and strengthens community and belonging. We prioritise the value of partnerships and relationships as a key determinant of a happy, strong and thriving community.

Goal 1.1 Community Engagement

Seek out and support diverse perspectives and collaborations with community, community leaders, businesses, agencies and local service providers to enhance community life.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

WEST ARNHAM REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 January 2026

Agenda Reference:	10.7
Title:	Technical Services Projects Report
Author:	Kylie Gregson, Manager Technical Services

SUMMARY

This report is presented to the Council to provide an overview of all Local Authority and other Council projects delivered across the West Arnhem Regional Council locations, for the reporting period up to 12 January 2026.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL receives and notes the report titled *Technical Services Projects Report*.

BACKGROUND

High level operational/project management reports are provided to ensure transparency, communication, and support are provided to elected members.

COMMENT

As per the attached report, a comprehensive snapshot is provided to the Council of all current projects being undertaken by the Technical Services Team.

STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT

Not Applicable.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Not Applicable.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report aligns to the following pillars and goals as outlined in the *Regional Plan and Budget*:

PILLAR 4 SERVICE DELIVERY AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

We provide high quality infrastructure and service delivery that meets the unique needs of each community, creates a sense of place and contributes towards promoting a sense of pride in community.

Goal 4.1 Strategic Infrastructure and Asset Management

Strategically manage, maintain and enhance community infrastructure.

Goal 4.2 Fleet, Plant and Equipment

Provide a modern and well-maintained fleet of plant and vehicles capable of meeting service delivery requirements.

Goal 4.3 Waste and Water Management

Deliver environmentally and economically sound solid waste, water and sewerage services.

Goal 4.4 Local Road Management and Maintenance

Tactically monitor, maintain and manage Council gazetted roads and community safety via traffic management.

PILLAR 5 SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE ACTION

Leading by example, we commit to developing a culture of sustainable practice. We recognise and champion the importance of safe-guarding our environment for future generations by working collectively with community, private enterprises and all tiers of government.

Goal 5.1 Recycling and Waste

Develop recycling and waste initiatives which protect and preserve community natural resources and the local environment.

Goal 5.2 Procurement

Develop and implement a leading-edge sustainability procurement strategy.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Technical Services Projects - OCM Jan 2026 [10.7.1 - 4 pages]

GUNBALANYA COUNCIL PROJECTS

STATUS	PROJECT COMPLETE	TASK	DESCRIPTION	% DONE
In Progress	31-07-2026	Insurance claim accepted - Works awarded to M+J Builders. Following site visit, surveyors now advising this is a flood prone area and buildings need to be elevated higher. Draft plans approved. Build to take place in Darwin, then transported for site installation. Target completion end of November 2025. Delayed to 2026 dry season due to Cahills closure.	Gunbalanya Flood Insurance Toad Hall, Laundry & damaged house.	70%

JABIRU COUNCIL PROJECTS

STATUS	PROJECTED COMPLETE	TASK	DESCRIPTION	% DONE
In Progress	31-07-2026	Overview - Replanting of garden beds, move existing park benches under cover, install charging ports and bubbler.	Jabiru Town Square Revitalisation (Rio Tinto).	40%
In Progress	29-02-2026	Insurance claim accepted - Works awarded to TB Constructions. Replacement of internal ceiling due to water damage. Target completion end of February 2026.	Jabiru Hall Ceiling Replacement - Insurance.	20%
In Progress	30-6-2027	Cultural approval received for Dog Park, Playground and Outdoor Gym from GAC. Awaiting release of funds to commence tender procurement process of projects.	Dog Park & Playground - Lakeside Park. Outdoor Gym - Brockman Oval (Rio Tinto).	25%
In Progress	31-7-2026	Internal upgrades include - Pressure wash surfaces, painting walls, ceilings and doors. Supply and install new toilet pans, shower roses, toilet paper dispensers, paper towel dispensers, mirrors above basins. Supply & install new lighting as required. Awaiting release of funds to commence works.	Town Square Public Toilet Upgrades (Rio Tinto).	25%
In Progress	31-7-2026	Internal upgrades include - Pressure wash surfaces, painting walls, ceilings and doors. Supply and install new toilet pans, shower roses, toilet paper dispensers, paper towel dispensers, mirrors above basins. Investigate and repair internal water leaks. Awaiting release of funds to commence works.	Brockman Oval Public Toilet Upgrades (Rio Tinto).	25%
In Progress	31-7-2026	Replace existing wayfinding signs that are damaged and faded. Awaiting release of funds to commence works.	Wayfinding Sign Upgrades (Rio Tinto).	25%

MANINGRIDA COUNCIL PROJECTS

STATUS	PROJECTED COMPLETE	TASK	DESCRIPTION	% DONE
In Progress	31-03-2026	Construction commenced December 2025, delayed due to structural design. Admendment in place, awaiting design.	Maningrida Toilets upgrade near office.	25%

MINJILANG COUNCIL PROJECTS

STATUS	PROJECTED COMPLETE	TASK	DESCRIPTION	% DONE
In Progress	31-03-2026	Works awarded to Stedman's Construction. Contractor kick-off meeting completed. Boundary cleared, fencing completed, 6 mtr pavement completed. Pending works, installation of shelter, planting of pandanus and palms, installation of footpath. Target completion end of March 2026.	New Minjilang Cemetery.	70%

WARRUWI COUNCIL PROJECTS

STATUS	PROJECTED COMPLETE	TASK	DESCRIPTION	% DONE
--------	--------------------	------	-------------	--------

WEST ARNHAM REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 January 2026

Agenda Reference:	10.8
Title:	Regional Waste Update
Author:	Meredith Newall, Waste and Resource Coordinator

SUMMARY

This report is to provide an update to Council on the status of Waste Management within our communities.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL receives and notes the report titled *Regional Waste Update*.

BACKGROUND

As one of our key operational service delivery areas, Waste Management is an ongoing focus for West Arnhem Regional Council (WARC). Each community has its own unique challenges and opportunities in managing waste in our journey towards circular economy and effective waste management.

COMMENT

1. Regional

- Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority (NT EPA) inspections were conducted at:
 - Jabiru Waste Management Facility – 29 October 2025
 - Gunbalanya Waste Management Facility – 29 October 2025
 - Maningrida Waste Management Facility – 30 October 2025
- NT EPA inspection reports were received 2 December 2025 and a summary of the issues and actions required to be addressed are provided as an attachment
- A draft s19 lease from Northern Land Council (NLC) has been received by council. The lease is intended to be used as a template for the four (4) currently unlicensed landfill sites

2. Gunbalanya

- Lease Status: Awaiting lease from Northern Land Council (NLC)
- License Status: Requires licensing and NT EPA have advised in writing that a s19 lease is not required to apply and continuing to operate without a licence is in breach of the *Waste Management and Pollution Control Act 1998*
- Rubbish Collections:
 - Banyan: Mondays & Thursdays
 - Middle Camp: Mondays & Thursdays
 - Arrkuluk: Tuesdays & Fridays
 - Billabong: Tuesdays & Fridays
- Landfill: Operational from Monday to Friday 7.30am – 3.00pm
- The priority for this site is to achieve compliance with environmental legislation
- The reinstatement of power to the gatehouse and the provision of CCTV has been approved as per the Waste and Resource Management Grant 2024/2025 funding
- An upgraded loader is also sought for the community as part of the asset replacement program

3. Jabiru

- Lease Status: Lease with Gundjehmi Aboriginal Corporation Jabiru Town (GAC JT)
- License Status: License EPL351-01
- Rubbish Collections: Tuesdays and Thursdays
- Landfill: Operational from Monday to Friday 7.30am – 3.00pm
- The priority for Jabiru is to achieve and maintain compliance with the NT EPA license and work with the Office of Supervising Scientist (OSS) towards best outcome for remediation. A remediation progress meeting with stakeholders was held early October 2025. Awaiting minutes of meeting and updated action register
- The priority issues for the landfill site are leachate management, the presence of asbestos and updating the current Environmental Management and Operational Plan to reflect current practices
 - A green waste sign has been ordered to be installed at a segregation bay for residents to dispose of green waste
 - The site has limited space available for green waste receipt
 - There are no resources available to treat green waste either into a usable product (e.g. mulch) or to enable volume reduction prior to landfilling
- The Waste Resource Coordinator continues to work with landfill staff, the Finance team, the ICT Coordinator and Information Advisor to establish waste data system to enable accurate and timely recording and reporting of disposal quantities
- Online Landfill Operator Training was conducted for the Landfill Officer, Senior Works Officer and Acting Landfill Officer in January 2026

4. Maningrida

- Lease Status: Awaiting lease from Northern Land Council (NLC)
- License Status: Requires licensing and NT EPA have advised in writing that a s19 lease is not required to apply and continuing to operate without a licence is in breach of the *Waste Management and Pollution Control Act 1998*
- Rubbish Collections: Monday-Friday
- Landfill: Operational from Monday to Friday 7.30am–3.00pm and although currently unmanned, it is generally well maintained
- Maningrida Landfill is working towards compliance to be ready for licensing when a lease is approved. The focus of this site is to reinstate power and sewerage to the gatehouse to enable the employment of a Landfill Officer
 - One quote has been received for the required septic tank works
- A meeting was held with Cookers Oil in December 2025 to provide a solution for the large volume of waste cooking oil currently stored at the sorting bays
 - Cookers provided three IBCs that were delivered to Maningrida via Sea Swift
 - A procedure for sorting and decanting drums has been developed and sent through to the CSM
 - These IBCs have been filled and returned to Darwin for further processing
 - 3 more IBC are to be sent to Maningrida to continue decanting existing stockpile of waste cooking oils
- Letters have been sent to identified businesses and organisations that are disposing of waste cooking oil advising that these items are not able to be disposed at the Maningrida Waste Management Facility

- Cleansing bags have been delivered to the Maningrida Council office to address exposure issues associated with cultural waste
- Proofs for culture waste signage are awaiting Local Authority approval

5. Minjilang

- Lease Status: Awaiting lease from Northern Land Council (NLC)
- License Status: No license required
- Rubbish Collections: Mondays and Thursdays
- Landfill: Unmanned
- Minjilang Landfill is nearing capacity (estimated 12 months before full), and a key issue is wild pigs entering the site and eating waste. This is a public health risk and has the attention of both the local authority and NTG environmental health officers. No viable solutions have been found, and a lease remains a priority to expand operations outside the current footprint and create a fully fenced compliant site

6. Warruwi

- Lease Status: Draft lease received from Northern Land Council (NLC) which will be used as a template for other West Arnhem Regional Council landfills
- License Status: No license required
- Rubbish Collections: Mondays and Fridays
- Landfill: Unmanned
- Challenges for this site include limited space into the future. NTG advocacy needs to be undertaken to ensure that their procurement practices include removal of waste for Warruwi
- Opportunities for Warruwi are that it is the ideal community to pursue waste sorting and recycling initiatives into the future due to the mature landfill practices and established community garden

LEGISLATION AND POLICY

Not applicable.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report aligns to the following pillars and goals as outlined in the *Regional Plan and Budget*:

PILLAR 4 SERVICE DELIVERY AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

We provide high quality infrastructure and service delivery that meets the unique needs of each community, creates a sense of place and contributes towards promoting a sense of pride in community.

Goal 4.3 Waste and Water Management

Deliver environmentally and economically sound solid waste, water and sewerage services.

ATTACHMENTS

1. EPA Inspection Jabiru December 2025 [**10.8.1** - 4 pages]
2. EPA Inspection Gunbalanya December 2025 [**10.8.2** - 6 pages]
3. EPA Inspection Maningrida December 2025 [**10.8.3** - 7 pages]

West Arnhem Regional Council



NT EPA Inspection 29 October 2025 - Response Jabiru

West Arnhem Regional Council

Inspection Outcomes and Actions to be Taken

The NT EPA conducted an inspection of the Jabiru Waste Management Facility 29 October 2025. The facility is licensed under the *Waste Management and Pollution Control Act 1998* as it receives listed wastes on a commercial basis. The inspection report issued to West Arnhem Regional Council was set out to review the non-compliance issues identified in the inspection conducted June 2024. The following response outlines the actions to be taken in response to the findings of the NT EPA inspection.

