



# **MINUTES**

## **Annual General Meeting of Electors**

### **Tuesday 18 March 2025**

**Time: 5:30pm**

**Location: 13 McGregor Street, PORT HEDLAND WA  
6721**

**Distribution Date: 25 May 2025**

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Mayor

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**8.1 Closure**..... **20**

## 1 Opening of Meeting

The Presiding Member is to declare the meeting open at 5:30pm.

The Presiding Member declared recess at 5:30.

The Presiding Member reconvened the meeting at 5:34.

## 2 Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners and Dignitaries

The Presiding Member acknowledges the Kariyarra people as the Traditional Custodians of the land that we are meeting on and recognises their strength and resilience and pays respect to elders past, present and emerging.

## 3 Recording of Attendance

*Important note: This meeting is being live-streamed and audio recorded to facilitate community participation and for minute-taking purposes, which may be released upon request to third parties. In accordance with Section 6.16 of the Town of Port Hedland Local Law on Standing Orders members of the public are not permitted to use any visual or vocal electronic device or instrument to record the proceedings of any meeting unless that person has been given permission by the Presiding Member to do so. Members of the public are also reminded that in accordance with section 6.17(4) of the Town of Port Hedland Standing Orders Local Law mobile telephones must be switched off and not used during the meeting.*

### 3.1 Attendance

*Scheduled Present:* Mayor Peter Carter

*Scheduled for Attendance:* Mark Dacombe (Interim Chief Executive Officer)  
Tom Kettle (Manager Governance)  
Maree Cutler-Naroba (Senior Governance Advisor)  
Belinda Yull (Governance Support Officer)  
Sophie Marlow (Governance Services Trainee)  
Amy Dalton (Corporate Administration Officer)  
Rhiannon Holmes (Public Affairs Officer)

*Electors in attendance:* Ash Christensen  
Camilo Blanco  
Lorraine Butson  
Adrian McRae  
Roger Higgins  
John Ashenden  
Teresa Ashenden  
Jillian Fisher  
Jan Gillingham  
Sharon Todd

### 3.2 Attendance by Telephone / Instantaneous Communications

Nil

### 3.3 Apologies

Nil

### 3.4 Approved Leave of Absence

Nil

## 4 Response to Previous Questions

### 4.1 Response to Questions taken on notice from Public at the Annual General Meeting of Electors held on 15 May 2024

4.1.1	Jillian Fisher
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*Regarding the Annual Report and Financial Statements:*

*Page 21 - Why are there councillors who were elected in October 2023, actually in the report for FY2022-2023? We have Cr Arentz, Cr Blanco, Cr Butson and Cr Rebello.*

The Acting Chief Executive Officer provided the following further response:

The listed Councillors names have been removed from the Annual Report.

*Can you tell me what position, you don't have to name names, but on page 26, there is a member of your staff who is in the top and earns \$320-329,999? Can you tell me what position that person holds?*

The Acting Chief Executive Officer provided the following further response:

Position confirmed as the Chief Executive Officer. The Western Australian Salaries and Allowances Tribunal determines both local government elected members and CEO allowable remuneration bandings. The Local Government Act Regulations prescribe reporting the total remuneration package for CEO's to also include non-cash benefits, unlike other staff within this table, reporting cash salary only.

*Going into the financial statements, I'll be happy to take this on notice. Looking on page 56 - the 2021-2022 Annual Report, the total comprehensive income for this period was \$14,896,000. If we proceed ahead for the budgeted amount for 2022-2023, on page 19, the total comprehensive income for the year is -\$8,000,073. Now the interesting part is my next figure - it's very confusing, electors are going to have issues following this - so we'll go to the financial year annual report which ends 30th June 2023, and the actual amount for the total comprehensive income for the period \$162,853,060. Can you tell me how we went, in twelve months, from \$14m to \$162m?*

The Director Corporate Services provided the following further response:

As explained in the overview presentation prior on the night, at slide 4, the \$12M payment for the Spoilbank Landside development was a contributing factor. This together with higher than forecast depreciation charges, creating the -\$6M net result for 2022-2023, compared to the budgeted forecast deficit of -\$8M for year, compared to an actual net result of \$14M in 2021-2022.

Then referring to the associate Note 19, it reads "Movement in Revaluation" and details amounts against infrastructure assets (roads, drains, paths etc.). These are non-cash, book entries, to better reflect the value of our community assets and increases are recognised as income according to accounting standards.

