



**North Eastern Wheatbelt  
Regional Organisation of Councils**

## **Council Meeting**

Tuesday 27 May 2025

Bencubbin CRC

### **Minutes**

1.30pm Light lunch and break  
2pm Council Meeting

[www.newroc.com.au](http://www.newroc.com.au)

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## ANNUAL CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

MONTH	ACTIVITY	MEETING
January		Executive
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>👉 Council refreshes itself on NEWROC Vision, Mission, Values (review Vision and Mission every other year)</li> <li>👉 Council reviews NEWROC project priorities / strategic plan</li> </ul>	Council
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>👉 WDC attendance to respond to NEWROC project priorities</li> <li>👉 Submit priority projects to WDC, Regional Development and WA Planning</li> </ul>	Executive
April	👉 NEWROC Budget Preparation	Council
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>👉 NEWROC Draft Budget Presented</li> <li>👉 NEWROC Executive Officer Contract/Hourly Rate Review (current contract expires June 2027)</li> </ul>	Executive
June	👉 NEWROC Budget Adopted	Council
July		Executive
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>👉 Information for Councillors pre-election</li> <li>👉 NEWROC Audit</li> </ul>	Council
September		Executive
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>👉 NEWROC CEO and President Handover (every 2yrs)</li> <li>👉 NEWROC Dinner</li> </ul>	Council
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>👉 NEWROC Induction of new Council representatives (every other year)</li> <li>👉 Review NEWROC MoU (every other year)</li> </ul>	Executive
December	👉 NEWROC Christmas / End of Year Drinks	Council

### **ONGOING ACTIVITIES**

Compliance

Media Releases

### **NEWROC Rotation**

Shire of Mt Marshall

Shire of Nungarin

Shire of Wyalkatchem

Shire of Koorda

Shire of Mukinbudin

Shire of Trayning (Oct 2023 – Oct 2025)

Shire of Dowerin

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## NORTH EASTERN WHEATBELT REGIONAL ORGANISATION OF COUNCILS

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 27 May 2025 at the Bencubbin CRC commencing at 2pm.

### MINUTES

#### 1. OPENING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cr Brown welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 2pm.

#### 2. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

##### 2.1. Attendance

Cr Melanie Brown	President, Shire of Trayning, NEWROC Chair
Cr Gary Shadbolt	President, Shire of Mukinbudin
Cr Pippa De Lacy	President, Shire of Nungarin
Cr Jannah Stratford	President, Shire of Koorda
Cr Tony Sachse	President, Shire of Mt Marshall
Cr Owen Garner	President, Shire of Wyalkatchem
Peter Naylor	CEO NEWROC, CEO Shire of Trayning
David Nayda	CEO, Shire of Nungarin
Tanika McLennan	A/CEO Shire of Mukinbudin
Zac Donovan	CEO Shire of Koorda
Ben McKay	CEO, Shire of Mt Marshall
Sabine Taylor	CEO, Shire of Wyalkatchem
Caroline Robinson	Executive Officer, NEWROC

##### 2.2. Apologies

Cr Robert Trepp	President, Shire of Dowerin
Manisha Barthakur	CEO, Shire of Dowerin

##### 2.3. Guests

Michael Heydon, Regional Engagement Manager, Telstra (2pm – 2.20pm)  
Matthew Stewart, Sunrise Energy Group online

##### 2.4. Leave of Absence Approvals / Approved

Nil

#### 3. Declarations of Interest and Delegations Register

Nil

##### 3.1. Delegation Register

Please find below a delegations register as per the new policy adopted in March 2017:

Description of Delegations	Delegatee	Delegated to	Approval
----------------------------	-----------	--------------	----------

Records Management	CEO	NEWROC EO	Council
NEWROC Financial Management	CEO	NEWROC EO	Council Dec 2017
Bendigo Bank Signatory (NEWROC)	CEO	NEWROC EO	Council Dec 2017
Bendigo Bank Signatory (Shire of Mukinbudin)	Council	CEO	Council Dec 2017
NEWROC Website	CEO	NEWROC EO	Council June 2017

#### 4. Presentations

Michael Heydon, Regional Engagement Manager, TELSTRA

- Telstra are keen to know about places where there are 4G drop outs that are within the coverage map.
- ATU's – Community Support Agents Agreement is currently under development with the State Government.
- Internet of Things is a low bandwidth option for local governments to use where there is poor reception.
- Low Orbit Satellite being released and will enable SMS to satellite where there is no coverage.

Matthew Stewart and Neil Canby, Sunrise Energy

- Microgrid is proposed to solve fringe of grid reliability issues.
- Income generation through: selling renewable energy to consumers, renewable energy certificates, capacity credits and network reliability service.
- Questions from the presentation by Sunrise included impact on the Koorda Western Power Depot and impact of residential battery uptake on the feasibility of the microgrid.

#### 5. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

Minutes of the Executive Meeting held on 25 February 2025 have previously been circulated.