West Arnhem Regional Council

Issue No.	Description	Action	Timeframe
1	Entry signage must include EPL No. and 24 hour emergency contact	Compliant	
2	Copy of Environmental Management Plan (EMP) and Emergency Response Plan (ERP) to be available on site	Compliant	
3	Listed wastes permitted under the EPL	Compliant	
4	Permissible listed waste storage limits	Compliant	
5	Used lead acid battery storage	Compliant	
6	Permissible tyre stack limits	Compliant	
7	Firebreak around tyre stockpile	Compliant	
8	Appropriate containment of listed wastes – waste oil bund contained liquid	Requires improvement. VTG engaged to drain oily water from bund.	End January 2026
9	Waste segregation and appropriate signage	Compliant	
10	Litter – small amount along boundary fence but contained on site	Compliant	
11	Cause or permit waste to be burned	Compliant	
12	Covering of waste	Compliant	
13	Potential for release of leachate and water beyond site boundary	Compliant	
14	Maintenance of waste data	Investigate an electronic waste data collection platform.	End March 2026
15	Records to be retained for two years after the end of the 12 month period to which the record relates	Investigate an electronic waste data collection platform.	End March 2026



West Arnhem Regional Council



westarnhem.nt.gov.au

West Arnhem Regional Council



NT EPA Inspection 19 October 2025 - Response Gunbalanya



West Arnhem Regional Council

Inspection Outcomes and Actions to be Taken

The NT EPA conducted an inspection of the Gunbalanya Waste Management Facility 29 October 2025. It was identified that the facility was required to be licensed under the Waste Management and Pollution Control Act 1998 as it services a permanent population of more than 1,000. The inspection report issued to West Arnhem Regional Council was set out to reflect the non-compliance issues if a license had been issued for this site. The following response outlines the actions to be taken in response to the findings of the NT EPA inspection.

West Arnhem Regional Council

Issue No.	Description	Action	Timeframe
1	Entry signage must include EPL No. and 24 hour emergency contact	Signage to be installed with the option to include the EPL No. once issued.	End March 2026
2	Environmental Management Plan (EMP) and Emergency Response Plan (ERP) to be implemented	EMP was compiled by EcOz in 2016. This will be updated in house and submitted in support of EPL application. ERP to be compiled in house adapting the current plan issued for Jabiru.	End June 2026 End June 2026
3	Inadequate storage of used lead acid batteries (ULABS)	Order Uniseg ULAB storage and transport container (dependent on funding)	End March 2026
4	Permissible tyre stack limits exceeded	Staff to be advised of storage limits.	Presentation delivered to staff 9 December 2025
5	Separation distances from vegetation for tyre storage and burning of tyres	Staff to be advised of fire break requirements. No burning signs to be installed.	Presentation delivered to staff 9 December 2025 End March 2026
6	Plant and equipment operation	Landfill operator training to be conducted for all WARC communities. Training register to be kept in each community.	End June 2026 End January 2026
7	Ensure signage for segregation bays is appropriate for site use	Review existing signage at sorting bays.	End January 2026

West Arnhem Regional Council

	Burning of waste in bays Lack of signage for other stockpiles	No burning signs to be installed. Signage to be ordered and delivered	End March 2026 End March 2026
8	Daily cover	Assess availability of cover material and source if necessary Landfill operator training to be conducted for all WARC communities.	End January 2026 End June 2026
9	Litter containment	Establish a litter collection schedule. Landfill operator training to be conducted for all WARC communities.	End January 2026 End June 2026
10	Leachate and stormwater management	Landfill operator training to be conducted for all WARC communities.	End June 2026
11	Waste oil storage	Impervious bunds, frames and covers to be ordered and delivered. Landfill operator training to be conducted for all WARC communities.	End March 2026 End June 2026
12	Cause or permit waste to be burned	Firebreaks to be maintained. No burning signs to be installed. Landfill operator training to be conducted for all WARC communities	Immediate Presentation delivered to staff 9 December 2025 End March 2026 End June 2026

West Arnhem Regional Council

13	Absence of log for fire incidents	Log templates available in council electronic records system: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fires; • Complaints; • Listed waste collections; • Non-compliance notifications. All relevant staff notified and sent link to access.	Completed 12 November 2025
14	Appropriate fire response equipment	All WARC facilities to be assessed for fire response equipment appropriate to the site. Appropriate equipment ordered.	End March 2026
15	Potential groundwater impacts from leachate	To be addressed in EMP.	End June 2026
16	Potential for environmental harm from litter	Landfill operator training to be conducted for all WARC communities. Establish a litter collection schedule.	End June 2026 End January 2026
17	Stormwater management	Landfill operator training to be conducted for all WARC communities.	End June 2026
18	Release of smoke beyond boundary of the site	No burning signs to be installed.	End March 2026
19	Waste data not being collected	Investigate an electronic waste data collection platform.	End March 2026
21 (sic)	Listed waste records	Template has been created and available to staff via council's electronic records system.	Completed 12 November 2025
22	Records to be retained for two years after the end of the 12 month period to which the record relates	Investigate an electronic waste data collection platform.	End March 2026



West Arnhem Regional Council



westarnhem.nt.gov.au

West Arnhem Regional Council



NT EPA Inspection 30 October 2025 - Response Maningrida



West Arnhem Regional Council

Inspection Outcomes and Actions to be Taken

The NT EPA conducted an inspection of the Maningrida Waste Management Facility 30 October 2025. It was identified that the facility was required to be licensed under the *Waste Management and Pollution Control Act 1998* as it services a permanent population of more than 1,000. The inspection report issued to West Arnhem Regional Council was set out to reflect the non-compliance issues if a license had been issued for this site. The following response outlines the actions to be taken in response to the findings of the NT EPA inspection.

West Arnhem Regional Council

Issue No.	Description	Action	Timeframe
1	Entry signage must include EPL No. and 24 hour emergency contact	Signage to be installed with the option to include the EPL No. once issued.	End March 2026
2	Environmental Management Plan (EMP) and Emergency Response Plan (ERP) to be implemented	EMP was compiled by EcOz in 2016. This will be updated in house and submitted in support of EPL application. ERP to be compiled in house adapting the current plan issued for Jabiru.	End June 2026 End June 2026
3	Inadequate storage of used lead acid batteries (ULABS)	Order Uniseg ULAB storage and transport container (dependent on funding)	End March 2026
4	Permissible tyre stack limits exceeded	Staff to be advised of storage limits.	Presentation delivered to staff 9 December 2025
5	Separation distances from vegetation for tyre storage and burning of tyres	Staff to be advised of fire break requirements. No burning signs to be installed.	Presentation delivered to staff 9 December 2025 End March 2026
6	Plant and equipment operation	Landfill operator training to be conducted for all WARC communities. Training register to be kept in each community.	End June 2026 End January 2026
7	Ensure signage for segregation bays is appropriate for site use	Review existing signage at sorting bays.	End January 2026

West Arnhem Regional Council

	Overflow of waste at sorting bays (commercial cooking oil)	Commercial takeaway food businesses to be advised that used cooking oil is not to be disposed at the site. Appropriate disposal options to be conveyed to the operators.	Completed 22 December 2025
8	Daily cover	Assess availability of cover material and source if necessary Landfill operator training to be conducted for all WARC communities.	End January 2026 End June 2026
9	Litter containment	Establish a litter collection schedule. Landfill operator training to be conducted for all WARC communities.	End January 2026 End June 2026
10	Leachate and stormwater management	Landfill operator training to be conducted for all WARC communities.	End June 2026
11	Waste oil storage	Impervious bunds, frames and covers to be ordered and delivered. Spill kits to be delivered to all communities. Landfill operator training to be conducted for all WARC communities.	End March 2026 End March 2026 End June 2026
12	Cause or permit waste to be burned	Firebreaks to be maintained. No burning signs to be installed.	Immediate Presentation delivered to staff 9 December 2025 End March 2026

West Arnhem Regional Council

		Landfill operator training to be conducted for all WARC communities	End June 2026
13	Absence of log for fire incidents	Log templates available in council electronic records system: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fires; • Complaints; • Listed waste collections; • Non-compliance notifications. All relevant staff notified and sent link to access forms.	Completed 12 November 2025 Completed 4 December 2025
14	Appropriate fire response equipment	All WARC facilities to be assessed for fire response equipment appropriate to the site. Appropriate equipment ordered.	End March 2026
15	Potential for release of leachate and oils beyond boundary of premises	To be addressed in EMP.	End June 2026
16	Potential for environmental harm due to waste not being covered	Landfill operator training to be conducted for all WARC communities. Establish a litter collection schedule.	End June 2026 End January 2026
17	Stormwater management	Landfill operator training to be conducted for all WARC communities.	End June 2026
18	Airborne contaminants – no issues at time of inspection	Potential for to be addressed in EMP	End June 2026
19	Waste data not being collected	Investigate an electronic waste data collection platform.	End March 2026
21 (sic)	Listed waste records	Template has been created and available to staff via council's electronic records system.	Completed 4 December 2025



West Arnhem Regional Council

22	Records to be retained for two years after the end of the 12 month period to which the record relates	Investigate an electronic waste data collection platform.	End March 2026
----	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------	----------------



West Arnhem Regional Council



westarnhem.nt.gov.au

WEST ARNHem REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 January 2026

Agenda Reference:	10.9
Title:	Regional Cemetery Update
Author:	Meredith Newall, Waste and Resource Coordinator

SUMMARY

This report is to provide an update to Council on the progress of establishing declared Cemeteries within our Communities.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL receives and notes the report titled *Regional Cemetery Update*.

BACKGROUND

The Northern Territory Government introduced the *Burials and Cremations Act 2022* (commenced 28 November 2022) making Local Government the owners of cemetery facilities across the Northern Territory. West Arnhem Regional Council (WARC) has been working towards declaring Cemeteries for all our communities.

COMMENT

Operational staff have worked with our communities across the region to declare and establish community Cemeteries. This program of works involves extensive consultation with community members and landowners to ensure the facilities we are creating are both fit for purpose and culturally sensitive.

Status by Community:

1. Gunbalanya

- Site: The location of the proposed cemetery has now been identified as containing restricted works by the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority (AAPA). Northern Land Council (NLC) has been requested to consult with Traditional Owners to identify another site 24 October 2025
- License to Maintain: Draft lease issued by NLC 14 October 2025 but is now void as per above advice received
- Once the NLC has identified a suitable cemetery site through the Traditional Owners, a new s19 lease will be sought

Jabiru

- Site: Currently outside WARC lease boundaries
- Lease: Held by Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation Jabiru Town (GACJT)
- Declaration: Declared by the Northern Territory Government as a community cemetery 14 December 2025
- Currently WARC has consent from GACJT to operate the cemetery on Lot 967
- Traditional Owners consent is required to allow burials in Jabiru and has historically been via GAC. GACJT and GAC met to determine who the final decision makers are to allow burials to occur in the Cemetery precinct. It was confirmed 17 December 2025 that GACJT will provide consent for burials via WARC

2. Maningrida

- Site: Decided near airport / new sub
- Licence to Maintain: Held by WARC
- Declaration: Issued by the Northern Territory Government as a Community Cemetery
- Works commenced to expand boundaries 18 August 2025 and Scope 1 works completed 12 September 2025
- Sign to be ordered prior to installation of poles at the site. Signage proof is to be presented to the LA in March 2026 for approval
- Further consultation will be undertaken with the Local Authority members before determining the next work projects
- Two 6x6 shelters have been delivered to the site and a fee proposal is being sought to certify the plans
- Quotes for water connections have been requested from four suppliers. One of the suppliers has declined to submit a quote for the work. No quotes have been received to date

3. Minjilang

- Site: Decided through community consultation
- Licence to Maintain: Held by WARC
- Declaration: Issued by the Northern Territory Government as a Community Cemetery
- Construction has commenced with Scope 1 works 70% complete
- 6x6m Shelter has been delivered. Contractor will arrange for drawings to be certified

4. Warruwi

- Site: Boundaries to be determined via results of ground penetrating radar
- Licence to Maintain: Draft issued for site 24 October 2025
- Ground penetrating radar (GPR) works in Warruwi completed with results received by WARC 4 September 2025
- Community consultation is to be undertaken for input on design

LEGISLATION AND POLICY

Local Government Act 2019

Burials and Cremations Act 2022

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Per Community Places for Peoples Grant guidelines.

