



SHIRE OF IRWIN
DONGARA-PORT DENISON

A BRILLIANT BLEND

MINUTES

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING
Tuesday 24 February 2026



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MINUTES

of the

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

held

24 February 2026

1. DECLARATION OF OPENING / ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS

The Presiding Member declared the meeting open at 5.00pm and welcomed Councillors, Staff and Gallery Members.

2. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE / APOLOGIES / LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Members

Councillor I Scott
Councillor A J Gillam
Councillor J Melsom
Councillor S Hansen
Councillor L Berecz
Councillor L Musulin

Shire President
Deputy Shire President

Staff

Mr S D Ivers
Mr M Connell
Ms F Boksmati
Mr M Jones
Miss P Machaka
Ms S Mearns

Chief Executive Officer
Manager Development
Manager Community Services
Manager Operations
Manager Finance
Executive Assistant

Guests

Nil

Apologies

Councillor P Summers
Mr M Antony

Community Emergency Services Manager

Approved Leave of Absence

Nil

Gallery

Mr Bruce Baskerville
Mr Barry Wyse

“Indiaview”, Port Denison
13 Clarkson Street, Port Denison

3. RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS PUBLIC QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE

Nil

4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Nil

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chief Executive Officer advised that a Declaration of Interest were received as listed below:

Councillor	Agenda Item	Disclosure
Cr Gillam	DEV 03-02/65 Belisama Gas Project – Lot M441 Yandanooka West Road, Milo	Financial – Cr Gillam currently negotiating access agreement for potential alternative site.

6. APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Nil

7. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS

Nil

8. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES AND TABLING OF AGENDA FORUM NOTES**8.1 Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held 8 December 2025**

The Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held 8 December 2025 are included in the *Attachment Booklet – February 2026*.

COUNCIL DECISION		010226
MOVED: Cr Gillam	SECONDED: Cr Berecz	
That Council confirms the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held 8 December 2025.		
VOTING DETAILS:	CARRIED: 6/0	
For: Cr Scott, Cr Gillam, Cr Hansen, Cr Berecz, Cr Musulin, Cr Melsom		
Against: Nil		

8.2 Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held 27 January 2026

The Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held 27 January 2026 are included in the *Attachment Booklet – February 2026*.

COUNCIL DECISION		020226
MOVED: Cr Melsom	SECONDED: Cr Gillam	
That Council confirms the Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held 27 January 2026.		
VOTING DETAILS:	CARRIED: 6/0	
For: Cr Scott, Cr Gillam, Cr Hansen, Cr Berecz, Cr Musulin, Cr Melsom		
Against: Nil		

8.3 Agenda Forum Notes – 17 February 2026

At the Agenda Forum held 17 February 2026, Shire Officers presented background information and answered questions on items to be considered at the February 2026 Ordinary Council Meeting.

Notes from the Agenda Forum are included in the *Attachment Booklet – February 2026*.

COUNCIL DECISION		030226
MOVED: Cr Musulin	SECONDED: Cr Hansen	
That Council confirms the Notes of the Agenda Forum held 17 February 2026.		
VOTING DETAILS:	CARRIED: 6/0	
For:	Cr Scott, Cr Gillam, Cr Hansen, Cr Berez, Cr Musulin, Cr Melsom	
Against:	Nil	

9. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE PERSON PRESIDING WITHOUT DISCUSSION

14 January 2026	Shire President and CEO met with Strike Energy
23 January 2026	Shire President and CEO attended MWDC Meeting
26 January 2026	Shire President and CEO attended Australia Day Celebrations and Citizenship Ceremony
6 February 2026	CEO attended MWDC North Midlands Executive Group Meeting
16 February 2026	CEO met with Water Corporation
18 February 2026	Shire President and CEO attended IDHS Heritage Grant Funding announcement
18 February 2026	Shire President and CEO attended MEPAU Quarterly Update Meeting
19 February 2026	Shire President and CEO met with Telstra Corporation
23 February 2026	Shire President and CEO attended WALGA Northern Country Zone Meeting
24 February 2026	CEO met with Department Water & Environmental Regulation Representatives

The Shire President also commented that she held interviews with the ABC, Midwest Times and GWN in relation to the Foreshore Redevelopment, the Drive-In and Fishing Restrictions.

10. REPORTS OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

10.1 Finance Reports

FIN 01-02/26 Accounts for Payment – January 2026	
Author:	K Pu, Casual Finance Officer
Responsible Officer:	P Machaka, Manager Finance
File Reference:	2.0057
Council Role:	Executive
Voting Requirements:	Simple Majority

Report Purpose:

For Council to receive the list of accounts paid under delegated authority during January 2026.

