



**Chief Executive Officer Attachments  
Wednesday, 15 October 2014**

REPORT NUMBER	REPORT TITLE AND ATTACHMENT DESCRIPTION	PAGE NUMBER(S)
9.4.2	<b>Minutes of the Special Electors Meeting 15 September 2014</b> "Unconfirmed" minutes of the Special Electors meeting held on 15 September 2014 (including Officer comments in relation to the Special Electors meeting)	<b>1</b>

# **MINUTES FOR SPECIAL MEETING OF ELECTORS**

Monday, 15 September 2014

Muchea Hall  
Archibald Street  
Muchea

Commencement: 7.09 pm

Closure: 9.07 pm



**These minutes will be confirmed at the Ordinary Meeting of Council to be held on Wednesday, 15 October 2014.**

**SIGNED BY**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Person presiding at meeting which minutes were confirmed

**DATE**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Disclaimer**

The purpose of this Council meeting is to discuss and, where possible, make resolutions about items appearing on the agenda.

Whilst Council has the power to resolve such items and may in fact, appear to have done so at the meeting, no person should rely on or act on the basis of such decision or on any advice or information provided by a member or officer, or on the content of any discussion occurring, during the course of the meeting.

Persons should be aware that the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1995* (section 5.25 (e)) establish procedures for revocation or rescission of a Council decision. No person should rely on the decisions made by Council until formal advice of the Council decision is received by that person.

The Shire of Chittering expressly disclaims liability for any loss or damage suffered by any person as a result of relying on or acting on the basis of any resolution of Council, or any advice or information provided by a member or officer, or the content of any discussion occurring, during the course of the Council meeting.

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\* indicates separate attachments

## **1. ATTENDANCE**

The Presiding Member declared the meeting open at 7.09 pm

## **2. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE / APOLOGIES**

### **2.1 Attendance**

The following members were in attendance:

Cr Robert Hawes	President (Presiding Member)
Cr Michelle Rossouw	Deputy
Cr Sandra Clarke	
Cr Doreen Mackie	
Cr Don Gibson	
Cr Barni Norton	

The following staff were in attendance:

Mr Gary Tuffin	Chief Executive Officer
Ms Jean Sutherland	Executive Manager Corporate Services
Ms Karen Dore	Economic Development Officer

The following ratepayers were in attendance:

1.	Jill Boerma	Muchea
2.	Vicki Smit	Muchea
3.	Glenn Andrews	Muchea
4.	Louise Andrews	Muchea
5.	Harry Testoni	Muchea
6.	Bevan Francis	Muchea
7.	Arthur Blewitt	Lower Chittering
8.	Wendy Gellard	Lower Chittering
9.	Kay Lambourne	Muchea
10.	Ted Lambourne	Muchea
11.	Carol Cumalkovs	Muchea
12.	Ronald Cumalkovs	Muchea
13.	Nigel Hunt	Lower Chittering
14.	Robyn Hunt	Lower Chittering
15.	Glen Pringle	Lower Chittering
16.	Greg Norrish	Lower Chittering
17.	Josene Norrish	Lower Chittering
18.	Colin Mattingly	Muchea
19.	Maria Mattingly	Muchea
20.	Nevil Alexander	Muchea
21.	Chris Ellyard	Muchea
22.	Michelle Ellyard	Muchea
23.	Jamie Turner	Muchea