Per Remote Burials Grant Program guidelines.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report aligns to the following pillars and goals as outlined in the *Regional Plan and Budget*:

PILLAR 1 PARTNERSHIPS, RELATIONSHIPS AND BELONGING

Investing in relationships and partnerships at all levels supports and strengthens community and belonging. We prioritise the value of partnerships and relationships as a key determinant of a happy, strong and thriving community.

Goal 1.1 Community Engagement

Seek out and support diverse perspectives and collaborations with community, community leaders, businesses, agencies and local service providers to enhance community life.

PILLAR 3 SAFETY AND WELLBEING

As an 'Employer of Choice', we provide and promote a positive culture of safety, inclusion and respect. Our people are skilled, informed and have opportunities to grow and develop within our organisation. Services provided to community are professional, impactful, engaging and appropriate to local needs.

Goal 3.1 Cultural Safety

Delivery of actions in the WARC 'Innovate' Reconciliation Action Plan.

PILLAR 4 SERVICE DELIVERY AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

We provide high quality infrastructure and service delivery that meets the unique needs of each community, creates a sense of place and contributes towards promoting a sense of pride in community.

Goal 4.1 Strategic Infrastructure and Asset Management

Strategically manage, maintain and enhance community infrastructure.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

WEST ARNHAM REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 JANUARY 2026

Agenda Reference:	10.10
Title:	Finance Committee Minutes
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

SUMMARY

The unconfirmed minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on Thursday, 18 December 2025 are submitted to Council for noting.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL notes the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on Thursday, 18 December 2025 and reviews the decisions made by the Committee.

BACKGROUND

The Finance Committee Terms of Reference states that the minutes for each Committee meeting will be presented at the next Ordinary Council Meeting for noting.

COMMENT

Nil

LEGISLATION AND POLICY

Section 82 *Local Government Act 2019*.

Council's Scheduling and Conduct of Meetings (Elected, Local Authority and Council Committee Members) Policy.

Finance Committee Terms of Reference

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report is aligned to the following pillars and goals of the *Regional Plan and Budget*:

PILLAR 6 FOUNDATIONS OF GOVERNANCE

Integrity is at the heart of everything we do. We are leaders of best practice and excellence in governance, advocacy, consultation and administration. Our processes, procedures, and policies are ethical and transparent.

Goal 6.3 Council and Local Authorities

Excellence in governance, consultation administration and representation.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 2025-12-18 Finance Committee Meeting Minutes - Unconfirmed [**10.10.1** - 5 pages]



Minutes of the West Arnhem Regional Council Finance Committee Meeting
Thursday, 18 December 2025 at 9:00 am
Council Chambers

1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY AND OPENING OF MEETING

Mayor James Woods declared the meeting open at 9:09am, welcomed all in attendance and did an Acknowledgement of Country.

2 PERSONS PRESENT

ELECTED MEMBERS PRESENT

Chairperson	James Woods (Mayor)
Deputy Mayor	Jacqueline Phillips
Councillor	Mickitja Onus
Councillor	Ralph McCoy

STAFF PRESENT

Chief Executive Officer	Katharine Clare Murray
Director Finance	Jocelyn Nathanael-Walters
Manager Finance	Imran Shajib
Director Technical Services	Grant McKenzie
Acting Director Community and Council Services	Rick Mitchell
Governance Advisor	Debbie Branson

3 APOLOGIES AND ABSENCES

Agenda Reference:	3.1
Title:	Apologies, Leave of Absence and Absence Without Notice
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

The Committee considered a report on Apologies, Leave of Absence and Absence Without Notice.

FC8/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Cr Mickitja Onus
Seconded Deputy Mayor Jacqueline Phillips

THAT THE COMMITTEE:

1. Notes the apology received from Cr Ralph Blyth; and
2. Determines Cr Ralph Blyth is absent with permission of the Committee.

CARRIED

4 ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

Agenda Reference:	4.1
Title:	Acceptance of Agenda
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

The Committee considered a report on Acceptance of Agenda.

FC9/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Mayor James Woods
Seconded Cr Mickitja Onus

THAT THE COMMITTEE accept the agenda papers as circulated for the Finance Committee meeting held on 18 December 2025.

CARRIED

5 DECLARATION OF INTEREST OF MEMBERS OR STAFF

Agenda Reference:	5.1
Title:	Disclosure of Interest of Members or Staff
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

The Committee considered a report on Disclosure of Interest of Members or Staff.

FC10/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Mayor James Woods
Seconded Deputy Mayor Jacqueline Phillips

THAT THE COMMITTEE acknowledge there were no declarations of interest received in relation to the items listed for the Finance Committee meeting held on 18 December 2025.

CARRIED

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Item 6.1 – Finance Committee Meeting Minutes was deferred.

7 ACTION REPORTS

Nil.

8 RECEIVE AND NOTE REPORTS

Agenda Reference:	8.1
Title:	Financial report for period ending 30 November 2025
Author:	Jocelyn Nathanael-Walters, Director Finance

The Committee considered a report on Financial report for period ending 30 November 2025.

FC11/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Mayor James Woods
Seconded Deputy Mayor Jacqueline Phillips

THAT THE COMMITTEE receives and notes the report titled *Financial report for period ending 30 November 2025*.

CARRIED

Agenda Reference:	8.2
Title:	Local Authority Funding - Community Sponsorship
Author:	Jocelyn Nathanael-Walters, Director of Finance

The Committee considered a report on Local Authority Funding - Community Sponsorship.

FC12/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Mayor James Woods
Seconded Cr Micketja Onus

THAT THE COMMITTEE receives and notes the report titled *Local Authority Funding - Community Sponsorship*.

CARRIED

6 CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Agenda Reference:	6.1
Title:	Finance Committee Meeting Minutes – 26 August 2025
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

The Committee considered a report on Finance Committee Meeting Minutes - 26 August 2025.

FC13/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Cr Micketja Onus
Seconded Mayor James Woods

THAT THE COMMITTEE confirm the minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on Tuesday, 26 August 2025 are a true and correct record of the meeting.

CARRIED

9 PROCEDURAL MOTIONS

Agenda Reference:	9.1
Title:	Closure to the Public for the Discussion of Confidential Items
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

The Committee considered a report on Closure to the Public for the Discussion of Confidential Items.

FC14/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Mayor James Woods
Seconded Cr Micketja Onus

THAT pursuant to section 99(2) and 293(1) of the Local Government Act 2019 and section 52 of the Local Government (General) Regulations 2021 the meeting be closed to the public at 9:44am to consider the Confidential items of the Agenda.

CARRIED

10 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

Agenda Reference:	10.1
Title:	Finance Committee Meeting Confidential Minutes - 26 August 2025
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

FC14/2025 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Cr Mickitja Onus
Seconded Deputy Mayor Jacqueline Phillips

THAT the confidential unconfirmed minutes of the Finance Committee held 26 August 2025 are confirmed as a true and correct record of the meeting.

CARRIED

12 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Tuesday, 25 August 2026.

13 MEETING DECLARED CLOSED

Mayor James Woods declared the meeting closed at 9:47am.

This page and the preceding pages are the minutes of the Finance Committee held on Thursday 18 December 2025.

Click [here](#) to view the agenda for the Finance Committee held on Thursday 18 December 2025.

WEST ARNHAM REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 January 2026

Agenda Reference:	10.11
Title:	Human Resource Monthly Report
Author:	Luisa Arango, Human Resources Manager

SUMMARY

This report is to inform Council of the activities and initiatives undertaken by the Human Resources Team.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL receives and notes the report titled *Human Resource Monthly Report*.

BACKGROUND

The Human Resources Team remains committed to fostering a supportive work environment and investing in the professional development of its employees. Through strategic Human Resources initiatives, we aim attract, retain, and develop our talented employees to better serve our communities.

The Human Resources (HR) Team is responsible for council recruitment and retention, employee learning and development, Work Health Safety (WHS) management and payroll. To achieve its human resource management responsibilities under the Local Government Act 2019, in particular section 172, the HR Team has policies and practices in place that give effect to the following principles:

- Selection processes for appointment and promotion that are based on merit and are fair and equitable.
- Employees have reasonable access to training and development and opportunities for advancement and promotion.
- Employees are treated fairly and consistently (not subject to arbitrary or capricious decisions).
- Suitable processes are in place to deal with employment-related grievances.
- Work conditions are required to be safe and healthy.
- Unlawful, or any form of unreasonable or unjustifiable, discrimination against an employee or potential employee is not tolerated.

The HR Team also is required to adhere to Work Health and Safety laws, Fair Work, Australian Taxation and Superannuation legislation.

STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT

Local Government Act 2019 (Act)

Council's Organisational Structure

Council's Budget and Long-Term Financial Plan

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council must maintain an organisational chart showing the council's staff structure, per regulation 6(1)(a) of the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2021*. The Council approved Organisational Structure is used to develop, and later review, the Budget and Long-Term Financial Plan.

The CEO is responsible for the appointment of the council's staff in accordance with a budget allocated to staff expenditure approved by the Council, per section 170 of the Act.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report aligns to the following pillars and goals as outlined in the *Regional Plan and Budget*:

PILLAR 1 PARTNERSHIPS, RELATIONSHIPS AND BELONGING

Investing in relationships and partnerships at all levels supports and strengthens community and belonging. We prioritise the value of partnerships and relationships as a key determinant of a happy, strong and thriving community.

Goal 1.5 Cultural Awareness Training

Develop increased understanding and observation of cultural protocols.

PILLAR 2 INCREASED LOCAL INDIGENOUS EMPLOYMENT

We are committed to investing in and supporting local Indigenous employment. We recognise the instrumental value that Indigenous staff bring to our organisation and the social force that occurs with employment opportunities.

Goal 2.1 Indigenous Employment Framework

Create Council Indigenous employment framework including tailored pathways to employment.

Goal 2.2 Policy and Procedures

Research, review and develop policy to underpin and inform Council's intent and strategy to increase local Indigenous employment.

Goal 2.3 Policy and Procedures

Research, review and develop policy to underpin and inform Council's intent and strategy to increase local Indigenous employment.

PILLAR 3 SAFETY AND WELLBEING

As an 'Employer of Choice', we provide and promote a positive culture of safety, inclusion and respect. Our people are skilled, informed and have opportunities to grow and develop within our organisation. Services provided to community are professional, impactful, engaging and appropriate to local needs.

Goal 3.1 Cultural Safety

Delivery of actions in the WARC 'Innovate' Reconciliation Action Plan.

Goal 3.2 Health and Safety

Staff and public safety is achieved via planning, education and training.

Goal 3.3 Training and Development

Deliver training and development which is effective and culturally appropriate, engaging and increases future employment opportunities and pathways.

Goal 3.4 Community Service Delivery

Provision of high quality, culturally informed programs that support and enhance the safety and wellbeing of community members.