COUNCIL DECISION		040226																						
MOVED: Cr Gillam	SECONDED: Cr Melsom																							
<p>That Council, by Simple Majority, receives the Accounts paid during January 2026 as contained in FIN01-02/26 Attachment 1 of the Attachment Booklet – February 2026 represented by:</p>																								
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Payment Type/Numbers</th> <th>Total Amount</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>EFT 00000001 - 00000001</td> <td>\$87,986.41</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Muni Cheques – 32260 – 32261</td> <td>\$6,932.50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Direct Debit – Telstra</td> <td>\$3,104.87</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Direct Debit – WA Treasury Corporation</td> <td>\$38,109.83</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Direct Debit – N-Able Pty Ltd</td> <td>\$2,416.76</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Direct Debit – Australian Phone Company</td> <td>\$225.23</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Direct Debit – Telair Pty Ltd</td> <td>\$2,560.90</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Direct Debit – Insurance Premium Repayments</td> <td>\$47,893.29</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Direct Debit – Superannuation</td> <td>\$64,611.95</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: right;">Grand Total</td> <td>\$253,841.74</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Payment Type/Numbers	Total Amount	EFT 00000001 - 00000001	\$87,986.41	Muni Cheques – 32260 – 32261	\$6,932.50	Direct Debit – Telstra	\$3,104.87	Direct Debit – WA Treasury Corporation	\$38,109.83	Direct Debit – N-Able Pty Ltd	\$2,416.76	Direct Debit – Australian Phone Company	\$225.23	Direct Debit – Telair Pty Ltd	\$2,560.90	Direct Debit – Insurance Premium Repayments	\$47,893.29	Direct Debit – Superannuation	\$64,611.95	Grand Total	\$253,841.74
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VOTING DETAILS:	CARRIED: 6/0																							
For:	Cr Scott, Cr Gillam, Cr Hansen, Cr Berecz, Cr Musulin, Cr Melsom																							
Against:	Nil																							

Background:

A list of accounts paid under delegated authority is attached showing all payments made during the month of January 2026.

Officer's Comment:

Changes to the format of the list of payments has been made to be aligned with Section 13(1) of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations.

Consultation:

Nil

Statutory Environment:

The *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* provides as follows:

13. *Payments from municipal fund or trust fund by CEO, CEO's duties as to etc.*
- (1) *If the local government has delegated to the CEO the exercise of its power to make payments from the municipal fund or the trust fund, a list of accounts paid by the CEO is to be prepared each month showing for each account paid since the last such list was prepared*
- (a) *the payee's name;*
 - (b) *the amount of the payment;*
 - (c) *the date of the payment; and*
 - (d) *sufficient information to identify the transaction.*
- (3) *A list prepared under sub-regulation (1) or (2) is to be —*
- (a) *presented to the council at the next ordinary meeting of the council after the list is prepared; and*
 - (b) *recorded in the minutes of that meeting.*

Policy Implications:

Under Delegation CEO101 Council has delegated authority to the Chief Executive Officer to authorise payments from the municipal or trust fund.

Financial/Resource Implications:

Nil

Strategic Implications:

Our Brilliant Future – Strategic Community Plan 2021 – 2031

Strategy 4.2.1 Ensure compliance whilst embracing innovation and better practice principles

Strategy 4.3.2 Adopt and follow better practice processes

Attachments:

Attachment Booklet – February 2026

FIN 01-02/26 Attachment 1: Accounts for Payment – January 2026

FIN 02-02/26 Monthly Financial Statements - December 2025	
Author:	P Machaka, Manager Finance
Responsible Officer:	S Ivers, Chief Executive Officer
File Reference:	2.0057
Council Role:	Executive
Voting Requirements:	Simple Majority

Report Purpose:

For Council to consider and receive the Monthly Financial Statements for the period 1 July 2025 to 31 December 2025.

COUNCIL DECISION		050226
MOVED: Cr Gillam	SECONDED: Cr Musulin	
<p>That Council, by Simple Majority, receives the Monthly Financial Statements for the period 1 July 2025 to 31 December 2025 as contained in FIN 02-02/26 Attachment 1 of the Attachment Booklet – February 2026.</p>		
VOTING DETAILS:	CARRIED: 6/0	
For:	Cr Scott, Cr Gillam, Cr Hansen, Cr Berecz, Cr Musulin, Cr Melsom	
Against:	Nil	

Background:

The Monthly Financial Statements to 31 December 2025 are prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1995* and the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* and includes the following statutory reports:

- Statement of Financial Activity by Nature
- Statement of Financial Position
- Explanation of Material Variances
- Net Current Funding Position

The Statements also include various other financial information not required by legislation, but for Council information.