4.1.2	Renaë Coles
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*My first question is based around the opening statements on the Town of Port Hedland being the town of liveability and inclusivity. I had someone stop and have a chat with me in regard to our Bowls Club, and not being able to use this anymore. With his issues and problems with being as old as he is, he always likes to play lawn bowls. Since the closure of the club, he hasn't been able to actively lead a prosperous life within the Town of Port Hedland, so my question, if you can take it to Council, is how long is it going to take to get that club open? Can sports and recreation not take on the Bowls Club area to be able to get out there and enjoy life?*

The Manager Infrastructure Operations provided the following further response:

We are currently working through the Club liquidation process and dissolution. The determination of assets and other property associated with the Club is yet to be completed and is in the hands of the Administrator.

We recognise that the potential to utilise the site exists, however, until the determination and liquidation process is completed, access to the site will not be permitted.

*And also, to fix the gates. It's not very safe - it's not very eye-appealing.*

The Manager Infrastructure Operations provided the following further response:

On Wednesday 22 May, the site wide clean and tidy will be undertaken.

The subject gates had already been identified as requiring replacement along with a number of other maintenance issues. The works will be the subject of an RFQ process which will be initiated in the new financial year.

*Is there a register or list on ToPH of employees who have free housing here through the Town and are running a business outside of their employment with the Town? Is there a list of these employees and do they put in a Conflict of Interest for that?*

The Acting Chief Executive Officer provided the following further response:

All staff members who hold secondary employment, including self-employment, are required to notify the Town to in accordance with internal policy, to ensure there is no Conflict of Interest.

4.1.3	Roger Higgins
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*I'd like an explanation for some of the expenditures in the financial report. In every one of the months from July 22, there was an expense from C3 Church, but there's no amount in there. Could someone tell me what that's for, there's 12 payments there? What's this payment for and has it been approved by Council?*

The Manager Financial Services provided the following further response:

\$22,000 was paid to C3 Church in October 2022 for a Christmas Event, being grant funds which the Town was auspice for. These are approved through procurement delegations.

*There are also some very regular payments being made to the Royal Lifesaving Association, sometimes there's no figure next to it, but the amount is substantial - it's \$231,000 or thereabouts. There are multiple payments, more than one a month. What's the payment for, has it been approved by Council?*

The Manager Financial Services provided the following further response:

These payments include labour hire, purchase of equipment such wrist bands and mats and lifeguard training.

4.1.4	Chris Skelton
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*The Port Hedland International Airport, when is it going to be more than just a namesake and actually have flights to Asia again, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore? We're looking up at Broome, and Broome jumped the gun on us. When can we look forward to having our airport be more than a namesake and be an International Airport?*

The Acting Chief Executive Officer provided the following further response:

The Port Hedland International Airport is continuing to investigate the return of international flights from the airport, with the Council providing a financial incentive to support them. There are a number of items to be addressed including engagement and support from Borderforce, access to International Airport slots to receive Port Hedland aircraft and financial viability of providing this service. The Town is hopeful that these will be addressed shortly.

*I've been to numerous council meetings where's there have been police attending - I'd like to know the cost associated with security and with all of that, has there ever been a need to have the police? With all the meetings that I've attended, there was never any need, there were never any violent outbreaks or need for security and I'm*

*personally feeling like you're treating me and other members of the community like criminals, like we can't hold ourselves in good decorum.*

Governance provided the following further response:

The total cost for 2 security guards attending the Special Council Meeting held on 22 April 2024 was \$687.39.

4.5	Jan Gillingham
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*On page 120 of the financial report, there's grants, subsidies and contributions and it's just below rates, and it says \$8,591,000, etc. What is that for?*

The Director Corporate Services provided the following further response:

Operating grants, subsidies and contributions income. This includes Financial Assistant Grants received from State Government as well as sponsorship recognised from the Port Authority, BHP, and Horizon Power for projects that are not capital related.

4.6	Camilo Blanco speaking as Elector
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*Through the ARC Audit and Finance - audit and finance has the ability to adjust the statements so that the people can read it a lot easier. I don't understand why people have just glazed over this for years. Why don't we have another line item in expenses for Capital Works. Why don't we have another line item in expenses or credits for our GST content? That would simplify things quite a bit, wouldn't it? So that we would have an understanding of what is going on with our money. Can I get an answer to that?*

The Director Corporate Services provided the following further response:

Payments for Plant & Equipment and Infrastructure as well as GST paid/received for the year ended 30 June 2023 is detailed in the cash flow statement in the annual report. The Profit and Loss Statement is based on accrual accounting for operational projects only, it does not include capital works.

*So, my question now is what did the Town spend in total in 2022-2023? Was it \$180-188m, or in that vicinity, according to the monthly payments?*

The Director Corporate Services provided the following further response:

According to the Cashflow statement the total payments made for the year to 30 June 2023 is \$166.2M (ex GST) including capital payments.