##### RESOLUTION

**That the Minutes of the Executive Meeting held on 29 April 2025 be received as a true and correct record of proceedings.**

**Moved Cr Sachse**

**Seconded Cr De Lacy**

**CARRIED 6/0**

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 1 April 2025 have previously been circulated.

##### RESOLUTION

**That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 1 April 2025 be received as a true and correct record of proceedings (with amendment to 9.1)**

**Moved Cr Sachse**

**Seconded Cr Garner**

**CARRIED 6/0**

## **5.1. Business Arising**

### **5.1.1 Waste Project**

RPPP funding no update as its in caretaker mode.

Verbal update of the project from the Shire of Mt Marshall.

#### **Discussion:**

- There is a motion for a regional subsidiary to run the regional waste project.
- The Shire of Mt Marshall would like to lead and to drive the project, with the proposed site and associated service be under the management of the Shire of Mt Marshall. Agreements would be in place with each Shire seeking to use the regional facility.
- This approach does not exclude the NEWROC from seeking external funding for the project. Nor does it impact the current rPPP application.

#### **RESOLUTION**

**That the Shire of Mt Marshall is the lead Shire for the regional waste project.**

**Moved Cr Shadbolt**

**Seconded Cr Garner**

**CARRIED 6/0**

### **5.1.2 Disaster Resilience Grants**

Four members of NEWROC partnered with four members of ROEROC and submitted a Disaster Resilience Grant for power switches and generators for designated Evacuation Centres.

### **5.1.3 NEWROC Brand**

Logo adopted and implemented across Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn. Social media posts about the NEWROC Economic Development Strategy have commenced.

Website holding page is active.

**ACTION: EO to seek costs for NEWROC polo's and badges (Merino Polo)**

**6. FINANCIAL MATTERS****6.1. Income, Expenditure and Profit and Loss**

<b>FILE REFERENCE:</b>	42-2 Finance Audit and Compliance
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Caroline Robinson
<b>DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST:</b>	Nil
<b>DATE:</b>	22 May 2025
<b>ATTACHMENT NUMBER:</b>	
<b>CONSULTATION:</b>	
<b>STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT:</b>	Nil
<b>VOTING REQUIREMENT:</b>	Simple Majority

Account transactions for the period 1 December 2024 to 28 February 2025 for both accounts:

Date	Description	Reference	Credit	Debit	Running Balance
<b>BB NEWROC Funds-5557</b>					
<b>Opening Balance</b>			<b>203,756.16</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>203,756.16</b>
01 Dec 2024	Bendigo Bank		0.00	1.60	203,754.56
02 Dec 2024	Xero Australia	XERO Subscription	0.00	66.50	203,688.06
09 Dec 2024	Payment: Sunrise Energy Group	IV00000000466	0.00	20,900.00	182,788.06
09 Dec 2024	Payment: Seed Studio	00339	0.00	370.00	182,418.06
09 Dec 2024	Payment: 150Square	INV-0349	0.00	4,404.13	178,013.93
09 Dec 2024	Travel	UWA Intern	0.00	582.25	177,431.68
10 Dec 2024	Payment: Merredin Tourist Park	UWA Intern	0.00	340.00	177,091.68
01 Jan 2025	Bendigo Bank	Fee	0.00	2.00	177,089.68
02 Jan 2025	Xero Australia	XERO	0.00	66.50	177,023.18
21 Jan 2025	Payment: 150Square		0.00	3,715.63	173,307.55
21 Jan 2025	Payment: Bencubbin Community Resource Centre	INV-2320	0.00	100.00	173,207.55
22 Jan 2025	Payment: Shire Of Mukinbudin	INV-0113	14,300.00	0.00	187,507.55
31 Jan 2025	Payment: Shire Of Mukinbudin	INV-0127	357.48	0.00	187,865.03
01 Feb 2025	Bendigo Bank	Fee	0.00	0.80	187,864.23
03 Feb 2025	Xero Australia	XERO	0.00	66.50	187,797.73
05 Feb 2025	Bendigo Bank	Fee	0.00	30.00	187,767.73
17 Feb 2025	Payment: Wheatbelt Business Network	Wheatbelt Futures Forum Sponsorship	0.00	2,750.00	185,017.73
17 Feb 2025	Payment: 150Square		0.00	3,715.63	181,302.10
26 Feb 2025	Bank Transfer from ATO Integrated Client Account to BB NEWROC Funds-5557	ATO Credit	1,737.00	0.00	183,039.10
<b>Total BB NEWROC Funds-5557</b>			<b>16,394.48</b>	<b>37,111.54</b>	<b>183,039.10</b>
<b>Closing Balance</b>			<b>183,039.10</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>183,039.10</b>
<b>BB Term Deposit Account-1388</b>					
<b>Opening Balance</b>			<b>311,785.83</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>311,785.83</b>
26 Dec 2024	Bendigo Bank		6,235.72	0.00	318,021.55
<b>Total BB Term Deposit Account-1388</b>			<b>6,235.72</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>318,021.55</b>
<b>Closing Balance</b>			<b>318,021.55</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>318,021.55</b>
<b>Total</b>			<b>22,630.20</b>	<b>37,111.54</b>	<b>(14,481.34)</b>