ATTACHMENTS

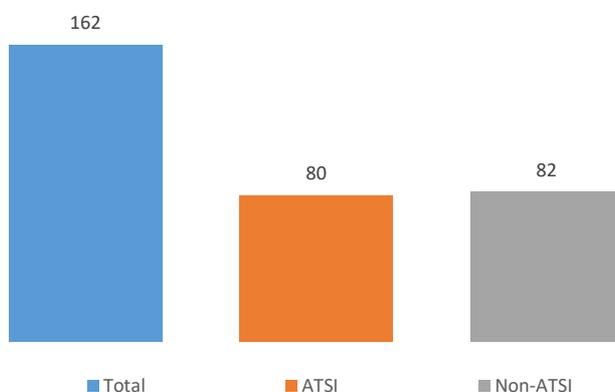
1. 2026.01.28 - HR Report for OCM [**10.11.1** - 7 pages]

Workforce Report – Period 18 October 2025 to 9 January 2026

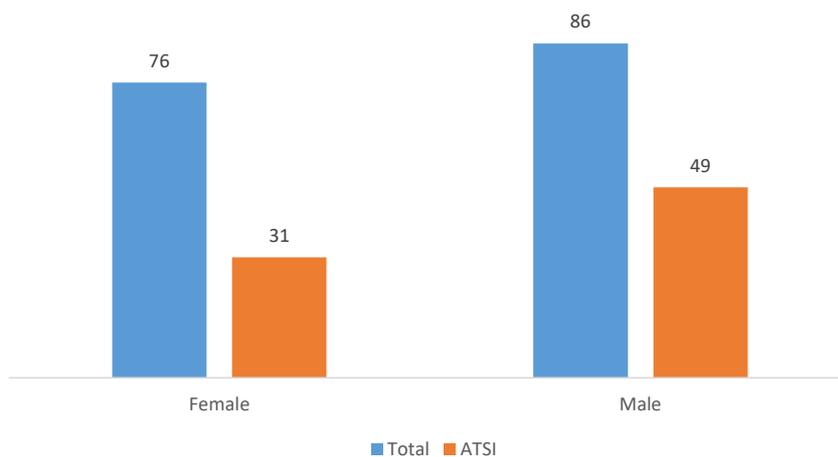
Workforce statistics as of 9 January 2026:

Total Workforce	Turnover	
Total Employees:	162	Staff turnover – Previous for 12 months: 44%
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees	80	
Percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees:	49%	

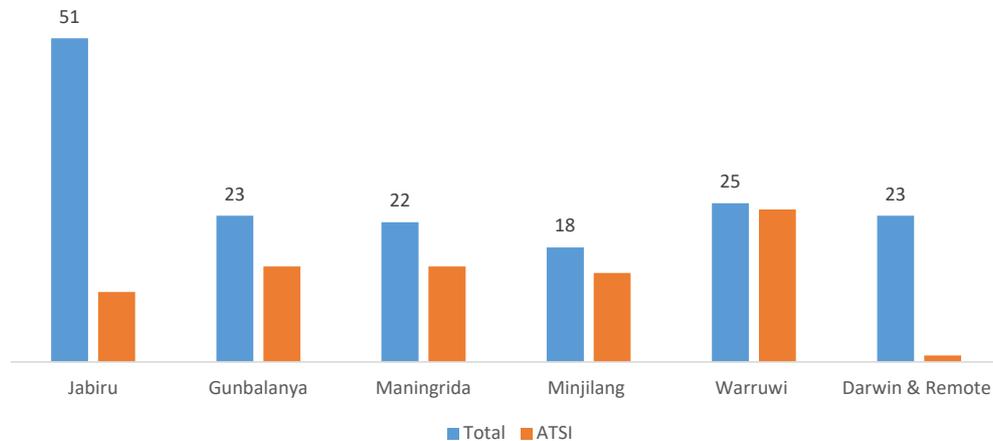
EMPLOYEES NUMBER



EMPLOYEES BY GENDER



EMPLOYEES BY LOCATION



General Team Report

Human Resources and WHS

- WHS Training: Building a strong WHS safety culture at Jabiru Childcare**
 On 6th and 7th of January, the staff at Jabiru Childcare strengthened its WHS awareness and safety culture by completing three-module practical training on chemical safety, contractor management and incident reporting.

Educators learned how to safely use and store hazardous chemicals, read Safety Data Sheets, identify hazards, and use the right PPE; then checked their own storage areas against Council's five-step chemical management process. They also completed contractor management training, focusing on checking risk levels and documentation (insurance, SWMS/JHA, SDS), keeping children away from work areas, and ensuring no unsupervised contractors or loose chemicals are left on site. Finally, staff undertook "report every time" training focused on recognising, classifying and reporting all incidents and near misses, using realistic childcare scenarios.

Together, these three modules reinforced positive, proactive action to strengthen the WHS awareness of our childcare educators, supporting a strong safety culture, and ultimately helping keep children, families and staff safe every day.

- Policies reviewed, updated and approved:**
 Performance Management Policy – approved by CEO 18 December 2025
- Draft First Nations Employment Plan:**
 A refreshed draft of the First Nations Employment Plan has been developed, and staff have been encouraged to contribute to the consultation process by providing feedback on the draft plan, completing a survey, or both. The consultation period was open until 31 October 2025. Feedback is being reviewed and considered to ensure WARC continues to grow, support, and develop a strong, skilled, and capable First Nations workforce.

Recruitment

Engagement with employment programs

- WARC staff are engaging daily with local Community Development and employment programs to identify, encourage and support potential applicants for Council vacancies. This includes offering information about roles, application assistance and pathways for local people to move into entry-level and career positions within Council.

Advertising and promotion activity

- Council continues to promote vacancies through the WARC website, online job application form and social media channels, including Facebook and LinkedIn, reinforcing the message that “West Arnhem Regional Council has jobs available”.
- All communities’ LED screens are also being used for local advertising of current vacancies, ensuring consistent, place-based visibility of job opportunities across the region.

RECRUITMENT PERIOD	18 October 2025 - 9 January 2026
New vacancies over reporting period	16
Positions still available from previous reporting period	21
Position filled	18
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander’s Appointed	10

Vacancies by location as of 9 January 2026

Location	Job Title	Pay	Employment Type	Accom	Closing date
Darwin	Finance Assistant	Level 3	Fixed Term	None	Open until filled
Gunbalanya	Works Assistant	Level 1	Permanent	None	Open until filled
Gunbalanya	Youth, Sport & Recreation Assistant	Level 1	Permanent	None	Open until filled
Gunbalanya	Community Safety Senior Officer	Level 4	Permanent	None	Open until filled
Gunbalanya	Community Safety Officer	Level 2	Permanent	None	Open until filled
Gunbalanya	Centrelink Assistant	Level 1	Permanent	None	Open until filled
Gunbalanya	Community Care Officer x2	Level 2	Permanent	None	Open until filled

Jabiru	Child Care Centre Manager	Level 8	Permanent	✓	28 Jan 2026
Jabiru	Early Childhood Educational Leader	Level 6	Permanent	✓	Open until filled
Jabiru	Works Officer - MR Licence	Level 3	Permanent	✓	28 Jan 2026
Jabiru	Early Childhood Group Leader	Level 4	Fixed Term	✓	Open until filled
Jabiru	Pool Officer	Level 3	Permanent	✓	Open until filled
Jabiru	Early Childhood Cook and Educator	Level 2	Permanent	None	Open until filled
Jabiru	Early Childhood Educator Assistant	Level 2	Permanent	None	Open until filled
Maningrida	Works Assistants x2	Level 1	Permanent	None	Open until filled
Maningrida	Post and Administration Officer	Level 4	Permanent	✓	Open until filled
Maningrida	Casual Cleaner	Level 1	Casual	None	Open until filled
Maningrida	Youth, Sport & Recreation Assistant	Level 1	Permanent	None	Open until filled
Minjilang	Community Care Officer	Level 1	Permanent	None	Open until filled
Minjilang	Child Care Senior Officer	Level 4	Permanent	✓	Open until filled
Minjilang	Works Officer	Level 2	Permanent	None	Open until filled
Minjilang	Broadcasting Officer	Level 4	Permanent	None	Open until filled
Warruwi	Child Care Senior Officer	Level 4	Permanent	✓	Open until filled
Warruwi	Team Leader Works	Level 5	Permanent	None	Open until filled
Warruwi	Broadcasting Officer	Level 4	Permanent	None	Open until filled

Warruwi	Centrelink Officer	Level 3	Permanent	None	Open until filled
Warruwi	Youth, Sport & Recreation Assistant	Level 1	Permanent	None	Open until filled

Learning and Development Report

CERTIFICATIONS	LOCATIONS & NUMBER STAFF ENROLLED	ATSI PARTICIPATION
Certificate III in Civil Construction RTO: Batchelor Institute Staff in: Works Teams	Jabiru: 5	2 ATSI
	Maningrida: 8	8 ATSI
	Minjilang: 5	5 ATSI
	Warruwi: 10	10 ATSI
	Gunbalanya: 2	1 ATSI
	Total: 30	26 ATSI
Certificate III in Community Services RTO: TBA Staff in: Community Safety and YSR	Jabiru: 2	0 ATSI
	Gunbalanya: 3	2 ATSI
	Maningrida: 1	1 ATSI
	Minjilang: 5	5 ATSI
	Warruwi: 7	7 ATSI
	Total: 17	15 ATSI
Certificate II in Individual Support RTO: Response Employment & Training Staff in: Community Care	Warruwi: 2	2 ATSI
	Minjilang: 2	2 ATSI
	Gunbalanya: 2	1 ATSI
	Total: 6	5 ATSI
Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care RTO: Alana Kaye / Batchelor Institute Staff in: Child Care	Minjilang: 2	2 ATSI
	Jabiru: 2	0 ATSI
	Total: 4	2 ATSI

Other training activities carried out between 18 October 2025 and 9 January 2026

1. Growth and Wellbeing Webinar series

Topic 4: Leading Organisational Change

Audience: Managers and Supervisors via Teams

Date: Tuesday 11 November 2025

2. HR Fundamentals 2 – Working Well together

Audience: All staff

Date: Thursday 30 October 2025

3. Mandatory Reporting and Child Abuse Prevention Session

- Delivered on Friday 9 January via Teams
- Total 30 / ATSI 19 / Non-ATSI 11

Work Health Safety

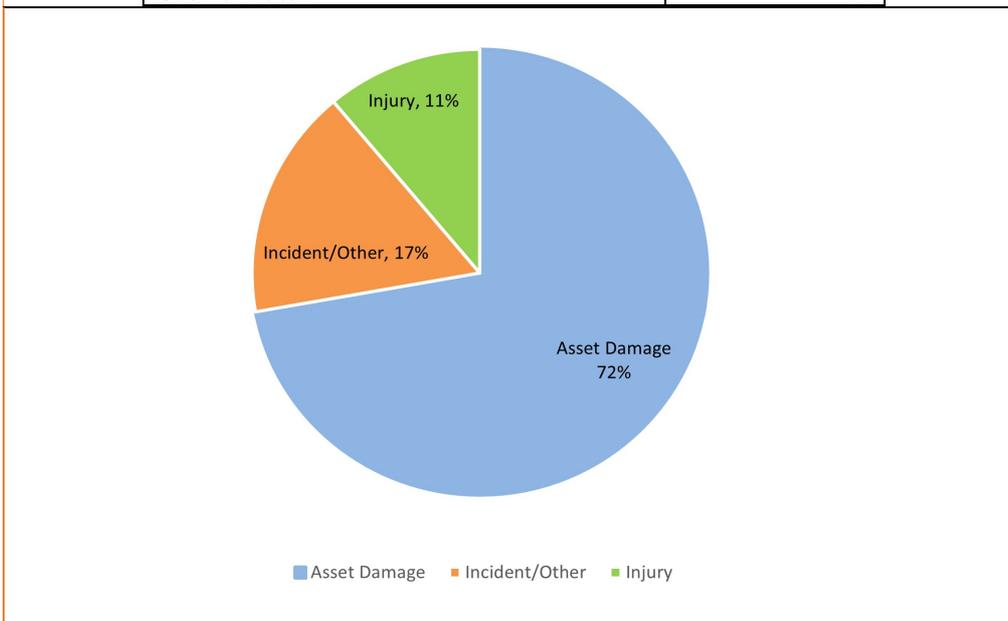
This table outlines the progress we have made in enhancing our safety measures across various areas.

RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS		DATES
Lucidity Software Usage and Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource Enhancement: Inspection Dashboard updated for the new year 2026 	Ongoing
Policy and Compliance	<p>Projects completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aerodrome reporting officer (ARO) Work WHS Management Plan Draft. Review as requested of the administrative documentation for the Fireworks (Maningrida NYE Event) 2025. Childcare Asbestos Sand National recall. <p>Risk Assessments and Project Reviews:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1x Risk Assessment ARO Work all communities 1x Risk Assessment Australia Day 2026 Jabiru 1x Risk Assessment Australia Day 2026 Gunbalanya 1x Risk Assessment Australia Day 2026 Minjilang 1x Risk Assessment Australia Day 2026 Maningrida 1x Risk Assessment Australia Day 2026 Waruwi Road Hazard signs for Minjilang ordered and supplies to the community 1x MANINGIDA Risk Assessment - MGD Changerooms – Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cyclone Season Preparedness 	<p>16.12.2025 Sent for review 12.12.2025</p> <p>02.12.2025</p> <p>Completed</p>
WHS Training	<p>Childcare Jabiru Focused WHS training and “report every time” culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All educators have completed three practical WHS modules: Chemical Management, Contractor Safety, and Incident, Injury and Near Miss, using WARC training resources tailored to childcare scenarios. Staff practiced applying the Incident, Injury and Near Miss Procedure (classifying events, linking them to reporting timeframes, completing the Incident/Injury Report Form, and using the four-step first response ASSESS – REMOVE – FIRST AID – CALL with scene preservation for any notifiable incident), reinforcing a strong “report every time” mindset 	06 -07 January 2026

	and earlier escalation of hazards and near misses.	
Site Visits	Jabiru: Childcare Jabiru Focused WHS training and “report every time” culture Cyclone Fina Post Clean up on the ground WHS Support Minjilang: National Safe Work Month Risk Assessment Training	06 -07 January 2026 25.11.2025 30.10.2025

OTHER ACTIVITIES		DATES
Site Visits	Jabiru	06 -07 January 2026
	Minjilang	30.10.2025

WHS INCIDENTS		
WARC Incidents		
18 October 2025 to 9 January 2026		
Type		Number
Damage to Assets		9
Incident/Near Miss/ Other		4
Injury		1
Grand Total		14



WEST ARNHAM REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 2026-01-28

Agenda Reference:	10.12
Title:	Community and Council Services Report
Author:	Fiona Ainsworth, Director Community and Council Services

SUMMARY

This report is presented to the Council to provide an overview of community and council services delivered across the West Arnhem Regional Council (WARC) locations, for the reporting period of **01 November 2025 – 31 December 2025**.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL receives and notes the report entitled Community and Council Services Report.

BACKGROUND

High level operational figures are provided to ensure transparency, communication, and insight are provided to elected members.

COMMENT

1. Business and Commercial Services

1.1. Aerodrome Reporting Officer (ARO) Services (Gunbalanya, Maningrida, Minjilang, Warruwi)

Total number of Care Flight callouts that occurred:

Community	October	November	December	Year to date
Gunbalanya	4	4	3	14
Maningrida	10	4	11	49
Minjilang	1	1	0	4
Warruwi	0	0	0	0

Current ARO-trained staff available across the region:

- Gunbalanya: 3 (including the Senior Works Team Leader)
- Maningrida: 4 (including the Council Services Manager (CSM) for emergencies only)
- Minjilang: 2 (including the Council Services Manager (CSM) for emergencies only)
- Warruwi: 2
- Jabiru: 1 (Contracts Coordinator)

1.2. Centrelink Services (Gunbalanya, Jabiru, Minjilang, Warruwi)

All Centrelink services were closed 25 – 31 December 2025. Other closures for the reporting period:

Community	Date	Reason for closure
Gunbalanya	19.11	Technical problems
	05.12 11:30am onwards	End of year staff Christmas party
Jabiru	04.12, 05.12 & 15.12	Staff shortages

Warruwi	03.11 & 04.11	Incident in Community
	21.11	Cyclone Fina
	05.12 11:30am onwards	Staff Christmas party
	15.12-17.12 & 22.12-31.12	Staff availability
Minjilang	14.11	Sorry business
	21.11	Cyclone Fina
	15.12-09.01	Self-serve (Centrelink officer holidays)

1.3. Post Office Services

Total amount of post received and delivered (kg):

Community	October	November	December	Year to date
Gunbalanya	1,510.93	1,356.54	1,367.51	8,149.51 kg
Maningrida	5,389.5	3,620.9	4,824.25	28,356.65 kg
Minjilang	329.36	256	256	1,604.36 kg
Warruwi	595	246	427	2,445 kg
Jabiru	7,900	7,930.2	8,190.3	51,182.4 kg

1.4. Power Water Services (Gunbalanya, Maningrida, Minjilang, Warruwi)

	October	November	December	Year to date
Total number of new Services Requests (SR) received:	69	23	29	287

1.5. Grants

Refer to the separate Finance Report.

1.6. Tenancy

	October	November	December	Year to date
Number of new tenants	4	4	1	14
Number of vacating tenants	2	2	1	19

	Gunbalanya	Jabiru	Maningrida	Minjilang	Warruwi
Current total number of properties under refurbishment	0 552 finished in November	2 1 Maranta & 3 Frew	0	0	0

2. Community Services

2.1. Broadcasting (Gunbalanya, Maningrida, Minjilang, Warruwi)

Total number of Top End Aboriginal Bush Broadcasting Association (TEABBA) on-air hours:

Community	October	November	December	Year to date
Gunbalanya	46	38.4	43.2hrs	239.6
Maningrida	0	0	8	8
Warruwi	0	0	0	0
Minjilang	0	0	0	0

- Gunbalanya's Broadcasting Officer continues to deliver a reliable and informative local service in partnership with the Top End Aboriginal Bush Broadcasting Association (TEABBA).
- Maningrida's Broadcasting Officer was available for minimum shifts in December.
- No hours recorded for Minjilang and Warruwi. Recruitment is ongoing for a part-time broadcaster in both communities.

2.2. Community Care (Aged Care – Gunbalanya, Jabiru, Minjilang, Warruwi)

Number of Aged Care recipients by community as of 31.12.25:

Community	CHSP	HCP/SAH
Kakadu	8	1
Gunbalanya	6	10
Minjilang	1	2
Warruwi	2	0
Total	17	13

Total meals provided:

Community	October (HCP/CHSP)	November (SAH/CHSP)	December (SAH/CHSP)	Year to date (SAH/CHSP)
Gunbalanya	592	500	558	3,056
Jabiru	270	206	236	1,308
Minjilang	56	48	50	514
Warruwi	110	82	60	672

2.3. Community Safety (Night Patrol – Gunbalanya, Minjilang & Warruwi)

Number of nights Night Patrol operated:

Community	October	November	December	Year to date
Gunbalanya	0	10	14	24
Minjilang	23	20	20	127
Warruwi	19	17	17	117

- Gunbalanya Community Safety services continued to operate with limited capacity during the reporting period. The Community Safety Senior Officer position in Gunbalanya remains vacant and is currently advertised.
- Night Patrol services in Minjilang operated on all available nights during the reporting period. Holiday periods saw additional pressure, as charter flights brought more alcohol into the community, contributing to weekend brawls and general disturbance. Suicide prevention also remained a major focus of the team’s work.
- Patrol continuity in Warruwi was affected on a small number of nights during the reporting period due to staff unavailability and public holidays, however the team continued to engage consistently with residents and support local safety throughout their operating hours.

2.4. Early Learning Centres (Jabiru Childcare Centre, Minjilang & Warruwi Creches)

Total attendance at the Early Learning Centres:

Community	October	November	December	Year to date
Jabiru	235	205	145	1,259
Minjilang	65	59	28	456
Warruwi (Closed since December 2024)	0	0	0	0

Total closures at the Early Learning Centres:

Community	October	November	December	Year to date
Jabiru	0	0	8	9
Minjilang	10	10	18	54
Warruwi (Closed since December 2024)	Closed all days	Closed all days	Closed all days	Closed all days

New enrollments at the Community Creches:

Community	October	November	December	Year to date
Minjilang	2	0	0	3
Warruwi (Closed since December 2024)	0	0	0	0

- Mayor, CEO and Director have approved for a Community Engagement activity in Warruwi with Stakeholders and community, to discuss their requirements for early years education. Based on Traditional Owner and Local Government feedback, this meeting will be held 29.01.26. Mayor, Deputy Mayor and CEO will be in attendance.
- The Warruwi Creche remained closed for the reporting period. The Senior Child Care position in Warruwi is advertised and will remain open until the position is filled.
- Throughout December, staff focus in Minjilang was Christmas activities. End of year home packages of the children’s work will be given to children’s parents and/or guardians.

- There was some damage to the outdoor area of the Minjilang Creche in November during Cyclone Fina. Shed, fence, and gate needed to be repaired or replaced. CSM organised for a quote, which has been sent to the funder via Grants.



Jabiru Early Learning Center Christmas Party and Graduation

2.5. National Disability Insurance Scheme (Gunbalanya, Jabiru, Minjilang, Warruwi)

Number of National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) participants receiving services as of 31.12.25:

	Gunbalanya	Jabiru	Minjilang	Warruwi	Total
NDIS Participants receiving services	14	2	0	2	18

Total meals provided:

Community	October	November	December	Year to date
Gunbalanya	362	352	382	2,340
Jabiru	104	88	92	426
Minjilang	0	0	0	0
Warruwi	62	92	106	1,288

- There are currently no participants registered with Council for services in Minjilang.

2.6. National Disability Insurance Agency

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) Remote Community Connector (RCC) based in Jabiru. Meetings and engagement across the region; as follows:

	October	November	December	Year to date
Community and Stakeholder Engagement Activities	0	0	38	141
Participant Check-In	0	0	0	58
Access Request Forms prepared for potential NDIS Participants	0	0	0	20
Service Provider Visits	0	0	0	17
NDIA Supported Visit	0	0	0	2

Number of other Activities Agreed to By Agency	0	0	0	2
Community Visits	0	0	1	7

- Nil data for October and November, as the vacant Remote Community Connector position meant limited engagement with community and stakeholders.
- Remote Community Connector joined 08.12.25 and since has completed all NDIA training modules, engaged with key stakeholders for introduction, visited Gunbalanya to engage with NDIS participants and assisted with Community Care, worked closely with NDIA Top End Remote Team to gain thorough understanding of role and expectations and completed Food Safety and Hygiene training.



Gunbalanya Christmas Celebration - Aged Care & NDIS



Kakadu Christmas Celebration - Aged Care & NDIS

2.7. Sports and Recreation

Total attendance at the Sports and Recreation programs:

	October	November	December	Year to date
Gunbalanya	140	412	1095	3,254
Maningrida	2029	1880	835	7,322
Minjilang	244	349	685	2,686
Waruwi	0	0	150	1,118
Jabiru	95	320	68	2,147

During the reporting period:

- A structured school holiday program ran in Gunbalanya from 15.12.25 to 02.01.26, which was delivered jointly with Adjumarllarl Aboriginal Corporation.
- Sport and Recreation supported whole-of-community events in Gunbalanya, contributing to Christmas party and carols.
- In Jabiru, the Sport and Recreation team delivered daily after-school activities throughout November, adapting programs to the wet season.
- Additional highlights in Jabiru, included Monday pool sessions, delivered in partnership with Stars and Clontarf, a popular slip 'n slide event at Magela Oval, and a skills-based NT Tennis Australia clinic.
- After-school Youth, Sport and Recreation activities continued through December in Jabiru, up to the last day of term, before transitioning directly into the school holiday program.