4.7

Lorraine Butson speaking as Elector

*Can we please have a breakdown of the \$67M that has been spent from the Airport Fund over the last nine years, and also the amount of interest that would have been put with that, as well?*

The Manager Financial Services provided the following further response:

The Port Hedland International Airport Reserve was established in March 2016 to recognise \$162.3M of lease proceeds. In May 2020 a transfer of the balance of \$141.2M was allocated to the Strategic reserve (as per CM201920/199). During this time \$4.6M of interest was paid into the account and \$32.5M was transferred out. The transfers out include \$24.7M of early debt repayments (as per CM201819/178) and \$7.8M for capital projects including Staff Housing Construction \$3.6M, JD Hardie roof upgrade \$0.9M, Kevin Scott Reuse Tanks \$0.6M, SH Sport Precinct \$0.5M, Cooke Point round about \$0.2M and other projects of less than \$0.1M

## 5 Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting

The decision to confirm the meeting minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 8 February 2023 lapsed and were not confirmed at the AGM held on 15 May 2024. Therefore, we have an officer's recommendation that the meeting minutes of 8 February 2023 be confirmed, as well as last year's minutes of the AGM held on 15 May 2024.

### **ELECTORS DECISION**

**MOVED: NIL**

**SECONDED: NIL**

**That Council confirm that the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Electors held on 8 February 2023 are a true and correct record.**

***MOTION LAPSED FOR WANT OF MOVER (0/0)***

### **ELECTORS DECISION**

**MOVED: NIL**

**SECONDED: NIL**

**That Council confirm that the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Electors held on 15 May 2024 are a true and correct record.**

***MOTION LAPSED FOR WANT OF MOVER (0/0)***

### **ELECTORS DECISION**

**MOVED: NIL**

**SECONDED: NIL**

**That Council confirm that the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Electors held on 19 June 2024 are a true and correct record.**

***MOTION LAPSED FOR WANT OF MOVER (0/0)***

### *Disclaimer*

*Members of the public are cautioned against taking any action on Electors decisions until formal notification in writing by the Town has been received. Decisions made at this meeting will be reviewed by Council at the next practicable Ordinary Council Meeting.*

## 6 Annual Report

### 6.1 Response to Elector Questions

6.1.1	Roger Higgins
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- 1. Two points, so I just want to raise with regard to the Annual Report. For those of you who have the report, you will see that there is a population figure 17,000. I want to just ask questions about the accuracy of that figure, the reason I ask questions about the accuracy of the figure is because I'm aware of the decreasing enrolments at the Port Hedland Primary School. I don't have any figures on what's going on in the South Hedland schools, but I can tell you that the enrolments for the last three years have been falling. Now, if we have falling enrolments at schools, it means we have falling numbers of families here. So, I think the accuracy of the figure of at 17,000 is probably more likely to be, based on the data that I've seen, to be round about 14,700. If you question the accuracy of the figure of the population now, it means you've got to also question the figure that we've seen of what's expected at 2040. Now I've raised with the Port Hedland Industry Council after their last meeting this issue and because the model for industry is becoming increasingly more FIFO (Fly-In Fly-Out). so, that's the reason that I'm raising these issues now. We need to have accuracy in these figures. I know that the Bureau of Statistics takes samples from various areas and I don't know whether they do it here. I'd suggest that we look at some of that sampling if it's available and then modify those figures.*

The Director Regulatory Services provided the following response:

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) on 27 March 2025 released the Estimated Resident Population for the Town of Port Hedland local government area, reporting a population of 17,448 as at 30 June 2024. The ABS also revised the ERP as at 30 June 2023 to 17,256 from a previous estimate of 17,247.

The ABS detail their methodology online. While the Town shares Mr. Higgins concerns regarding declining primary school enrolments, the Town has no reason to question the ABS' methodology or the accuracy of the figures reported. Data reported by the ABS indicates that declines in the primary school aged population is compensated by increases in other age groups.

6.1.2	Jan Gillingham
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- 1. Yes, I'd just like to concur with Mr. Higgins regarding the population. As a board member of the Port Hedland Primary School (PHPS) and Mr. Higgins wife is a board member of PHPS. We had a lot of discussion just several weeks ago on the lack of parents and students in our town, who have had a mass exodus towards the end of last year. The only school that is kept up with their population is actually Baler Primary School, but all other schools have had a*

*massive drop and because it was the very first week of the school year, this will be detrimental to the funding from the Education Department and other funding areas. Which means they're going to have lack of funding this year and that's going to be a big drawback on those schools. I know it does not reflect in the 17,000 population, but it's something that the Council needs to be very aware of and I think that as a Council, Council needs to reach out to the schools and get the population of the primary schools, because then it gives a better idea.*

The Director Regulatory Services has provided the following response:

The Department of Education publishes enrolment data for each school across the state. This data is available to Semester 1, 2024.