Officer's Comment:

The financial position to the end of December 2025 is detailed in the attached report and summarised as per below:

31/12/2025	YTD Budget	YTD Actual
Operating Revenue	9,821,613	9,813,392
Operating Expenditure	(7,361,501)	(7,422,598)
Net Operating	2,460,112	2,390,794
Non-Operating Revenue	2,606,719	93,165
Non-Operating Expenditure	(3,161,433)	(1,590,003)
Net Non-Operating	(554,714)	(1,496,838)
Cash at Bank		2,767,401
Cash at Bank Restricted		623,302
Reserve Bank		1,049,610
Total Cash Funds		4,440,313

Consultation:

Nil

Statutory Environment:

Local Government Act 1995

- *Section 6.4 Financial report*

Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations

- *Section 34 Financial activity statement report provides as follows:*

(1) *A local government is to prepare each month a statement of financial activity reporting on the sources and applications of funds, as set out in the annual budget under regulation 22(1)(d), for that month in the following detail -*

- annual budget estimates, taking into account any expenditure incurred for an additional purpose under section 6.8(1)(b) or (c);*
- budget estimates to the end of the month to which the statement relates;*
- actual amounts of expenditure, revenue and income to the end of the month to which the statement relates;*
- material variances between the comparable amounts referred to in paragraphs (b) and (c); and*
- the net current assets at the end of the month to which the statement relates.*

(2) *Each statement of financial activity is to be accompanied by documents containing -*

- an explanation of the composition of the net current assets of the month to which the statement relates, less committed assets and restricted assets;*
- an explanation of each of the material variances referred to in sub-regulation (1)(d); and*
- such other supporting information as is considered relevant by the local government.*

(3) *The information in a statement of financial activity must be shown according to the nature classification.*

(4) *A statement of financial activity, and the accompanying documents referred to in sub-regulation (2), are to be -*

- presented to the council - at an ordinary meeting of the council within 2 months after the end of month to which the statement relates; and*
- recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which it is presented.*

Policy Implications:

Nil

Financial/Resource Implications:

Any issues in relation to expenditure and revenue allocations or variance trends are identified and addressed each month or at budget review.

Strategic Implications:

Our Brilliant Future - Strategic Community Plan 2021 – 2031

Strategy 4.2.1 Ensure compliance whilst embracing innovation and better practice principles

Strategy 4.3.2 Adopt and follow better practice processes

Attachments:

Attachment Booklet –February 2026

FIN02-02//26 Attachment 1: Financial Statements for the Period Ended 31 December 2025.

Unconfirmed

FIN 03-02/26 Budget Amendment – February 2026	
Author:	P Machaka, Manager Finance
Responsible Officer:	S Ivers, Chief Executive Officer
File Reference:	2.0057
Council Role:	Executive
Voting Requirements:	Absolute Majority

Report Purpose:

For Council to approve amendments to the 2025/26 budget as detailed in the attachment.

COUNCIL DECISION	060226
MOVED: Cr Melsom	SECONDED: Cr Berecz
<p>That Council, by Absolute Majority, approve February 2025/26 budget amendments as detailed in the attachment in accordance with section 6.8(1) of the Local Government Act 1995.</p>	
VOTING DETAILS:	CARRIED: 6/0
For:	Cr Scott, Cr Gillam, Cr Hansen, Cr Berecz, Cr Musulin, Cr Melsom
Against:	Nil

Background:

After the adoption of the annual budget, when circumstances change it is good management practice to amend the budget. Budget amendments are undertaken to comply with statutory requirements, ensuring that any changes to the original adopted budget are communicated to, and approved by, Council.

Officer's Comment:

The Shire has secured three grants which were not part of the 2025/26 Original Budget. As the grant conditions require works to commence in the current financial year, a budget amendment is required to enable delivery.

Details of the grants are as follows:

Grantor	Amount	Description
Iluka Helping Hands	\$4,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant for Dongara Denison Drive In kitchen equipment (popcorn machine, bain marie, deep fryer, chest freezer, steam pan) Must be completed this FY 2025/26
Lotterywest Arts & Culture Infrastructure	\$231,355	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant to replace the Dongara Denison Drive In's obsolete lamp projector with a laser projector, as well as necessary building modifications to support projector. Must be completed and acquitted by November 2026.
Main Roads Industry Contribution	\$168,333 \$84,167	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main Roads had surplus funds for FY 2025/26, which the Shire applied for. The funding is for the upgrade of Mount Adams Road and Brand Highway Intersection. Total Cost of the project is \$252,500. Main Roads will fund \$168,333 and Industry will contribute \$84,167.

It is recommended that the 2025/26 budget be adjusted in accordance with section 6.8(1) of the Local Government Act 1995 to bring to account the grant funding and the corresponding expenditure as detailed in the attachment.

Consultation:

Nil

Statutory Environment:

Local Government Act 1995 Section 6.8 (1)

A local government is not to incur expenditure from municipal for an additional purpose except where the expenditure:

- *Is incurred in a financial year before the adoption of the annual budget by the local government.*
- *Is authorised in advance by Council resolution – absolute majority required.*
- *Is authorised in advance by the Mayor or President in an emergency.*

Policy Implications:

Nil

Financial/Resource Implications:

After making the above budget amendment, the impact to the budget surplus will be nil.