24.	Justin Dawson	Lower Chittering
25.	Neil Bonser	Muchea
26.	Roslyn Bonser	Muchea
27.	Peter Gunn	Lower Chittering
28.	Chris Durey	Lower Chittering
29.	Dennis Harvey	Muchea
30.	Maxine Harvey	Muchea
31.	Mark Brunini	Muchea
32.	Frank Blanchfield	Muchea
33.	Graham Belgrove	Lower Chittering
34.	Robyn Belgrove	Lower Chittering
35.	Jenny Marshall	Lower Chittering
36.	Mike Clark	Muchea
37.	Deb Clark	Muchea
38.	Gordon Carter	Chittering
39.	Maurus Ward	Chittering
40.	Elizabeth Nobes	Bindoon
41.	Frank Schubert	Bindoon
42.	Mike Savy	Muchea
43.	Daphne Mackey	Muchea
44.	Robert Ekholm	Muchea
45.	Graham McAlpine	Muchea
46.	Michael Minchin	Muchea
47.	Katarina Pringle	Lower Chittering
48.	Travis Taylor	Lower Chittering
49.	Craig Lofthouse	Muchea
50.	Ian Wheeler	Lower Chittering
51.	Clay Millar	Muchea
52.	Andrea Millar	Muchea
53.	Keith Macey	Muchea
54.	Kylie Hughes	Muchea
55.	Brendan Hughes	Muchea
56.	Paul Martin	Muchea
57.	Ashley Launer	Muchea
58.	Tina Launer	Muchea
59.	Ruth Gibson	Bindoon
60.	Lois Jones	Bindoon
61.	Graeme Donaldson	Bindoon
62.	Ian Campbell	Bindoon
63.	Olive Campbell	Bindoon
64.	Luke Gibson	Bindoon
65.	Alex Mackie	Chittering
66.	Carol Maguire	Muchea
67.	Louise Yates	Muchea
68.	Nicholas Angel	Muchea
69.	Neville Abrams	Lower Chittering
70.	Tara de Beaux	Lower Chittering
71.	Mark de Beaux	Lower Chittering
72.	Sarah de Beaux	Lower Chittering
73.	Beverley Holland	Muchea

74.	James Maguire	Muchea
75.	Hartley Read	Lower Chittering
76.	Yvonne Ong	Muchea
77.	Phillippa Ong	Muchea
78.	Laurie Bush	Lower Chittering
79.	Cliff Harris	Bindoon
80.	Pamela Wheeler	Lower Chittering
81.	Keith Macey	Muchea
82.	Robyn Macey	Muchea
83.	Steve Vallance	Muchea
84.	Esther Vallance	Muchea
85.	Natalie Vallance	Muchea
86.	Dennis Badcock	Bindoon
87.	Tom Connolly	Muchea
88.	Krystyna Winter	Chittering
89.	David Barnard	Lower Chittering
90.	Alison Barnard	Lower Chittering
91.	Peter Scott	Lower Chittering
92.	Bernie Erhard	Bindoon
93.	Peter Chick	Gingin
94.	Josephine Chick	Gingin
95.	Jean Kerr	Bindoon
96.	John Curtin	Bindoon
97.	Alan Barnes	Bindoon
98.	Geoff Parrott	Bindoon
99.	Anne Parrott	Bindoon
100.	Phillip Surtees	Lower Chittering
101.	Bernard Herrera	Muchea
102.	Pat Herrera	Muchea
103.	Walter Zemunik	Bindoon
104.	Ida Zemunik	Bindoon
105.	Dorothy From	Bindoon
106.	Domenico Yozzi	Muchea
107.	Glenys Yozzi	Muchea
108.	Louise Yozzi	Muchea
109.	Phillip Lefroy	Mooliabeenee
110.	Joy Lefroy	Mooliabeenee
111.	Les Parsons	Bindoon
112.	Maxine Parsons	Bindoon
113.	Jan Stagbouer	Bindoon
114.	Lee Martin	Bindoon
115.	Clint O'Neil	Chittering
116.	Alec Evans	Muchea
117.	Paul Groves	Bindoon
118.	Robert Taylor	Bindoon
119.	Sonja Taylor	Bindoon
120.	Derek Tabor	Mooliabeenee
121.	Patricia Tabor	Mooliabeenee
122.	Ernie Males	Mooliabeenee
123.	Gwyneth Males	Mooliabeenee