The Town expects 2025 data to be made available in May 2025.

2. *On page 14 of tonight's agenda, it says that there was a special electors meeting held on 19th of June 2025, I think that should reflect as 2024.*

Governance has provided the following response:

This been corrected in the agenda for the 2025 Annual General Meeting of Electors.

3. *Just to just to mention on the little video that was just played, I know that this would have been quite costly to have made and it's really great to have something like that. But I sat and watched the many mistakes, the spelling mistakes in there, Hedland was even spelt as "Headland". I'm not sure who your proof-reader is, but I really think that it needs to go back through thoroughly, even the word councillor was spelt incorrectly.*

Governance has provided the following response:

To make the Annual Report video accessible to those online and those with hearing challenges, closed captions were added. The closed captions are automatically generated. The Public Affairs team has had subtitles added to this video with correct spelling and will upload this version to YouTube in the coming week.

6.1.3	Jillian Fisher
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1. *On page 28 of the annual report, we have some really good graphics, we've got \$104 million as being total spend, including a series of amounts under that. But then on the second page, the operating expenses only totals nearly \$94 million. Can you tell me why the difference is between those two things? The first page 28 and then the second part of \$937580 is on page 29.*

The Manager Financial Services has provided the following response:

On page 28: \$104 million represents both operating and capital spend without depreciation.

on page 29: \$94 million represents operating expenses only including depreciation.

6.1.4	Sharon Todd
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- 1. I haven't had a chance to have a look at it, but I can't see in here if there's been anything spent on air quality testing out near the rubbish tip, when there's tyres burning. I know of a couple of elderly relatives that have asthma and breathing problems, so I'm wondering if that can be considered?*

The Director Infrastructure Services provided the following response:

We don't burn tyres at the tip.

- 2. Oh, they have burnt though. Twice in the last financial year. There's been tyre burns.*

The Director Infrastructure Services provided the following response:

Not by us.

- 3. By accident, maybe?*

The Director Infrastructure Services provided the following response:

No, we certainly don't burn.

- 4. I'll try and get hold of the dates for you.*

The Director Infrastructure Services provided the following response:

That would be great.

- 5. I also I can't see that anything has been spent on the cemetery, which is in really poor condition. I know there's a water leak there at the moment. Which has been reported in the last couple of days, so hopefully that'll be repaired.*

The Director Infrastructure Services provided the following response:

In terms of the cemetery, we are working our way through the Cemetery Master Plan. There was quite a bit of pavement work done. A new set of toilets was put in, we had just a set of toilets that could be used by both men and women, we were asked to separate those, and we now have men's and women's toilets. There was a new drain that was put in.

## **6.2 Annual Report**

Copies of the 2023-2024 Annual Report are attached to this agenda and are available on the Town's website.

Presentation of the Town of Port Hedland 2023-2024 Annual Report Review.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**MOVED: NIL**

**SECONDED: NIL**

**That the Town of Port Hedland Annual General Meeting of Electors, pursuant to section 5.27 of the Local Government Act 1995 and regulation 15 of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996, receive and note the contents of the Town of Port Hedland Annual Report for the 2023-2024 Financial Year, including the Mayor's report, the Chief Executive Officer's Report and the Audited Financial Report for the period ended 30 June 2024.**

***LAPSED FOR WANT OF MOVER***

## 7 General Business

### 7.1 Written Questions

These questions will be responded to in the Agenda for 30 April 2025 Ordinary Council Meeting.

7.1.1	Sharon Todd
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- 1. Can the Council repair the Yarrie Road, Greenfield roads & Councillor Road or write a letter to the Dept of Main Roads to fix them?*
- 2. Can the Council Please fix the signs at Bosna Community and repair entry sign?*
- 3. Can Council assist with the installation of NBN at Bosna community?*
- 4. Can Council please plant regional appropriate trees at the Bosna community and provide recreational park area with BBQs, exercise equipment and play equipment for the members?*
- 5. Can Council remove more rubbish?*

## 7.2 Motions on Notice

### 7.2.1 MOTION

**MOVED:** John Ashenden

**SECONDED:** Jillian Fisher

**That two Elected Members be appointed to formally deliver the will of the people to the appropriate Western Australian State and federal authorities, advocating for an independent investigation into the following matters:**