Strategic Implications:

Our Brilliant Future - Strategic Community Plan 2021 – 2031

Strategy 4.2.1 Ensure compliance whilst embracing innovation and better practice principles

Strategy 4.3.2 Adopt and follow better practice processes

Attachments:

Attachment Booklet – February 2026

FIN 03-02/26 Attachment 1: February 2026 Budget Amendments

10.2 Development Reports

DEV 01-02/26 December 2025 and January 2026 Development Delegated and Authorised Authority Report	
Author:	M Connell, Manager Development
Responsible Officer:	S Ivers, Chief Executive Officer
File Reference:	3.00125
Council Role:	Executive
Voting Requirements:	Simple Majority

Report Purpose:

For Council to receive the December 2025 and January 2026 Development Delegated and Authorised Authority Report.

COUNCIL DECISION	070226
MOVED: Cr Musulin	SECONDED: Cr Berecz
<p>That Council by Simple Majority, receives the December 2025 and January 2026 Development Delegated and Authorised Authority Report, as contained in DEV 01-02/26 Attachment 1.</p>	
VOTING DETAILS:	CARRIED: 6/0
For:	Cr Scott, Cr Gillam, Cr Hansen, Cr Berecz, Cr Musulin, Cr Melsom
Against:	Nil

Background:

Local governments utilise levels of delegated authority to undertake day-to-day statutory functions, thereby allowing Council to focus on policy development, representation, strategic planning and community leadership, with the organisation focussing on the day-to-day operations of the Shire.

The use of delegated authority means the large volume of routine work can be effectively managed and acted on promptly, which in turn facilitates efficient service delivery to the community.

In addition, as of 1 July 2024, the determination of development applications for single houses or any development associated with a single house (excluding development associated with a heritage place), can now only be done by the CEO or authorised employees of the local government.

Officer's Comment:

This report presents the details of development functions made under delegated or authorised authority for the partial month of November 2025 (from 26 November 2025), December 2025 and January 2026, with 31 building permits/certificates, 9 single house applications and 3 applications for development approval having been issued.

Consultation:

Nil.

Statutory Environment:

- *Local Government Act 1995*
- *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*
- *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015*

Policy Implications:

Nil.

Financial/Resource Implications:

Nil.

Strategic Implications:

Our Brilliant Future – Strategic Community Plan 2021 – 2031

Strategy 4.2.1 Ensure compliance whilst embracing innovation and better practice principles

Strategy 4.3.2 Adopt and follow better practice processes

Attachments:

Attachment Booklet – February 2026

DEV 01-02/26 Attachment 1: December 2025 and January 2026 Development Delegated and Authorised Authority Report

Unconfirmed

DEV 02-02/26 Shire of Irwin draft Local Planning Scheme No. 6	
Author:	M Connell, Manager Development
Responsible Officer:	S Ivers, Chief Executive Officer
File Reference:	P25/042
Council Role:	Legislative
Voting Requirements:	Simple

Report Purpose:

For Council to adopt the draft Local Planning Scheme No. 6 and forward it to the Environmental Protection Authority for its assessment and the Western Australian Planning Commission for its approval to advertise the scheme.

COUNCIL DECISION	080226
MOVED: Cr Hansen	SECONDED: Cr Melsom
That Council by Simple Majority:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adopt the draft Shire of Irwin Local Planning Scheme No. 6 as contained in DEV 02-02/26 Attachment 1. 2. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to modify the local planning scheme as required by the either the Environmental Protection Authority or the Western Australian Planning Commission. 3. Not initiate any standard or complex scheme amendments to Local Planning Scheme No. 5 once the Western Australian Planning Commission has given approval to advertise the draft Shire of Irwin Local Planning Scheme No. 6. 	
VOTING DETAILS:	CARRIED: 6/0
For:	Cr Scott, Cr Gillam, Cr Hansen, Cr Berecz, Cr Musulin, Cr Melsom
Against:	Nil

Background:

It is a statutory requirement under the *Planning and Development Act 2005* (Act) that all local governments must prepare a local planning scheme.

Local planning schemes are the principal statutory tool for achieving the development aims and objectives of a local government. They are used by local governments to implement things like residential density, land use permissibility and development controls for setbacks, car parking, landscaping. The main purposes of a local planning scheme are to:

- set out the local government's planning aims for the scheme area, and implement the local planning strategy;
- set aside land as reserves for various public purposes and zone land within the scheme area; and
- control and guide land use and development.

On 27 September 2016 Council resolved to prepare a new local planning scheme and on 28 February 2017 Council approved a report on the review of Local Planning Scheme No. 5. Following the resolutions from Council priority was given to the preparation of a new local planning strategy, which is now complete.

Draft Local Planning Scheme No. 6 (LPS6) has now subsequently been prepared and is contained in DEV02-02/26 Attachment 1.