# Balance Sheet

North Eastern Wheatbelt Regional Organisation of Councils  
As at 28 February 2025

28 FEB 2025

## Assets

### Bank

BB NEWROC Funds-5557	183,039.10
BB Term Deposit Account-1388	318,021.55
<b>Total Bank</b>	<b>501,060.65</b>

**Total Assets**

**501,060.65**

## Liabilities

### Current Liabilities

ATO Integrated Client Account	1,737.00
GST	(1,635.44)
Rounding	0.07
Sundry Creditors Control	24,685.63
Unpaid ATO Liabilities	(1,737.00)
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>23,050.26</b>

**Total Liabilities**

**23,050.26**

**Net Assets**

**478,010.39**

## Equity

Current Year Earnings	(3,347.59)
Retained Earnings	481,357.98
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>478,010.39</b>

## RESOLUTION

That the income and expenditure from 1 December 2024 to 28 February 2025 and balance sheet be received.

Moved Cr De Lacy

Seconded Cr Sachse

CARRIED 6/0



**6.2. Income, Expenditure and Profit and Loss**

**FILE REFERENCE:** 42-2 Finance Audit and Compliance  
**REPORTING OFFICER:** Caroline Robinson  
**DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST:** Nil  
**DATE:** 22 May 2025  
**ATTACHMENT NUMBER:**  
**CONSULTATION:**  
**STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT:** Nil  
**VOTING REQUIREMENT:** Simple Majority

**COMMENT**

Account transactions for the period 1 March 2025 to 30 April 2025:

Date	Description	Reference	Credit	Debit	Running Balance
<b>BB NEWROC Funds-5557</b>					
<b>Opening Balance</b>			<b>183,039.10</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>183,039.10</b>
01 Mar 2025	Bendigo Bank	Fees	0.00	0.80	183,038.30
03 Mar 2025	Xero Australia	XERO	0.00	66.50	182,971.80
04 Mar 2025	Payment: 150Square	0368	0.00	4,081.14	178,890.66
04 Mar 2025	Reconciliation adjustment	Audit adjustment	0.14	0.00	178,890.80
04 Mar 2025	Payment: Koorda CRC	Printing	0.00	17.50	178,873.30
04 Mar 2025	Payment: Trayning Hotel	Presidents Dinner	0.00	185.56	178,687.74
05 Mar 2025	Payment: Econisis	24125-1 Housing Project	0.00	3,960.00	174,727.74
05 Mar 2025	Payment: Alyce Smith	#2093	0.00	2,111.21	172,616.53
05 Mar 2025	Payment: JE Planning	Housing Project	0.00	17,424.00	155,192.53
01 Apr 2025	Xero Australia	XERO	0.00	66.50	155,126.03
01 Apr 2025	Bendigo Bank	Fees	0.00	2.40	155,123.63
10 Apr 2025	Payment: Seed Studio	00374 - Branding	0.00	1,500.00	153,623.63
10 Apr 2025	Payment: Alyce Smith	2095	0.00	2,111.21	151,512.42
22 Apr 2025	Payment: Audit Partners Australia	5506	0.00	1,155.00	150,357.42
22 Apr 2025	Payment: 150Square	INV-0356	0.00	3,715.63	146,641.79
22 Apr 2025	Payment: Sally J Design	Website	0.00	1,661.00	144,980.79
29 Apr 2025	Payment: Wheatbelt Business Network	Ticket - Futures Forum	0.00	100.00	144,880.79
29 Apr 2025	Payment: Wheatbelt Business Network	Ticket - Futures Forum	0.00	200.00	144,680.79
<b>Total BB NEWROC Funds-5557</b>			<b>0.14</b>	<b>38,358.45</b>	<b>144,680.79</b>
<b>Closing Balance</b>			<b>0.14</b>	<b>144,680.79</b>	<b>144,680.79</b>
<b>Total</b>			<b>0.14</b>	<b>38,358.45</b>	<b>(38,358.31)</b>

## Balance Sheet

### North Eastern Wheatbelt Regional Organisation of Councils

As at 30 April 2025

30 APR 2025

<b>Assets</b>	
<b>Bank</b>	
BB NEWROC Funds-5557	144,680.79
BB Term Deposit Account-1388	318,021.55
<b>Total Bank</b>	<b>462,702.34</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>462,702.34</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>	
<b>Current Liabilities</b>	
GST	(4,226.92)
Rounding	0.21
Sundry Creditors Control	870.00
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>(3,356.71)</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>(3,356.71)</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>466,059.05</b>
<b>Equity</b>	
Current Year Earnings	(15,298.93)
Retained Earnings	481,357.98
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>466,059.05</b>