Sports and Recreation events in Jabiru throughout November and December

- A major highlight for November in Minjilang, was a community basketball game and BBQ on 07.11.25, delivered in partnership with the Army.
- A Minjilang Community Christmas cook-up at the Recreation Hall was well received.
- AFLNT partnered with Youth, Sport and Recreation throughout the holidays, running afternoon drills and matches on the Minjilang oval.



A highlight for Minjilang was a basketball game and BBQ, delivered in partnership with the Army

- Warruwi Sport and Recreation services were significantly impacted in November and December due to staff shortages.
- A New Year’s Eve community event was successfully delivered and included the lucky door prize and the provision of food as part of the celebrations.
- The opening of the new \$4.6 million grandstand and changerooms on 13.11.25 attracted around 300 community members and key dignitaries in Maningrida.
- The AFL 20-week competition naturally slowed over the school holiday period but continued to run, with committed participants attending training, skills sessions and informal games to maintain momentum and engagement.
- A targeted school holiday program was also delivered in partnership with Njmarleya and the Yellow Shirts team
- November featured several key initiatives, including a Sydney Swans visit in Maningrida.



Sydney Swans “Kick the Habit” visit from 12–16 November in Maningrida.

3. Council Services

3.1. Aquatic Centres (Jabiru, Maningrida)

Total attendance at the Aquatic Centres:

Community	October	November	December	Year to date
Maningrida	1,454	636	1,250	6,537
Jabiru	853	649	368	4,761

- Attendance numbers down in Maningrida in November, due to one week closure (staff availability), cyclone preparations for Tropical Cyclone Fina and closure due to regular chemical order not arriving on Barge due to Tropical Cyclone Fina.

3.2. Library (Jabiru only)

Total attendance at the library:

Community	October	November	December	Year to date
Jabiru	254	218	139	1,404

- After school activities at the library continue to run throughout the reporting period.

3.3. Community Works

- Pre and post cyclone clean up continues around Gunbalanya.
- Blades on mowers are having to be replaced often, as Pigs are destroying grassy areas in Gunbalanya along Billabong and around the community.
- Pre-cyclone cleanup took place in Maningrida in November, in preparation for expected cyclone impact.
- Chainsaw and Maintenance training took place from 01.12.25-05.12.25.



Chainsaw / Small Engine Training - December 2025 in Maningrida

- An abandoned car and trees were removed off the roads in Jabiru across the reporting period.
- Tropical Cyclone Fina created issues in Minjilang. This led to a lot of mowing and tree removals in November. A further 24 truckloads of Cyclone debris were removed from the community in December.
- Certificate 3 in Civil Construction Training is underway in Minjilang.

- The backup road to the Airstrip was cleaned after the cyclone, in preparation for the mud flats becoming impassable.
- Open spaces in Warruwi were cleared up in November, ready for the wet season.
- The washouts towards barge landing were repaired, in preparation for the cyclone season.



Warruwi Chainsaw Course

3.4. Community Wins

- New Years Eve fireworks display went off without a hitch in Maningrida, even rain failed to dampen the expectation and enthusiasm of hearty locals.



- Sydney Swans “Kick the Habit” In Maningrida from 12.11.25 - 16.11.26. YSR teams from Jabiru and Gunbalanya flew in to support the Sydney Swans event. The Sydney Swans also visited Jabiru, running footy clinics and provided educational talks about the dangers of smoking.

- Grandstand & Changerooms Opening – 13.11.25 in Maningrida. Around 300 community members joined dignitaries, including Hon Marion Scrymgour MP, Hon Jinson Charles MLA, Hon Manuel Brown MLA and Mayor James Woods to open the new \$4.6m facility.



- The Childcare Centre in Jabiru has been building greater relationships with Caulfield College, as their students came to visit Jabiru twice during the reporting period, and had a fantastic time.



- A New Year's Eve community event was successfully delivered in Warruwi, drawing strong attendance and positive feedback from residents, who particularly appreciated the lucky door prize and the provision of food as part of the celebrations.





- Gunbalanya had a visit from Santa, via helicopter on 04.12.25, bringing Christmas joy to the community, despite the closed crossing.



- Sport and Recreation in Gunbalanya worked closely with Adjumarllarl Aboriginal Corporation to create and deliver a wide range of activities to maximise opportunities for children, with food also made available to participants.



- The Army basketball games held on 07.11.25 in Minjilang at the basketball court, was a highlight for Minjilang. The event included a BBQ.



4. Technical Services

Refer to the separate Technical Services Project Report.

STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT

Not applicable.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report aligns to the following pillars and goals as outlined in the *Regional Plan and Budget*:

PILLAR 1 PARTNERSHIPS, RELATIONSHIPS AND BELONGING

Investing in relationships and partnerships at all levels supports and strengthens community and belonging. We prioritise the value of partnerships and relationships as a key determinant of a happy, strong and thriving community.

Goal 1.1 Community Engagement

Seek out and support diverse perspectives and collaborations with community, community leaders, businesses, agencies and local service providers to enhance community life.

Goal 1.3 Communication

Deliver dynamic communication which is culturally informed and appropriate, engaging and relevant to the interests of Council.

Goal 1.4 Community Events

Deliver cultural, civic and sporting events which engage and unite the community.

Goal 1.6 Youth Engagement

Deliver diverse, targeted programs and events which actively empower and engage young people as valuable partners in decision-making which effects them.

PILLAR 3 SAFETY AND WELLBEING

As an 'Employer of Choice', we provide and promote a positive culture of safety, inclusion and respect. Our people are skilled, informed and have opportunities to grow and develop within our organisation. Services provided to community are professional, impactful, engaging and appropriate to local needs.

Goal 3.4 Community Service Delivery

Provision of high quality, culturally informed programs that support and enhance the safety and wellbeing of community members.

PILLAR 6 FOUNDATIONS OF GOVERNANCE

Integrity is at the heart of everything we do. We are leaders of best practice and excellence in governance, advocacy, consultation and administration. Our processes, procedures and policies are ethical and transparent.

Goal 6.3 Council and Local Authorities

Excellence in governance, consultation administration and representation.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

WEST ARNHem REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 January 2026

Agenda Reference:	10.13
Title:	Northern Territory Electoral Commission - West Arnhem Regional Council Election Report
Author:	Katharine Murray, Chief Executive Officer

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with the final 2025 Local Government General Election and 2025 Local Government Supplementary Election report from the Northern Territory Electoral Commission.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL receives and notes the report titled *Northern Territory Electoral Commission - West Arnhem Regional Council Election Report*.

BACKGROUND

The Northern Territory 2025 Local Government General Election was held on Saturday, 23 August 2025.

Elections included the following positions within West Arnhem Regional Council:

- * Election of Gunbalanya Ward councillors – 3 positions
- * Election of Kakadu Ward councillors – 3 positions
- * Election of Maningrida Ward councillors – 4 positions
- * Election of Minjilang Ward councillor – 1 position
- * Election of Waruwi Ward councillor – 1 position

The Northern Territory 2025 Local Government Supplementary Election was held on Saturday, 29 November 2025.

Elections included the following positions within West Arnhem Regional Council:

- * Election of Kakadu Ward councillor – 1 position
- * Election of Gunbalanya Ward councillor – 1 position

The final report from the Northern Territory Electoral Commission is attached provides information in relation to both elections which includes key dates, enrolment details, public awareness, nominations, election outcomes, financial disclosure, election debrief and election costs.

STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT

Insert text here

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Insert text here

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This report aligns to the following pillars and goals as outlined in the *Regional Plan and Budget*:

PILLAR 6 FOUNDATIONS OF GOVERNANCE

Integrity is at the heart of everything we do. We are leaders of best practice and excellence in governance, advocacy, consultation and administration. Our processes, procedures and policies are ethical and transparent.

Goal 6.3 Council and Local Authorities

Excellence in governance, consultation administration and representation.

ATTACHMENTS

1. West Arnhem Regional Council FINAL report [**10.13.1** - 17 pages]

2025 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS



West Arnhem Regional Council Election Report



ntec.nt.gov.au



Northern Territory Electoral Commission
EVERY vote counts

Document version control

Version Number	Description	Date
1.0	Draft	16/01/2026

Disclaimer

Copyright © 2025. This document may not be reproduced without permission. This document is controlled and has been released electronically. The version the NTEC website is the up to date document. Hard copies are uncontrolled and may not be up to date. Users of hard copies should confirm the revision by comparing it with the electronically controlled version

The latest version is accessible via the NTEC website at ntec.nt.gov.au.

2025 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

2025 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS West Arnhem Regional Council

ELECTION SUMMARY

The 2025 Local Government Elections were the periodic general elections for the Northern Territory's local government councils, held every 4 years. The general elections included:

- 51 elections
- 138 elected positions
- 15 local government councils

The general elections for **WEST ARNHEM REGIONAL COUNCIL** included the following elections:

- Election of Gunbalanya Ward councillors – 3 positions
- Election of Kakadu Ward councillors – 3 positions
- Election of Maningrida Ward councillors – 4 positions
- Election of Minjilang Ward councillor – 1 position
- Election of Warruwi Ward councillor – 1 position

KEY DATES

Event	Date
Nominations open	Friday 11 July
Close of electoral roll	Tuesday 22 July
Nominations close	Thursday 31 July, 12 noon
Declaration of nominations	Friday 1 August
Postal mail out commences	Monday 4 August
Early and mobile voting commences	Monday 11 August
Election day	Saturday 23 August
Deadline for receipt of postal votes	Friday 5 September
Distribution of preferences (final count)	
Declaration of election results	Monday 8 September
Campaign donation returns due	Saturday 1 November

ENROLMENT

There were 4,422 West Arnhem Regional Council electors eligible to vote in the 2025 Local Government Elections.

ntec.nt.gov.au



Northern Territory
Electoral Commission
EVERY vote counts

2025 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

This is an increase of 844 electors (or 23.6%) from the previous general elections held in 2021.

Elector numbers by ward:

- Gunbalanya Ward: 1,035 (up 22.5% from 2021)
- Kakadu Ward: 587 (up 11.4% from 2021)
- Maningrida Ward: 2,241 (up 27.8% from 2021)
- Minjilang Ward: 202 (up 25.5% from 2021)
- Warruwi Ward: 357 (up 22.3% from 2021)

PUBLIC AWARENESS

Campaign overview

The 2025 Local Government Elections public awareness campaign unfolded in 3 phases: encouraging enrolment, promoting voter education and empowerment, and issuing a final call to action for Territorians to vote.

Running from 1 July until the declaration of results on 8 September, the campaign used TV, radio, digital and social media, signage, letterbox drops and print to raise election awareness.

The campaign aimed to equip all eligible voters with the knowledge and confidence to participate, while placing special emphasis on disengaged groups and those facing barriers including:

- seniors
- electors with English as an additional language
- electors living in remote communities.

Website

The NTEC launched the election event webpage in June as the central hub for election information. During the campaign, the site recorded 883,018 views (71.3% from mobile devices and over 10,000 referrals from Meta platforms).

Radio

The local radio campaign reached a total of 216,900 listeners across all phases, on a high rotation during peak listening times and delivered excellent cost efficiency.

Print

With a large decline in print media options since the 2017 general elections, newspaper advertising for the 2025 Local Government Elections was largely restricted to statutory advertising requirements as prescribed under the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2021. These advertisements ran in the NT News and the Centralian Today.

ntec.nt.gov.au



Northern Territory
Electoral Commission
EVERY vote counts

2025 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

However, further publications with a digital presence such as the Katherine Times was also engaged for location targeted aspects of the campaign.