Officer's Comment:

The Shire's current scheme (Local Planning Scheme No. 5) was gazetted on 7 May 2008. Since that time the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015* (Regulations) have come into effect. The content and format of a scheme has to now follow the Model Provisions set out in Schedule 1 of the Regulations. These model provisions establish a standard structure and wording for a scheme to bring about consistency across the State.

LPS6 is generally consistent with the substantive terms of the current scheme but has updated terms and references to reflect contemporary scheme drafting standards as prescribed by the Regulations. There have been no significant changes to the underlying zoning of land.

In summary the main changes include:

- updating the scheme text and removing provisions that are now obsolete;
- inserting, deleting and renaming land use classes in the zoning table;
- aims of the scheme now directly correlate to the community strategic plan;
- standardising reserve and zone classifications;
- introducing a 'Tourism' zone and removing most special uses;
- increasing the base residential density to R20 (i.e. 450m² average lot sizes);
- modifying the scheme maps to correct minor anomalies with reserve areas;
- ensuring crown land reserves reflect their current general management purpose; and
- updating the cadastre to reflect new lots that have been created.

For comparison, the current Local Planning Scheme No. 5 can be viewed on the Shire's website: <https://irwin.wa.gov.au/local-planning-scheme/>

Consultation:

Consultation to date:

Council's resolution of 27 September 2016 to prepare a new scheme was publicly advertised in accordance with the requirements of r. 20 of the Regulations, inviting any recommendations in respect of the resolution. The advertising involved the following:

- A public notice was published in the Midwest Times on 26 October 2016.
- A copy of the public notice was sent to the adjoining local governments of:
 - Shire of Mingenew
 - Shire of Carnamah
 - Shire of Three Springs
 - City of Greater Geraldton
- A copy of the public notice was referred to the following (then) government / service agencies and stakeholders:
 - Department of Aboriginal Affairs
 - Department of Planning
 - Department of Agriculture and Food
 - Department of Environmental Regulation
 - Department of Fire and Emergency Services
 - Department of Health
 - Department of Parks and Wildlife
 - Department of Water
 - Department of Mines and Petroleum
 - Department of Lands
 - Department of Fisheries
 - Department of Education

- Department of Transport
- Public Transport Authority
- Midwest Development Commission
- Tourism WA
- Environmental Protection Authority
- Main Roads WA
- State Heritage Office
- Water Corporation

In response to the advertising a total of 8 submissions were received, and all the comments have been taken into consideration in preparing LPS6.

Proposed consultation:

As part of the scheme process and prior to public advertising, the Environmental Protection Authority is required to determine whether or not the scheme needs to be assessed under Part IV of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*. Given LPS6 is generally consistent with the substantive terms of the current scheme it is considered unlikely that the scheme will be assessed.

The scheme is required to be publicly advertised for a period of not less than 90 days in accordance with the requirements of the Regulations. At the conclusion of the public advertising period the matter must be presented back to Council which will include a schedule of submissions if any are received. A resolution must then be passed to either support the scheme (with or without modification) or not support the scheme.

Given that a substantial amount of public consultation has occurred with the preparation of the new local planning strategy, LPS6 is simply implementing the recommendations of the strategy and there are only relatively minor modifications to the current scheme it is proposed that LPS6 be advertised in the following ways:

- A notice being published in the Mid West Times and the Dongara Denison Local Rag;
- A copy of the scheme being made available for public inspection at the Shire office and the Dongara public library;
- The scheme being published on the Shire's website along with an alert on the Shire's Facebook page;
- Directly contacting landowners who's zoning has demonstrably changed; and
- A written notice being sent to each public authority likely to be affected by the scheme including neighbouring local governments.

Statutory Environment:

Part 5, Section 72 of the Act 2005 provides for a local government to prepare a local planning scheme as follows:

72. Local government may prepare or adopt scheme

(1) *Subject to section 71, a local government may –*

- (a) *prepare a local planning scheme with reference to any land within its district, or with reference to land within its district and other land within any adjacent district;*

Part 4 of the Regulations sets out the process that must be followed for the preparation of a local planning scheme. A flowchart that details this process is contained in DEV02-02/26 Attachment 2.

Policy Implications:

All local planning policies are currently being reviewed as part of the new local planning scheme, and it is proposed that a new suite of policies will accompany the scheme when it is finalised.

Financial/Resource Implications:

Nil.

Strategic Implications:

Our Brilliant Future – Strategic Community Plan 2021 – 2031

Strategy 2.1.3 Ensure adequate and appropriately zoned land to support commerce and industry

Strategy 3.1.4 Prepare cutting edge land use strategies to guide future development

Attachments:

Attachment Booklet – February 2026

DEV 02-02/26 Attachment 1: draft Local Planning Scheme No. 6

DEV 02-02/26 Attachment 2: Process for preparation of new local planning scheme flowchart

Unconfirmed

Cr Gillam having declared a Financial Interest in Item DEV 03-02/26 left the Meeting at 5.13pm.