## Profit and Loss

### North Eastern Wheatbelt Regional Organisation of Councils

For the 5 months ended 30 April 2025

DEC 2024-APR 2025

<b>Trading Income</b>	
Interest	6,235.72
<b>Total Trading Income</b>	<b>6,235.72</b>
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>6,235.72</b>
<b>Operating Expenses</b>	
Accounting/Audit fees	1,050.00
Bank charges	46.69
Bookkeeping Charges	302.25
Catering	161.36
Consultancy / Project Fees (206)	20,940.00
Executive Officer Contract Services	16,889.25
Executive Officer Travel	1,583.31
Printing and Stationery	15.91
Records Storage	90.91
Sponsorship	2,500.00
Town Teams Contractor	3,520.00
Town Teams Travel	318.56
Website and Database	1,510.00
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>48,928.24</b>
<b>Net Profit</b>	<b>(42,692.52)</b>

**RESOLUTION**

**That the income and expenditure from 1 March 2025 to 30 April 2025, P and L (1 Dec to 30 April 2025) and balance sheet be received.**

**Moved Cr De Lacy**

**Seconded Cr Shadbolt**

**CARRIED 6/0**

Ben McKay left at 2.40pm and did not return.

## 7. FINANCIAL MATTERS

### 7.1. 2025/26 NEWROC Budget

<b>FILE REFERENCE:</b>	032-1 Budgets
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Caroline Robinson
<b>DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST:</b>	Nil
<b>DATE:</b>	22 May 2025
<b>ATTACHMENT NUMBER:</b>	
<b>CONSULTATION:</b>	
<b>STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT:</b>	Nil
<b>VOTING REQUIREMENT:</b>	Simple Majority

#### COMMENT

NEWROC Budget prepared and submitted for comment.

Inclusions:

- NEW Advocacy expense, inclusive of ALGA attendance by the NEWROC President (aligned to Economic Development Strategy).
- NEW Sponsorship expense.
- Increase business cases – grant writing for the housing worker study, NEWTRAVEL accommodation study, NEWROC and WDC worker housing study.
- No income included for Disaster Readiness Grant (held by the Shire of Narembeen if successful).
- No income included for other grants (housing, waste, microgrid etc).
- Town Team Builder role is funded from reserves.
- Annual interest from Term Deposits is circa \$13K and has been included as income.

#### RESOLUTION

**NEWROC adopt the 2025/2026 Budget**

**Moved Cr Garner**

**Seconded Cr De Lacy**

**CARRIED 6/0**

ACTION: NEWROC EO to discuss TTM early communication – end of October 202

**NEWROC Budget**  
**North Eastern Wheatbelt Regional Organisation of Councils**  
**1 July 2025 - 30 June 2026**

Estimated Opening Balance (operations account) 1 July 2025	\$134,000.00	
Opening Balance (TD)	\$318,021.00	
<b>Income</b>		
Grants received (057)		
Regional Precinct Grant	\$616,800.00	<i>To be confirmed</i>
Interest Received (076)	\$13,000.00	<i>Interest from term deposits to be transferred</i>
NEWROC Business Case / Project Work Subs (055)	\$14,000.00	
NEWROC Subscriptions Received (054)	\$77,000.00	
Special Projects Subscriptions Rec. (056)	\$0.00	
Reserves Transfer	\$15,000.00	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$735,800.00</b>	
<b>Less Operating Expenses</b>		
<b>Governance / General Administration</b>		
Accounting/Audit fees (200)	\$2,000.00	
Advocacy Expenses	\$3,000.00	<i>President ALGA attendance</i>
Advertising (201)		
Bank charges (203)	\$50.00	
Catering (204)	\$200.00	
Computer Software/Support (205)	\$0.00	
Consultancy / Project Fees (206)	\$17,000.00	<i>NEWTRAVEL accommodation study \$7000; Grant Writer (housing) \$3000; Worker Accommodation Study \$7000</i>
Event / Ceremony Expenses (207)	\$500.00	
Gifts (208)	\$200.00	
Legal expenses (209)	\$500.00	
Printing and Stationery (213a)	\$120.00	
Sponsorship	\$2,000.00	
Records Storage (215)	\$70.00	
<b>Executive officer</b>		
Executive Officer Business Case/Project Work (105)	\$0.00	
Executive Officer Contract Services (100)	\$40,000.00	
Executive Officer Office Expenses (103)	\$3,000.00	
Executive Officer Seminars/Conferences (101)	\$1,000.00	
Executive Officer Travel (102)	\$3,000.00	
<b>Grant Funding</b>		
Regional Precinct Grant	\$646,800.00	
<b>NEWROC Literary Luncheon</b>		
Literary Luncheon (600)	\$600.00	
<b>Wheatbelt Town Team Builder</b>		
Contract (1 day a week)	\$15,000.00	
<b>NEWROC Promotion</b>		
Website and Database (700)	\$760.00	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$735,800.00</b>	
<b>Net Profit</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	
<b>Closing Balance (Ops and TD)</b>	<b>\$452,021.00</b>	