Council engagement pack

Acknowledging the key role councils play in supporting elections, the NTEC developed a council resource pack to support voter, candidate and council staff information sharing and engagement. Councils were consulted on the draft resource pack and encouraged to provide images unique to each council area to be incorporated in the final version of the engagement pack. The council engagement pack included electronic resources such as social media content, videos, posters, flyers, email templates, forms and handbooks.

Digital

The digital campaign reached 1.21million people with 288,000 views and 8,073 clicks. "Vote" advertisements had the biggest reach and lowest cost, while "Educate" and "Enrol" advertisements got the highest click rates.

Facebook in-stream videos generated the most clicks, while YouTube engagement was also strong with a 55% view-through rate.

Social media

From 1 July to 23 August, the NTEC drove a Territory-wide social media campaign.

Paid ads delivered key messages with over 2 million impressions, while organic posts on LinkedIn, Instagram and Facebook tackled misinformation and built community engagement.

Councils were also encouraged to share ready-made content on nominations, enrolment and voting, ensuring consistent local messaging. All activity lead back to the NTEC website as the single source of trusted election information.

Emails/SMS

Direct messaging was a key communication tool during the elections, targeting electors who had provided email or mobile details through enrolment.

Messages were delivered via email and SMS on enrolment, early voting, remote mobile voting, and election day reminders.

A total of 179,146 SMS and 104,254 emails were sent to electors across the Territory.

Corflute signs

NTEC branded corflute signs were distributed to councils to install to raise community awareness.

Posters

Electronic posters tailored and culturally appropriate were distributed to councils and community organisations to distribute aiming to engage diverse groups, including people with

ntec.nt.gov.au



2025 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

disabilities, older voters and English as an additional language speakers, ensuring consistent communication across all audiences.

Call centre

The NTEC call centre operated from 7 July to 23 August 2025, staffed by 3 officers who assisted electors with a wide range of enquiries. Most calls related to voting, enrolment, or lodging excuses for not voting.

In addition, the NTEC received significant volumes of enquiries via email, Facebook, and in person at its Darwin and Alice Springs offices.

NOMINATIONS

Nominations for West Arnhem Regional Council elections included:

- 12 accepted nominations across all wards
- no rejected or withdrawn nominations.

Election	Accepted nominations (candidates)
GUNBALANYA WARD (3 vacancies)	Henry YATES Ralph McCOY
KAKADU WARD (3 vacancies)	Ralph Francis BLYTH Mickitja ONUS
MANINGRIDA WARD (4 vacancies)	Jacqueline PHILLIPS James WOODS Jermaine NAMANURKI Joseph DIDDO Monica WILTON
MINJILANG WARD (1 vacancy)	Steven NABALMARDA
WARRUWI WARD (1 vacancy)	James MARRAWAL Jamie MILPURR

Age and gender of candidates:

GENDER	Male	Female
All wards	10	2

AGE	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
All wards	-	1	2	3	5	1

Note: Other demographic questions are not asked for on nomination forms

ntec.nt.gov.au



Northern Territory
Electoral Commission
EVERY vote counts

2025 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

VOTING SERVICES

Postal voting

• Postal vote applications received	27
• Postal votes issued	11
• Postal vote applications rejected	16
• Postal votes returned	9
• Postal votes admitted to the count	5
• Postal votes rejected	4

Note: the number of votes admitted does not always equate to the number of votes recorded as postal votes in results webpage, as returned envelopes may be missing ballot paper or may include missorted ballot papers.

The reasons for rejecting postal vote applications were:

- Uncontested election/no election (15)
- Undeliverable address (1)

The reasons for rejecting (returned) postal votes were:

- Ordinary vote issued (3)
- Postal vote certificate not signed (1)

Remote mobile voting

Mobile Team West Arnhem 1 – Week 1:

Date	Time	Community	Location	Votes issued
Tuesday 12 August	11:30am – 12:30am	Ji-Malawa	Community	26
	1:30pm – 2:30pm	Ji-Marda	Community	
Wednesday 13 August	9:00am – 10:00am	Mumeka	Community	11
	11:00am – 12:00pm	Yikarrakkal	Community	
	1:15pm – 2:15pm	Kolorbidahdah	Community	
Thursday 14 August	9:00am – 10:00am	Buluhkaduru	Community	42
	11:00am – 12:00pm	Bolkdjam	Community	
	1:15pm – 2:15pm	Gochan Jiny-Jirra	Community	
	3:15pm – 4:15pm	Ji-Bena	Community	
Friday 15 August	9:00am – 10:00am	Maningrida	Mala'la Aged Care	34

ntec.nt.gov.au



Northern Territory
Electoral Commission
EVERY vote counts

2025 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

	12:00pm – 1:00pm	Gamardi	Community	
TOTAL				113

Note the number of votes issued does not always equate to the number of votes counted

Mobile Team West Arnhem 1 – Week 2:

Date	Time	Community	Location	Votes issued
Monday 18 August	10:00am – 5:00pm	Maningrida	New Sub	50
Tuesday 19 August	8:30am – 4:30pm	Maningrida	MPA Motel	35
Wednesday 20 August	8:30am – 4:30pm	Maningrida	MPA Motel	66
Thursday 21 August	8:30am – 4:30pm	Maningrida	MPA Motel	27
TOTAL				178

Note the number of votes issued does not always equate to the number of votes counted

Mobile Team West Arnhem 2:

Date	Time	Community	Location	Votes issued
Friday 15 August	9:30am – 2:30pm	Warruwi	Council office	43
TOTAL				43

Note the number of votes issued does not always equate to the number of votes counted

Early voting

Early voting centre	Votes issued
Alice Springs	-
Casuarina	13
Coolalinga	2
Darwin	4
Katherine	-
Palmerston	-
TOTAL	19

*Note the number of votes issued does not always equate to the number of votes counted

Urban mobile voting

- Number of votes issued by the Darwin urban mobile team 17

ntec.nt.gov.au



Northern Territory
Electoral Commission
EVERY vote counts

2025 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

Election day voting

Election day voting centre	Votes issued
Alice Springs	-
Casuarina	4
Coolalinga	3
Darwin	1
Katherine	-
Palmerston	1
TOTAL	9

Note the number of votes issued does not always equate to the number of votes counted

Declaration voting

- Total number of declaration votes issued 3
- Declaration votes admitted to the count 2
- Declaration votes rejected from the count 1

The reasons for rejecting declaration votes were:

- Enrolled in a different council/ward area (1)

ELECTION OUTCOMES

Results: Election of councillors – Gunbalanya Ward

- There were 2 nominations for 3 councillor vacancies
- Elected councillors: Henry YATES, Ralph McCOY
- The remaining vacancy was filled at the 2025 Local Government Supplementary Elections (held 29 November 2025)

Results: Election of councillors – Kakadu Ward

- There were 2 nominations for 3 councillor vacancies
- Elected councillors: Ralph Francis BLYTH, Micketja ONUS
- The remaining vacancy was filled at the 2025 Local Government Supplementary Elections (held 29 November 2025)

ntec.nt.gov.au



Northern Territory
Electoral Commission
EVERY vote counts

2025 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

Results: Election of councillors – Maningrida Ward

Candidate	First preference votes
Jacqueline PHILLIPS	130
James WOODS	94
Jermaine NAMANURKI	15
Joseph DIDDO	47
Monica WILTON	22
TOTAL	308

- Quota required to be elected: 62
- Elected councillors: Jacqueline PHILLIPS, James WOODS, Joseph DIDDO, Jermaine NAMANURKI

Results: Election of councillors – Minjilang Ward

- There was one nomination for 1 councillor vacancy
- Elected councillor: Steven NABALMARDA

Results: Election of councillors – Warruwi Ward

Candidate	First preference votes
James MARRAWAL	51
Jamie MILPURR	16
TOTAL	67

- Quota required to be elected: 34
- Elected councillor: James MARRAWAL

Voter turnout

Based on the number of votes counted in the 2 contested elections, voter turnout was 15.3%. This compares to 27.6% overall turnout in the previous general elections in 2021 when all 5 wards were contested.

Voter turnout by ward:

- Maningrida Ward: 14.7% (19.7% in 2021)
- Warruwi Ward: 18.8% (45.9% in 2021)

ntec.nt.gov.au



Northern Territory
Electoral Commission
EVERY vote counts

2025 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

Informality

Election	No. of candidates	Total votes	Informal votes	%
Maningrida Ward	5	330	22	6.7%
Warruwi Ward	2	67	0	0%

FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE

All candidates in the 2025 Local Government Elections are required to submit a campaign donation return if they received:

- donations of \$200 or more
- loans of \$1,500 or more
- during the disclosure period of 1 July 2024 to 22 September 2025
- with no nil return required if these thresholds were not met.

By the due date of 1 November 2025, no West Arnhem Regional Council candidates had submitted a campaign donation return.

All returns received have been published on the NT Electoral Commission website.

ELECTION DEBRIEF

A post-election review meeting was held Friday 19 December 2025 at the NTEC office.

ELECTION COSTS

Expense category	Estimates	Actuals
Advertising	12,108.32	9,947.41
Corporate	219.56	63.03
Destruction/rubbish removal	192.78	19.12
Information technology	4,641.20	1,676.17
Materials	3,804.97	1,745.99
Postage	2,353.57	1,227.05
Premises	2,098.77	2,126.95
Staff travel/accommodation/reimbursements	17,273.55	4,054.07
Staff wages	62,892.13	38,334.38
Vehicle hire/charter	52,930.17	30,230.35
Sub-total	158,515.02	89,414.52
GST (10%)	15,851.50	8,941.45

ntec.nt.gov.au



Northern Territory
Electoral Commission
EVERY vote counts

2025 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

TOTAL

\$ 174,366.52

\$ 98,355.97

2025 LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUPPLEMENTARY ELECTIONS

Gunbalanya and Kakadu wards

ELECTION SUMMARY

In accordance with Local Government (Electoral) Regulation 73, where there are failed or partially failed elections due to insufficient nominations, a new supplementary election is required to fill any remaining vacancies in the membership of the council.

At the close of nominations for the 2025 Local Government Elections, only 2 nominations were received for the 3 vacancies in both Gunbalanya and Kakadu wards. Therefore, a supplementary election was required for the remaining vacancy in each of these wards.

KEY DATES

Event	Date
Nominations open	Friday 17 October
Close of electoral roll	Tuesday 22 July
Nominations close	Thursday 6 November, 12 noon
Declaration of nominations	Friday 7 November
Postal mail out commences	Monday 10 November
Early and mobile voting commences	Monday 17 November
Election day	Saturday 29 November
Deadline for receipt of postal votes	Friday 12 December
Distribution of preferences (final count)	
Declaration of election results	Monday 15 December
Campaign donation returns due	Saturday 7 February 2026

ENROLMENT

Supplementary elections require that the electoral roll for the original election be used.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

A targeted public awareness campaign was delivered to inform electors of the supplementary elections for Gunbalanya and Kakadu wards.

Promotional activities seeking nominations included:

ntec.nt.gov.au



Northern Territory
Electoral Commission
EVERY vote counts

2025 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

- updates to the NTEC and BushTel websites
- media releases
- publication of statutory notices
- social media posts tagging West Arnhem Regional Council and promoting key election dates.

Election messaging was tailored for remote communities eligible to vote, supported by the production of custom election posters and direct communications outlining key dates and voting requirements. Activities included:

- publication of statutory notices
- media releases
- updates to the NTEC and BushTel websites
- tailored social media messaging
- 8 direct SMS messages issued to residents within Gunbalanya and Kakadu wards.

Due to the impact of Cyclone Fina, scheduled remote mobile voting services were first postponed, then cancelled to ensure the safety of voters and NTEC staff, and were subsequently rescheduled. Updated information was communicated promptly with the assistance of West Arnhem Regional Council via:

- NTEC and BushTel website update
- 2 direct SMS messages to electors
- social media posts tagging West Arnhem Regional Council
- a media release.