DEV 03-02/26 Belisama Gas Project – Lot M441 Yandanooka West Road, Milo	
Author:	M Connell, Manager Development
Responsible Officer:	S Ivers, Chief Executive Officer
File Reference:	P25-90 / A9545
Council Role:	Advocacy
Voting Requirements:	Simple

Report Purpose:

For Council to provide comment and recommend conditions to the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) on the significant development application for the Belisama Gas Project on Lot M441 (No. 1906) Yandanooka West Road, Milo which is located within the Shire of Mingenew.

COUNCIL DECISION	090226
MOVED: Cr Melsom	SECONDED: Cr Berecz
<p>That Council by Simple Majority, in relation to the significant development application for the Belisama Gas Project on Lot M441 (No. 1906) Yandanooka West Road, Milo recommends the following conditions:</p>	
<p>1. Prior to the commencement of development, a Construction Management Plan is to be submitted to and approved by the Western Australian Planning Commission, on advice from the Shire of Irwin and Main Roads WA addressing but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Hours of construction; b. Site access and egress; c. Construction vehicle route and traffic management; d. Deliveries and storage of construction materials and machinery; e. Management of vibration, dust, wind and erosion; f. Management, removal and recycling of demolition and construction waste; g. Protection and repair of any public realm infrastructure; and h. Public communication and complaint-handling procedures. <p>The approved Construction Management Plan is to be implemented and adhered to at all times during construction, to the satisfaction of the Western Australian Planning Commission, on advice from the Shire of Irwin.</p>	
<p>2. Prior to the commencement of development, the applicant is to make suitable arrangements with the Shire of Irwin and Main Roads Western Australia to complete the following road network improvements works prior to any works being undertaken within Lot M441 Yandanooka West Road, Milo:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Sealing the intersection of Brand Highway and Mount Adams Road; b. Sealing Mount Adams Road from the intersection of Brand Highway to Yandanooka West Road; and c. Sealing Yandanooka West Road from Mount Adams Road to the site access point of the development site. <p>Details of which are to be provided to the satisfaction of the Western Australian Planning Commission.</p>	

3. **Within 30 days of the commencement of operations, any damage to public roads or infrastructure as a result of construction works is to be rectified to the required standard at the developer's cost to the satisfaction of the Western Australian Planning Commission, on advice from the Shire of Irwin and Main Roads WA.**
4. **Prior to the commencement of operations, land tenure arrangements are to be resolved so that the road carriageway of Yandanooka West Road and Mount Adams Road is located within a gazetted public road reserve.**
5. **Prior to the commencement of development, an updated Waste Management Plan addressing the location for the disposal of waste for the development during the construction and operational phases is to be submitted to the satisfaction of the Western Australian Planning Commission, on advice from the Shire of Irwin and the City of Greater Geraldton.**

VOTING DETAILS:**CARRIED: 5/0****For: Cr Scott, Cr Hansen, Cr Berecz, Cr Musulin, Cr Melsom****Against: Nil****Background:**

The Shire has received an invitation from the WAPC to make a submission on an application for significant development in December 2025 for a proposed gas processing plant and workforce accommodation (commonly referred to as the Belisama Gas Project) on Lot M441 (No. 1906) Yandanooka West Road, Milo in the Shire of Mingenew.

The application has been lodged under Part 11B of the *Planning and Development Act 2005*, which has established the WAPC as the decision-making authority for significant development applications.

The proposed development is located approximately 30km southeast of Dongara, and 20km west of Mingenew. The site straddles the boundaries of both the Shires of Irwin and Mingenew with the development itself located in the Shire of Mingenew. It is accessed from the west via Yandanooka West Road and Mount Adams Road through to Brand Highway.

Proposal

The application proposes a gas processing facility, condensate system, operations village with workforce accommodation, and supporting infrastructure and consists of the following elements:

- A processing facility to treat raw gas to the specification required for export to the Dampier to Bunbury Natural Gas Pipeline.
- A condensate stabilisation, storage and offloading system.
- On-site infrastructure to support the operations phase of the proposal including power generation, warehousing and workshops, and control, equipment and switch room infrastructure.
- Utilities infrastructure including telecommunications, groundwater supply bores, groundwater monitoring bores and sewage treatment systems.
- An operations village including workers accommodation (28 x 1 bedroom units) and associated landscaping.

The development application report is contained in DEV 03-02/26 Attachment 1 and the application also contains specialist reports addressing environmental impact, traffic, noise, bushfire

management, visual impact, water and waste management which are available for viewing at: <https://haveyoursay.dplh.wa.gov.au/belisamagasproject>

Location Plan



Officer's Comment:

The development site itself is located in the Shire of Mingenew however access to the site is from Brand Highway via Mount Adams and Yandanooka West Roads which are located in the Shire of Irwin.