## **8. MATTERS FOR DECISION**

### **8.1. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

<b>FILE REFERENCE:</b>	042-2 Executive Officer
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Cr Brown
<b>DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST:</b>	Nil
<b>DATE:</b>	25 April 2025
<b>ATTACHMENT NUMBER:</b>	#1 KPIs
<b>CONSULTATION:</b>	Caroline Robinson
<b>STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT:</b>	Nil
<b>VOTING REQUIREMENT:</b>	Simple Majority

#### **COMMENT**

At the last NEWROC Council meeting (1 April) members discussed:

- Progress of strategic projects;
- Setting realistic targets for the Executive Officer to achieve, predominantly against the NEWROC Economic Development Strategy to assist the group progress these strategic projects;
- Collaboration amongst members; and
- Promoting the NEWROC to Councillors of each Shire.

The NEWROC President has discussed this with the Executive Officer. CEO's provided input at the Executive meeting.

#### **RESOLUTION**

**The 2025 NEWROC EO Key Performance Indicators be recommended to Council.**

**Moved Cr De Lacy**

**Seconded Cr Shadbolt**

**CARRIED 6/0**

## 8.2. BENCUBBIN MICROGRID FEASIBILITY

<b>FILE REFERENCE:</b>	107-1 Power
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Caroline Robinson
<b>DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST:</b>	Nil
<b>DATE:</b>	
<b>ATTACHMENT NUMBER:</b>	#2 Economic Development SC Meeting #3 Presentation from Sunrise #4 Feasibility Study from Sunrise
<b>CONSULTATION:</b>	Ben McKay Sunrise Energy
<b>STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT:</b>	Nil
<b>VOTING REQUIREMENT:</b>	Simple Majority

### COMMENT

The NEWROC Economic Development Sub Committee engaged Sunrise Energy to complete the Bencubbin Microgrid Feasibility Study as the final part of the REDS grant.

The main objective of the study was to explore the feasibility of implementing a renewable microgrid in the Bencubbin area that would improve the reliability of the electricity supply. Sub-objectives were to establish:

- How it would work
- Where it would be located
- How much it would cost
- How would it be financed
- What grant funding opportunities may be available
- A pathway towards implementation

The NEWROC Economic Development Sub Committee has received the report and a presentation from Sunrise Energy.

The Bencubbin project was based on a repeatable model in Mullewa.

A key to both projects (Bencubbin and Mullewa) being implemented is finding finance.

The outcome from the Bencubbin study is that the establishment of a renewable microgrid encompassing the town of Bencubbin and the downstream radial network is feasible, technically, commercially and practically.

The estimated capital cost to install and connect the Bencubbin assets and to establish the microgrid would be in order of \$17/18million, with expected operating costs in the first year at around \$400k (for wind + solar option solution) or \$330k (solar only option).

The commercial modelling suggests the configurations would be capable of achieving a project IRR of 10-12% over the 25 year life, which is considered the typical range necessary to attract an investor, a requirement to be deemed commercially feasible

The proposal for financing is to find investors that are willing to fund the money to build a capex intensive project for a reasonable return. Despite demonstrating an IRR of 10-12% that could be achievable, there are a number of other factors that make the process of securing investors a challenge – these being:

- The “first of its kind” factor. Ideally this can be mitigated by getting the Mullewa microgrid built as a pilot, supported by grant funding. Sunrise has received a DA for this project already.

- The small-scale factor. Ideally this could be mitigated by presenting a portfolio of rural microgrids as larger scale investment and spreading the risk across more than one project.
- The “chicken and the egg” factor. Investors would like to see some of the revenue agreements in place, however it can be difficult to secure these without the project having secured finance. Ideally this could be mitigated if Sunrise were awarded a tender from Western Power for an NSS reliability service.
- The same goes with grants. Some of the feedback we got in relation to not winning a CEFF grant for Mullewa was that Sunrise didn't have the remainder of the finance in place. Grants can certainly help.

In terms of the Bencubbin microgrid, Sunrise needs to evaluate the value in seeking a grant specifically for Bencubbin over that for Mullewa, which is much further along in the development process - noting that a success in Mullewa should help pave the way for Bencubbin and other towns.

Sunrise is able to invest in some Pre-FID works such as securing a location and liaising with WP and submitting NSS tenders, however there is still a significant amount of remaining development work that needs to be done prior to execution (if going to be well placed to secure investment) that would need to be funded, outside of financing the project execution.

The NEWROC Economic Development Sub Committee was in agreement that the pathway forward presented by Sunrise Energy, with clear opex and capex costs so too a sound IRR was good progress and feasible.