NOMINATIONS

Nominations for the Gunbalanya Ward and Kakadu Ward supplementary elections included:

- 4 accepted nominations (2 for each ward)
- one rejected nomination (not enrolled in council area – Kakadu Ward nomination)
- no withdrawn nominations.

Election	Accepted nominations (candidates)
GUNBALANYA WARD (one vacancy)	Daniel SIEBERT Tamar NAWIRRIDJ
KAKADU WARD (one vacancy)	Calvin MURAKAMI Kylie LINDNER

VOTING SERVICES

Postal voting

- Postal vote applications received 66

ntec.nt.gov.au



Northern Territory
Electoral Commission
EVERY vote counts

2025 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

• Postal votes issued	66
• Postal vote applications rejected	0
• Postal votes returned	52
• Postal votes admitted to the count	38
• Postal votes rejected	14

Note: the number of votes admitted does not always equate to the number of votes recorded as postal votes in results webpage, as returned envelopes may be missing ballot paper or may include missorted ballot papers.

The reasons for rejecting (returned) postal votes were:

- Ordinary vote issued (7)
- Postal vote certificate dated after election day (3)
- Postal vote received after deadline (2)
- Returned to sender (2)

Early voting

Early voting centre (Darwin)	TOTAL
Gunbalanya Ward	1
Kakadu Ward	3
TOTAL	4

Note the number of votes issued does not always equate to the number of votes counted

Remote mobile voting

Remote mobile voting services for Gunbalanya and Kakadu wards were originally scheduled to occur from 17 – 22 November 2025 according to the timetable below.

Date	Time	Community	Location
Monday 17 November	10:15am – 11:15am	Mamadawerre	Community
	1:00pm – 2:00pm	Manmoyi	Community
Tuesday 18 November	8:30am – 3:30pm	Gunbalanya	Conference Room
Wednesday 19 November	8:30am – 3:00pm	Gunbalanya	Conference Room
Friday 21 November	11:30am – 12:30pm	Kakadu National Park	Headquarters
	3:00pm – 4:00pm	Mudginberri	Community
Saturday 22 November	8:00am – 3:00pm	Jabiru	Council office

ntec.nt.gov.au



Northern Territory
Electoral Commission
EVERY vote counts

2025 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

The remote voting schedule was amended several times due to weather conditions including heavy rain and Tropical Cyclone Fina. Subsequent access issues resulted in the cancellation of voting services in 3 communities. All amendment decisions were made collaboratively with West Arnhem Regional Council.

Therefore, remote mobile voting services were only provided in the 2 major communities of Gunbalanya and Jabiru, according to the schedule below.

Mobile Team West Arnhem 2:

Date	Time	Community	Location	Votes issued
Wednesday 26 November	9:00am – 3:30pm	Gunbalanya	Conference Room	54
Friday 28 November	11:00am – 5:00pm	Jabiru	Council office	58
Saturday 29 November	8:30am – 1:00pm	Jabiru	Council office	19
TOTAL				149

Note the number of votes issued does not always equate to the number of votes counted
Note ballot papers for both ward elections were issued in each location

ELECTION OUTCOMES

Results: Election of councillor – Gunbalanya Ward

Candidate	First preference votes
Daniel SIEBERT	46
Tamar NAWIRRIDJ	42
TOTAL	88

- Quota required to be elected: 45

Daniel SIEBERT elected.

Results: Election of councillor – Kakadu Ward

Candidate	First preference votes
Calvin MURAKAMI	46
Kylie LINDNER	49
TOTAL	95

- Quota required to be elected: 48

Kylie LINDNER elected.

ntec.nt.gov.au



Northern Territory
Electoral Commission
EVERY vote counts

2025 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

Voter turnout

Based on the number of votes counted, the voter turnout over all was 11.8%.

Voter turnout by ward:

- Gunbalanya Ward: 8.6% (23.8% in 2021)
- Kakadu Ward: 17.4% (46.9% in 2021)

Informality

Election	No. of candidates	Total votes	Informal votes	%
Gunbalanya Ward	2	89	1	1.1%
Kakadu Ward	2	102	7	6.9%

ELECTION COSTS

Expense category	Estimates	Actuals
Advertising	2,229.65	842.51
Corporate	103.18	34.39
Destruction/rubbish removal	103.18	35.87
Information technology	2,579.42	1,694.98
Materials	756.63	609.04
Postage	87.13	117.97
Premises	42.99	23.91
Staff travel/accommodation/reimbursements	2,544.68	1,592.98
Staff wages	14,112.87	13,939.00
Vehicle hire/charter	8,661.82	10,778.94
Sub-total	31,221.55	29,669.60
GST (10%)	3,122.16	2,966.96
TOTAL	\$34,343.71	\$32,636.56

ntec.nt.gov.au



Northern Territory
Electoral Commission
EVERY vote counts



**Northern Territory
Electoral Commission**

EVERY vote counts

ntec@nt.gov.au
1800 698 683
ntec.gov.au

WEST ARNHEM REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 JANUARY 2026

Agenda Reference:	11.1
Title:	Elected Member Questions with or without Notice
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to give Elected Members a forum in which to table items they wish to be debated by Council.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Chairperson invites questions with or without notice from Elected Members.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

WEST ARNHem REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 JANUARY 2026

Agenda Reference:	12.1
Title:	Closure to the Public for the Discussion of Confidential Items
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

SUMMARY

Pursuant to section 99(2) and 293(1) of the *Local Government Act 2019* and regulation 52 of the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2021*, the meeting is to be closed to the public to consider confidential matters.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY

Section 99(2) of the *Local Government Act 2019*

Regulations 51 and 52 of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 2021*

RECOMMENDATION

That pursuant to section 99(2) and 293(1) of the *Local Government Act 2019* and section 52 of the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2021* the meeting be closed to the public at {time} to consider the Confidential items of the Agenda.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

WEST ARNHEM REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING 28 JANUARY 2026

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

The information in this section of the agenda is classed as confidential under section 293(1) of the *Local Government Act 2019* and regulation 52 of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 2021*.

Agenda Reference:	13.1
Title:	Confirmation of Confidential Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

The Report will be dealt with under Section 293(1) of the Local Government Act 2019 and General Regulation 2021 Part (3) Administration - Division 2 Section 51(1)(c)(ii). It contains information that would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to: prejudice the maintenance or administration of the law.

Agenda Reference:	13.2
Title:	Confirmation of Special Council Meeting Minutes
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

The Report will be dealt with under Section 293(1) of the Local Government Act 2019 and General Regulation 2021 Part (3) Administration - Division 2 Section 51(1)(c)(ii). It contains information that would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to: prejudice the maintenance or administration of the law.

Agenda Reference:	13.3
Title:	Confidential Finance Committee Minutes
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

The Report will be dealt with under Section 293(1) of the Local Government Act 2019 and General Regulation 2021 Part (3) Administration - Division 2 Section 51(1)(c)(ii). It contains information that would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to: prejudice in the maintenance or administration of the law.

Agenda Reference:	13.4
Title:	Confidential Action Report
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

The Report will be dealt with under Section 293(1) of the Local Government Act 2019 and General Regulation 2021 Part (3) Administration - Division 2 Section 51(1)(e). It contains information provided to the council on condition that it be kept confidential and would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to be contrary to the public interest.

Agenda Reference:	13.5
Title:	Current Status of Outstanding Regional Land Use Agreements from the Northern Land Council
Author:	Clem Beard, Project Manager

The Report will be dealt with under Section 293(1) of the Local Government Act 2019 and General Regulation 2021 Part (3) Administration - Division 2 Section 51(1)(c)(i). It contains information that would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to: cause commercial prejudice to, or confer an unfair commercial advantage on, any person.

Agenda Reference:	13.6
Title:	Warruwi Local Authority Appointment
Author:	Katharine Murray, Chief Executive Officer

The Report will be dealt with under Section 293(1) of the Local Government Act 2019 and General Regulation 2021 Part (3) Administration - Division 2 Section 51(1)(a). It contains information about the employment of a particular individual as a member of the staff or possible member of the staff of the council that could, if publicly disclosed, cause prejudice to the individual.

Agenda Reference:	13.7
Title:	2025-26 Rates and Charges Payment Plans
Author:	Jocelyn Nathanael-Walters, Director of Finance

The Report will be dealt with under Section 293(1) of the Local Government Act 2019 and General Regulation 2021 Part (3) Administration - Division 2 Section 51(1)(b). It contains information about the personal circumstances of a resident or ratepayer.

Agenda Reference:	13.8
Title:	Determination of Allowances for Members of Local Councils
Author:	Katharine Murray, Chief Executive Officer

The Report will be dealt with under Section 293(1) of the Local Government Act 2019 and General Regulation 2021 Part (3) Administration - Division 2 Section 51(1)(e). It contains information provided to the council on condition that it be kept confidential and would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to be contrary to the public interest.

Agenda Reference:	13.9
Title:	Minjilang Lot 175 - Land Use Agreement
Author:	Clem Beard, Project Manager

The Report will be dealt with under Section 293(1) of the Local Government Act 2019 and General Regulation 2021 Part (3) Administration - Division 2 Section 51(1)(e). It contains information provided to the council on condition that it be kept confidential and would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to be contrary to the public interest.

Agenda Reference: 13.10

Title: Council Issued Credit Cards

Author: Jocelyn Nathanael-Walters, Director of Finance

The Report will be dealt with under Section 293(1) of the Local Government Act 2019 and General Regulation 2021 Part (3) Administration - Division 2 Section 51(1)(c)(iii). It contains information that would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to: prejudice the security of the council, its members or staff.

Agenda Reference:	13.11
Title:	Grants Update
Author:	Jocelyn Nathanael-Walters, Director of Finance

The Report will be dealt with under Section 293(1) of the Local Government Act 2019 and General Regulation 2021 Part (3) Administration - Division 2 Section 51(1)(e). It contains information provided to the council on condition that it be kept confidential and would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to be contrary to the public interest.

Agenda Reference:	13.12
Title:	Jabiru Child Care Centre Roof
Author:	Grant Mckenzie, Director Technical Services

The Report will be dealt with under Section 293(1) of the Local Government Act 2019 and General Regulation 2021 Part (3) Administration - Division 2 Section 51(1)(e). It contains information provided to the council on condition that it be kept confidential and would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to be contrary to the public interest.

Agenda Reference:	13.13
Title:	Jabiru Child Care
Author:	Katharine Murray, Chief Executive Officer

The Report will be dealt with under Section 293(1) of the Local Government Act 2019 and General Regulation 2021 Part (3) Administration - Division 2 Section 51(1)(e). It contains information provided to the council on condition that it be kept confidential and would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to be contrary to the public interest.

Agenda Reference:	13.14
Title:	Chief Executive Officer's Report
Author:	Katharine Murray, Chief Executive Officer

The Report will be dealt with under Section 293(1) of the Local Government Act 2019 and General Regulation 2021 Part (3) Administration - Division 2 Section 51(1)(e). It contains information provided to the council on condition that it be kept confidential and would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to be contrary to the public interest.

14 DISCLOSURE OF CONFIDENTIAL RESOLUTIONS AND RE-ADMITTANCE OF THE PUBLIC

WEST ARNHEM REGIONAL COUNCIL

FOR THE MEETING WEDNESDAY 28 JANUARY 2026

RE-ADMITTANCE OF THE PUBLIC

Agenda Reference:	14.1
Title:	Disclosure of Confidential Resolutions and Re-admittance of the Public
Author:	Debbie Branson, Governance Advisor

The Report will be dealt with under Section 293(1) of the Local Government Act 2019 and General Regulation 2021 Part (3) Administration - Division 2 Section 51(1)(c)(ii). It contains information that would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to: prejudice the maintenance or administration of the law.

15 NEXT MEETING

16 MEETING DECLARED CLOSED