In determining the application the WAPC must have due regard to the need to ensure the orderly and proper planning, and preservation of amenity, of the locality to which the application relates.

Amenity is defined as all of those factors which combine to form the character of an area and include the present and likely future amenity.

The locality is characterised by an undulating rural landscape used for broadacre agriculture with a mixture of cropping and grazing. The development footprint of the central processing facility is relatively small and approximately 5.4ha. Other than the specialised gas processing infrastructure, the other administration and accommodation buildings are representative of typical large, rural shed-type structures that is an expected form of rural development in the locality.

The materials, colours and scale of the development, in addition to the proposed landscaping achieves an overall appearance that would not contrast significantly with the rural aesthetic of the locality. The development is unobtrusive in the context of the wider landscape and is considered to be compatible with its setting and the surrounding character of the area.

When considering the likely future amenity, the Shire's recently endorsed Local Planning Strategy sets out the long-term planning directions for the Shire and guides land use planning over the next 10-15 years. The Strategy formally identifies the Arrowsmith Resources Area as a strategic energy and resources precinct thus reinforcing the State's Energy Transformation Strategy. Actively planning to meet the needs of industry through facilitating the establishment of new energy industries in the Arrowsmith Resources Area is a key recommendation from the Strategy.

The proposed development is clearly contemplated by the Local Planning Strategy. It is apparent that the planning framework acknowledges and indeed promotes development of this nature which in turn establishes reasonable expectations for this type of development in the locality.

Road Access

Accompanying the application was a Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) which provided an analysis of the access to the central processing facility as well as the surrounding road network.

Of concern is that there was no information provided on the anticipated traffic generated from the construction phase of the project. Once operational the expected haulage traffic generation from the gas plant site would be:

- 4 B-doubles per day for condensate loadout;
- 2 semi-trailers per week for chemical and general resupply logistics;
- 2 small trucks per week for ad-hoc maintenance and management; and
- 12 light vehicles per day.

The traffic volumes adopted in the assessment appear to be inconsistent with the Shire's more recent traffic count data and understate the existing traffic conditions.

Contrary to the presentation given to Council on 25 November 2025 by representatives from Hancock Energy, the applicant has not committed to any road upgrades associated with access to the central processing facility other than intersection upgrades with Brand Highway.

The development will generate a substantial increase in heavy vehicle movements along the existing unsealed roads. Gravel roads are not designed to accommodate sustained high-volume industrial traffic, and previous experience has demonstrated that such use results in accelerated road deterioration, increased safety risks and significant ongoing maintenance costs.

A previous gas project on Pye Road provides a clear precedent. During that project, the unsealed road required frequent grading and re-sheeting due to heavy vehicle traffic, with total maintenance costs over the project period exceeding the estimated cost of sealing the road. Additional issues included dust-related visibility hazards and several vehicle crashes involving heavy and light vehicles.

Unsealed roads are also regularly closed during and following rainfall events due to reduced pavement strength and safety concerns. These closures disrupt local residents, agricultural operations, emergency access, and project logistics while placing pressure on the Shire to reopen roads prematurely, further increasing road damage and maintenance costs.

The intensive maintenance required to keep the road serviceable would also result in the diversion of Shire plant, crews, and operational budgets away from the broader unsealed road network. This diversion would reduce the Shire's capacity to undertake routine maintenance on other local roads, leading to declining road conditions, increased community complaints and a deterioration in service levels across the wider road network.

The ongoing maintenance of an unsealed road under these conditions would impose an unsustainable financial burden on local ratepayers, despite the road impacts being primarily driven by the gas project. Sealing the road would significantly reduce maintenance requirements, maintain all-weather access, improve road safety by eliminating dust and protect the long-term integrity of the Shire's road assets.