Next steps:

- Identify suitable land for the project in Bencubbin (Shire of Mt Marshall and Sunrise) and gain agreement from the owner
- Investigate costs associated with progressing the project further (in progress)
- Securing an agreement with Western Power for a reliability service for Bencubbin, based on their recent EOI for Regional Reliability Network Support Services (NSS), and the assumption that this will result in a tender request that could include Bencubbin (Sunrise)

## **RESOLUTION**

**NEWROC Council receives the Bencubbin Microgrid Feasibility Study.**

**NEWROC EO seek additional information on stage 2 of the project and costs involved.**

**NEWROC presents the project to the Wheatbelt Development Commission and seeks assistance in engaging with Western Power.**

**NEWROC EO contact the City of Geraldton Greenough (Mullewa) to discuss ways to collaborate.**

**NEWROC President and Executive Officer meet with ARENA when in Canberra for ALGA.**

**NEWROC Executive recommends to Council to engage with DLGSC and Sunrise Energy to further investigations on a regional subsidiary for the ownership and management of a microgrid.**

**Moved Cr Shadbolt**

**Seconded Cr De Lacy**

**CARRIED 6/0**



**Discussion:**

- Discussion regarding scale of the renewables.
- Discussion regarding the reach of the microgrid.

**8.3. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

<b>FILE REFERENCE:</b>	Economic Development Strategy
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Caroline Robinson
<b>DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST:</b>	Nil
<b>DATE:</b>	22 May
<b>ATTACHMENT NUMBER:</b>	#5 Policy Positions
<b>CONSULTATION:</b>	Cr Brown; RDA Wheatbelt
<b>STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT:</b>	Nil
<b>VOTING REQUIREMENT:</b>	Simple Majority

**COMMENT**

PROGRAM	STRATEGY	OUTCOME	FOR DISCUSSION
REGIONAL BRAND ESTABLISHMENT	NEWROC will seek to establish a clear and compelling “brand” for the region to facilitate investment, business, funding, new resident visitor attraction and increase general State and national awareness of the region and associated Shires.	Regular meetings with regional, state and federal government representatives.	ALGA 2025 National General Assembly 24 – 27 June (Canberra). This year’s NGA theme is ‘National Priorities Need Local Solutions’.

The NEWROC EO met with the Director, RDA Wheatbelt to seek assistance on meeting partners and support in facilitating these meetings.

NEWROC is currently securing the following meetings:

- Live Sheep Transition Officer, DAFF – based in Perth
- Powering WA (contact made at the Wheatbelt Futures Forum)

Requested meetings in Canberra (June):

- ARENA (microgrid funding)
- ALGA Policy Advisor
- Inquiry into Local Government Sustainability Committee member
- National Rural Health Alliance (note the Office of the Rural Health Commissioner will be present at ALGA)

Three policy positions to be presented at the meeting:

- Ambulance Officers
- Live Sheep Transition (to be supplied)
- Provision of GP Services

#### **RESOLUTION**

**NEWROC Policy Positions be adopted, used in the Canberra meetings and future State based meetings.**

**Moved Cr Shadbolt**

**Seconded Cr De Lacy**

**CARRIED 6/0**

#### **Discussion:**

- Live Sheep policy: include Wheatbelt regional economic profile, inclusion of mental health initiatives and events in the Events Officer, green hydrogen and carbon business case, Economic Development Officer, inclusion of oilseeds in biofuel proposal, nurseries for tree planting where drought impacts natural bushland.

#### 8.4. MAJOR EASTERN WHEATBELT PROJECTS UPDATE EVENT

<b>FILE REFERENCE:</b>	
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Caroline Robinson
<b>DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST:</b>	Nil
<b>DATE:</b>	22 May 2025
<b>ATTACHMENT NUMBER:</b>	
<b>CONSULTATION:</b>	ROEROC EO WEROC EO Wheatbelt Development Commission
<b>STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT:</b>	Nil
<b>VOTING REQUIREMENT:</b>	Simple Majority

#### BACKGROUND

The Wheatbelt Development Commission recently presented at the Great Eastern Country Zone Conference. Key takeaways from the presentation were that economic development projects and priorities in the region should align with the Federal Government's Future Made in Australia Policy, and the State Government's policies; Diversify WA and Made in WA. There was also a keen focus on the Avon Arc.

The Wheatbelt Futures Forum, of which NEWROC is sponsoring and presenting at, is focused on bringing Wheatbelt businesses, local government, and government representatives together to focus on business opportunities in the coming year and beyond. The event is industry focused, with brief presentations from delegates representing a range of Wheatbelt industries. The Forum is aimed at attendees walking away with an informed plan on how they can operate their business in the current economic climate and take advantage of the opportunities that may present themselves in the future.

The Dowerin Down Town event held in July each year focuses on promoting agriculture to government, private and community stakeholders as well as promoting the Dowerin Machinery Field Days.

What is missing from these events is an opportunity for the NEWROC local governments and our key partners to promote the opportunities (aligned to the economic profile) and pitch projects and investment projects to government and gain interest from the private sector that have a major interest in our communities.

#### COMMENT

The [Midwest & Gascoyne Major Projects Update](#) event, held on April 8-9, 2025, at Novotel Perth Langley, focused on investment, project development, and collaboration across the region. Key topics included economic growth, diversification, renewable energy, and infrastructure development. The attendees of the event are predominantly Federal and State Government representatives, members of Parliament and major industry.