- **Excess deaths and adverse reactions in Australia since the roll out of the vaccines.**
- **The misrepresentation and flawed testing processes of the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA).**
- **The actions and decisions of Health Ministers during the pandemic.**
- **The operational conduct of all COVID-19-related policies and implementations.**
- **The withholding and redaction of critical information from the public.**

***8/0 MOTION CARRIED***

### 7.2.2 MOTION

**MOVED:** John Ashenden

**SECONDED:** Teresa Ashenden

**Express no confidence in the financial reports presented for the financial years 2022/23 and 2023/24. As such, we formally reject these reports and demand an independent forensic audit of the town's financial management.**

***8/0 MOTION CARRIED***

**7.2.3 MOTION****MOVED: John Ashenden****SECONDED: Roger Higgins**

**Propose that the CEO selection committee to be comprised of the following Elected Members:**

- **Mayor Peter Carter**
- **Councillor Adrian McRae**
- **Councillor Camilo Blanco**

***8/0 MOTION CARRIED*****7.2.4 MOTION****MOVED: John Ashenden****SECONDED: Roger Higgins**

**To formally recognise the following individuals as Freeman of the Town of Port Hedland in honour of their outstanding contributions to the community:**

- **Julie Arif – For her dedication and service to the town.**
- **Kelly Howlett – For her leadership and environmental initiatives.**
- **Jan Gillingham – For her longstanding service and commitment to the community.**

***8/0 MOTION CARRIED***

*Jillian Fisher proposed a motion that the Town remove the entry fees to both Gratwick and South Hedland pools for all school aged children from the end of the school year in December through to the beginning of the school term in February.*

The Mayor responded:

We do this every year. This motion is dropped.

### 7.3 Other Business

#### 7.3.1 Cr Camilo Blanco

- 1. We were talking in the annual report about population and a few of the members of the community have talked about school numbers reducing. My understanding now is the state government is going to reduce the funding to the School of the Air. Hasn't been announced yet, but I have some sources that have suggested that this is going to be the case. The state government tried this in 2017 and got absolutely smashed by the WA regional people and now it's on the agenda again. Allowing this sort of behaviour by the state government reduces the population in regional areas further, so I request that the Town engage with the state government and ask whether it is true that they are going to reduce the funding to the School of the Air in Hedland or any regional area in WA.*

The Director Regulatory Services provided the following response:

The administration is gathering information and will have a response for Cr Blanco's question in the upcoming Ordinary Council Meeting Agenda.

- 2. Can you explain or tell me where in the standing orders it states that people need to stand in the gallery when requested as Standing Orders is the document that governs the meeting. Can you give me a section?*

The Mayor provided the following response:

It's respect.

- 3. My next question is you hit the gavel, and you requested a 30-minute recess and people have walked out then 5 minutes later we're starting the meeting again. So, did you receive advice to say you could not?*

The Mayor provided the following response:

No, I did not receive any advice at all.

- 4. You didn't receive any advice? So why did you start the meeting 5 minutes later then?*

The Mayor provided the following response:

It was my call.

- 5. Mr Mayor do you think that is reasonable conduct?*

The Mayor provided the following response:

Yes, I think so, thank you.

7.3.2	Roger Higgins
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- 1. Can the Town's administration confirm that all current Councillors are Australian Citizens? If they are, do they all pay rates to the Town of Port Hedland? If not, why are they allowed to stand for office?*

Governance has provided the following response:

The *Local Government Act* s.2.19 states:

***Qualifications for election to council 2.19.***

- (1) A person is qualified to be elected as a member of a council if the person —
  - (a) is of or over the age of 18 years;
  - (b) is an elector of the district;
  - (c) is not disqualified from being elected as a member under section 2.20; and
  - (d) is not disqualified for membership of the council under section 2.21, 2.22, 2.23 or 2.24.
- (2) A person is not qualified under subsection (1) (b) if he or she is only eligible for enrolment under section 4.30 (1) (a) and (b) as the nominee of a body corporate under section 4.31.
- (3) A person who is qualified under subsection (1) can be elected as a councillor for a ward whether or not he or she is an elector of that ward

As it is the WA Electoral Commission that is responsible for the process of accessing all nominations for candidates – the administration suggest that you contact them through [Local Government Candidates | Western Australian Electoral Commission](#) for any queries you may have.

The Town of Port Hedland is satisfied that all councillors meet the requirements of nomination and this will be our final response on this query.

## **8 Closure**

### **8.1 Closure**

There being no further business, the Presiding Member declared the meeting closed at 6:10pm.