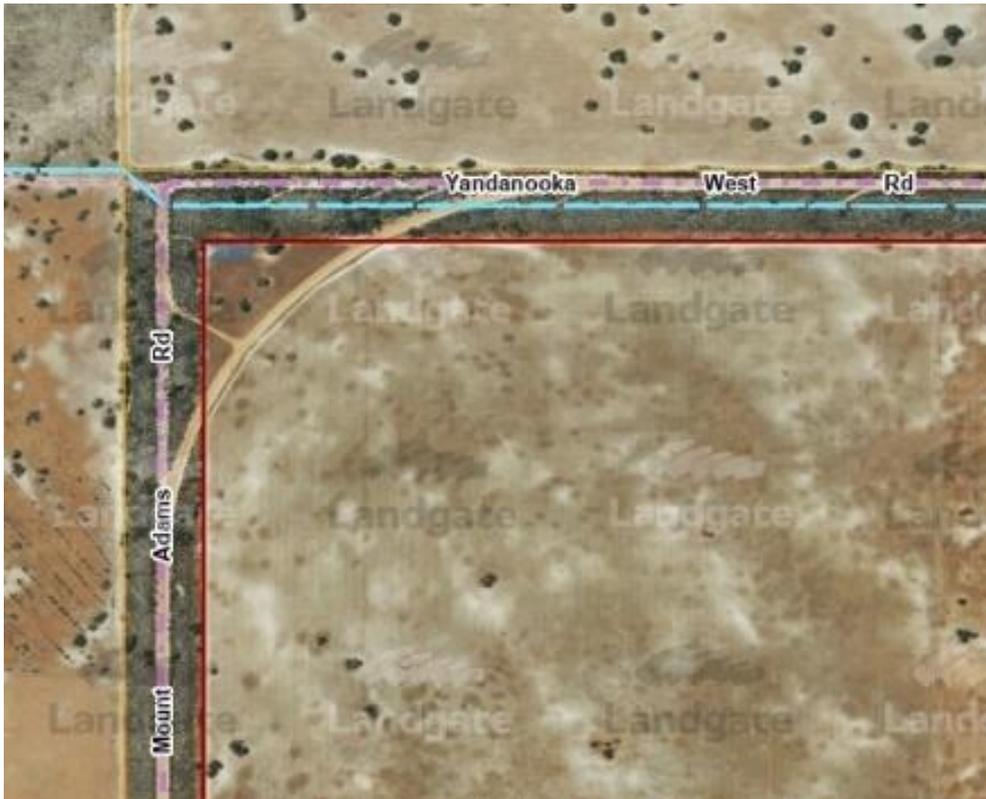
Based on demonstrated local experience and whole-of-life cost considerations, sealing the road access represents the most cost-effective, safe, and equitable solution to manage the impacts of the development while safeguarding the condition of the Shire's wider road network and the interests of its ratepayers.

Land Tenure

There are anomalies with the underlying land tenure on which the current road carriageway of Yandanooka West Road is situated.

Firstly, the land parcel (that is mistakenly considered to be the Yandanooka West Road reserve) is in fact Crown Reserve 10876. The responsible agency for the reserve is the DPLH and the reserve purpose is 'Stock Route'. The Reserve 10876 report is contained in DEV 03-02/26 Attachment 2.

Secondly, the road carriageway at the intersection with Mount Adams Road traverses Lot 10119 (No. 2087) Yandanooka West Road as shown on the plan below.



With a project of such state significance, it seems prudent to resolve these land tenure issues prior to operations commencing.

Waste Management

A Waste Management Plan (WMP) has been prepared in support of the proposed development and provided details on the estimation of general waste volumes and recommendations for appropriate collection, storage, handling and management of waste and recycling. There were no details as to where the waste is to be disposed of.

The Shire is currently facing significant constraints at its waste transfer site, and it is recommended that a condition be requested that requires the further information and detail in the WMP that specifically addresses the proposed location for waste to be disposed of and any contingency measures.

Consultation:

The DPLH has undertaken consultation on the application in accordance with the requirements of the *Planning and Development (Significant Development) Regulations 2024*.

As an adjoining local government the Shire has been invited to make a submission on the project. The WAPC must give due regard to any submissions made or advice given by stakeholders during the application process.

The WAPC initially requested the Shire provide information, comment or recommended conditions by 16 February 2026, however the applicant has agreed to extend the period to 27 February 2026. Deferring the matter is therefore not recommended.

Statutory Environment:

The application has been lodged under Part 11B of the *Planning and Development Act 2005* which provides a tailored assessment pathway directly to the WAPC for complex and significant development proposals.

The pathway is open to development valued at:

- \$20 million or more in the case of a development for which the Perth Metropolitan or Peel region scheme, or the Swan Valley Planning Scheme applies; or
- \$5 million or more in other parts of the state.

The development is valued at \$850 million.

Policy Implications:

Nil.

Financial/Resource Implications:

Nil. However it must be acknowledged that if the road network improvement works as recommended do not occur, then the Shire (ultimately the ratepayer) will have to bear significant costs to maintain the road network.

Strategic Implications:

Our Brilliant Future – Strategic Community Plan 2021 – 2031

Strategy 2.1.2 Partner with and advocate on behalf of commerce and industry to improve local infrastructure and services.

Strategy 2.1.3 Ensure adequate and appropriately zoned land to support commerce and industry.

Attachments:

Attachment Booklet – February 2026

DEV 03-02/26 Attachment 1: Development Application Report

DEV 03-02/26 Attachment 2: Reserve Report

Cr Gillam returned to Chambers at 5.16pm.

10.4 Community Services Reports

Nil

10.5 Office of the CEO Reports

Nil

10.6 Committee Reports

Nil

11. MOTIONS OF WHICH PREVIOUS NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

Nil

12. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF WHICH DUE NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

Nil

13. URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY PERSON PRESIDING OR BY DECISION

Nil

14. MATTERS FOR WHICH THE MEETING IS CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC

Nil

15. CLOSURE

There being no further business, the Presiding Member closed the meeting at 5.17pm.