Following initial discussions with the two Executive Officers of the ROEROC and WEROC, we would like to propose that all three ROCs consider collaborating and organizing a similar event to:

1. **Showcase Regional Projects:** Highlight ongoing and upcoming projects within the Eastern Wheatbelt (across all three ROCs and a pipeline of projects that the WDC has)
2. **Attract Investment:** Provide a platform for attracting investment and partnership opportunities.

3. **Promote Collaboration:** Foster collaboration between local government, industry, and community stakeholders through networking time.
4. **Discuss Key Topics:** Address critical issues such as renewable energy, infrastructure development, and economic diversification.

The costs of the event would be jointly shared by the three ROCs.

The Executive Officer's propose to hold the event:

- During the week of WALGA Local Government Week, whilst everyone is in Perth
- Potentially using WALGA facilities to keep costs down
- Approaching the Minister for the Wheatbelt to 'host' the event
- Including time together to discuss how the three ROCs can collaborate (before or after official proceedings of the day)
- Topics put forward by EO's of WEROC, ROEROC and NEWROC for potential inclusion:
  - NEWROC Brand and NEWROC Economic Development Strategy
  - Housing Strategy (across all three ROCs) and headworks funding
  - NEWTRAVEL, RoeTourism and WEROC tourism
  - Renewable energy and land use
  - Local Government sustainability (linked to a WALGA advocacy piece)
  - Freight task

#### **RESOLUTION**

**Members agreed to proceed with investigating the event further and the sponsorship allocated in the 2025/26 budget \$2000 be put towards the event.**

**Moved Cr Garner**

**Seconded Cr Sacshe**

**CARRIED 6/0**

## **8.5. LATE ITEM – Key Worker Housing Project**

**FILE REFERENCE:**  
**REPORTING OFFICER:** Caroline Robinson  
**DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST:** Nil  
**DATE:** 26 May 2025  
**ATTACHMENT NUMBER:**  
**CONSULTATION:** Grant Arthur, WDC  
WEROC EO  
**STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT:** Nil  
**VOTING REQUIREMENT:** Simple Majority

### **BACKGROUND**

The NEWROC Worker Housing Project's original scope of works (see following pages) was to cost the participating Shires \$75,600. This was to be split evenly across 8 Shires (inclusive of the Shire of Wongan Ballidu). This equated to \$9,450 inc GST for each Shire.

At the November NEWROC Council meeting the following resolution was passed:

### **RESOLUTION**

**NEWROC EO liaises with Wheatbelt Development Commission regarding the scope of works for all Councils regarding the housing and industrial land strategy  
Together with the Commission release an EOI to seek a reasonable price for the housing strategy and reduce the financial commitment by the individual member Shires.  
NEWROC commit in principle support of up to \$14,000 in total to the housing and industrial land strategy.**

**Moved Cr Garner      Seconded Cr Sasche      CARRIED 7/0**

The NEWROC has paid the fees for the project up front and will be invoicing the Shires shortly for their individual contributions. For the NEWROC Shires this will be \$7,450 (inc GST) and the Shire of Wongan Ballidu \$9,450 (inc GST).

At the same time as the NEWROC study, WEROC are also undertaking the same work.

### **COMMENT**

The Wheatbelt Development Commission has informed the NEWROC EO and WEROC EO recently that they have an extra \$10K they can contribute to the worker housing study (see following pages on the original scope of works).

In return the WDC are requesting WEROC and NEWROC each contribute an additional \$5K to the project for an additional activity - to engage a consultant to determine the costs of servicing and developing selected sites for both WEROC and the NEWROC.

The NEWROC and WEROC housing projects cover 15 Shires with potentially multiple sites per Shire that will be recommended for development. To facilitate the development of a business case and potential public and private investment attraction, a sample of potential sites will be analysed to determine servicing requirements and costs.

WEROC and NEWROC will jointly contribute \$10,000 (\$5k each) to be matched by the \$10K grant from the WDC. It is expected that it will be possible to analyse at least 6 sites across the two sub-regions combined with these initial funds.

The output is that development proposals will be provided for at least 6 sites across the eastern Wheatbelt and the information from this work will be available to WEROC, NEWROC and their Shires to plan for, and seek, investment for land assembly and housing development.

WEROC have agreed to contribute an additional \$5,000.

**RESOLUTION**

**NEWROC contribute an additional \$5,000 towards the housing project and enter into a grant agreement with the Wheatbelt Development Commission.**

**Moved Cr Sachse**

**Seconded Cr Garner**

**CARRIED 6/0**

Project Component	Indicative Timeframe	Deliverables
1.0 Stakeholder Engagement	TBD Estimated 6-8 weeks Commencing mid-January 2025	1.1 Engagement with key stakeholders (industry and local businesses, member Shires and key agencies) in accordance with an engagement plan to be informed by the respective Shire's. 1.2 Preparation of Stakeholder Engagement summary report.
2.0 Market & Planning (Demand Gap) Analysis	6 Weeks Commencing mid-January 2025	2. 1 Assessment of the sub-region's workforce accommodation, and housing needs relative to population, demographic and workforce trends, and dwelling approval data. Includes general literature review covering strategic planning and key documents. 2.2 Preparation of Housing Demand Profiles and Housing Demand Gap modelling for respective Shires. 2.3 Prepare Workforce Housing Needs Analysis Report.
3.0 Identification of Priority Sites 3.2 Feasibility Testing	4 Weeks Commencing February 2025 4-8 Weeks Commencing February 2025	3.1 Identification of a priority site (s) for development of workforce housing in each town. This will include consideration of crown land suitable for divestment for residential and workforce housing purposes. Where possible, prioritisation of sites will consider: a) Opportunities to leverage and coordinate service connections and headworks upgrades. b) Whether such land is subject to native title and/or ILUA processes that are likely to cause significant time delays for divestment. c) Other constraining factors which may make divestment and development of land unviable. d) Opportunities to include land to be designated for residential purposes in an overall 'package' of divestment priorities across the sub-region. 3.2 Housing Options Analysis and Feasibility Testing: Preparation of two transferable models for workforce housing informed by engagement with builders and the development sector. This



		<p>work will detail current costings and serve as adaptable templates with applicability within the sub-region.</p> <p>The intention is that the models will be adaptable to the priority sites identified for each town (with contingencies).</p>
4.0 Development Capacity Assessment and Town Action Plans	12-16 Weeks Commencing January 2025	<p>4.1 Town planning assessment of each town from a development capacity perspective. The assessment will consider development options under the current planning framework, required planning actions to achieve preferred options (and improved ROI), servicing availability and/or capacity constraints, and estimated development potential/dwelling yield.</p> <p>WDC will assist in providing site-specific mapping data, and some planning investigation.</p> <p>4.2 Preparation of 'town action plans' presenting the findings of 4.1 and providing guidance for the next-step actions needed from a planning and servicing perspective. Potential economic development initiatives will also be considered.</p>
5.0 Economic Modelling and Cost Benefit Analysis including Preliminary Business Case.	4 Weeks Commencing April 2025	<p>5.1 Preparation of cost-benefit analysis report for the subject sites, which includes a feasibility analysis of the local housing markets. A CBA is the most commonly used, and most comprehensive, of the economic evaluation techniques. Essentially, a CBA compares the monetised benefits and costs of a project to evaluate the desirability of a project. A CBA provides little value if it is conducted without a base case in which to compare options. The CBA steps include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Profiling project activity and associated assumptions – in this case details of the subject sites and associated housing market, demographic and economic attributes to inform the assumptions around market failure and product typologies.</li> <li>• Assessment of the present value of financial/fiscal costs (including whole of-life cycle costs and opportunity costs where relevant)</li> <li>• Identify the quantifiable benefits that can be monetised and calculate the value (in</li> </ul>

		<p>monetary terms) of the quantified incremental benefits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calculate key assessment indicators including the net present value (NPV) terms, benefit cost ratio (BCR) and Economic and Social Rate of Return (ESRR).</li> </ul> <p>5.2 Preparation of a <i>ready-to-go</i> business case template adaptable for each Shire. The business case template will be prepared to Treasury specifications for use by the constituent LGAs as the base for future funding submissions and applications. This will utilise the WA Government Business Case Template as the foundation of the structure and content and include:</p> <p>PROJECT PURPOSE – including Introduction, Proposal Background and Context – (locations and towns, socio-demographics), Project/Service Need, and Rationale for Intervention (market failure and intervention justification)</p> <p>STRATEGIC OPTIONS IDENTIFICATION AND ANALYSIS – including Potential Solutions (long list of potential solutions) and Preferred Project Option</p> <p>PROJECT EVALUATION – including summary of cost benefit analysis and feasibility analysis.</p>
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## 9. GENERAL UPDATES

Wheatbelt Futures Forum – Feedback (White Paper #6)

**ACTION: NEWROC EO request revision of White Paper**

NEWROC EO attendance at member Council meetings

## 10. 2025 MEETING SCHEDULE

- Shire of Dowerin Council meetings have been moved to the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month. This clashes with NEWROC meetings.
- CEOs would also like to move the meeting times forward in the day.
- Note some Councillors have work commitments on other days of the week
- Proposal to move to second Tuesday of the month

1 July	Executive	Shire of Trayning
5 August	Council	Shire of Koorda
2 September	Executive	Shire of Nungarin
7 October	Council	Shire of Wyalkatchem
4 November	Executive	Shire of Mt Marshall
2 December	Council	Shire of Mukinbudin

## RESOLUTION

**All NEWROC Executive and Council meetings move to the first Tuesday of the month, commencing with morning tea at 9.30am, and the meeting at 10am**

**Moved Cr Sachse**

**Seconded Cr Shadbolt**

**CARRIED 6/0**

## 11. CLOSURE

Cr Brown thanked everyone and closed the meeting at 4.38pm