124.	Robert Rogers	Muchea
125.	Richard Lanman	Chittering
126.	Sarah Lanman	Chittering
127.	Emily Lanman	Chittering
128.	Brian Bell	Lower Chittering
129.	Dierdre Bell	Lower Chittering
130.	Kim Fewster	Muchea
131.	Jeff Loudon	Wannamal
132.	Ruth Loudon	Wannamal
133.	Ed Walsh	Bindoon
134.	Rhonda Walsh	Bindoon
135.	Leona Savy	Muchea
136.	Thomas Richter	Muchea
137.	Roswitha Richter	Muchea
138.	Johan Rossouw	Lower Chittering
139.	Judith Connolly	Muchea
140.	Mark Penketh	Lower Chittering
141.	Gavin Rutherford	Bindoon
142.	Michelle Rutherford	Bindoon
143.	Vincent Thomasson	Lower Chittering
144.	Jane Thomasson	Lower Chittering
145.	Robyn Browne	Muchea

Note: The above attendance list has been taken from the attendance register that was requested be completed when entering the hall .

146.	Bill Nobes	Bindoon
147.	June From	Bindoon
148.	Bob Rogers	Muchea

## **2.2 Apologies**

Cr Alex Douglas	
Mr Azhar Awang	Executive Manager Development Services
Mr Jim Garrett	Executive Manager Technical Services
Mrs Karen Parker	Manager Human Resources
David Stalker	Bindoon – who requested his letter be tabled.

## **2.3 Approved leave of absence**

Nil



### **3. PURPOSE OF MEETING**

The Shire President welcomed those present to this Special Meeting of Electors called under section 5.28 of the *Local Government Act 1995* to discuss the matters raised by the community.

The Shire President read the following preamble;

*The request for a special Meeting of Electors received by the Shire of Chittering requested a meeting to discuss:*

- (1) The size of rate rises into the future*
- (2) The encouragement and support of volunteers in the Shire*
- (3) The transparency, accuracy and accountability of Shire communications*

*Under the Local Government Act these are the only items that the meeting can deal with tonight. If those in attendance have a question, statement or motion, it will need to relate to these matters.*

*In accordance with the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996, as Shire President I will preside over this special meeting of electors and have determined following procedure will be followed:*

- (1) All present are required to sign the attendance register at the entry to the hall, including name and address.*
- (2) Speakers must be Electors of the Shire of Chittering.*
- (3) The proceedings will be taped for the purpose of production of the minutes and speakers are requested to use the microphones each time they speak.*
- (4) I have no objection to the recording of the meeting by individuals.*
- (5) Motions from Electors will be read aloud to ensure that everyone is clear about what they are voting on.*
- (6) I will call for a mover and a seconder for a motion.*
- (7) No motion or amendment is open to debate until it has been seconded. Only one amendment on any one motion shall be received at a time and such amendment shall be disposed of before any further amendment can be received; but any number of amendments may be proposed.*
- (8) Upon a motion being proposed, I will call for speakers to address the Chair.*
- (9) When addressing the meeting, a person is to—*
  - (a) rise and move to the isle and wait for a Shire officer to give you a microphone;*
  - (b) state your name for recording in the minutes;*
  - (c) address the meeting through the person presiding;*
  - (d) limit questions/statements to fact - not opinion or supposition.*
- (10) The mover of a motion (but not the mover of an amendment) has the right of reply, and this closes the debate.*
- (11) An elector may rise and move without discussion "That the question be now put", which, on being duly seconded and carried by a majority, will result in submission of the motion at once to the meeting, after the mover has replied.*
- (12) The Shire President will then ask for a vote on the motion on the floor.*

- (13) *Each Elector has one vote. An Elector does not have to vote.*
- (14) *Voting is determined by show of hands.*
- (15) *A simple majority carries the vote.*
- (16) *Minutes of this meeting will be available for inspection by members of the public shortly following the meeting. Any motions arising from the meeting requiring action will be presented to the next available Ordinary meeting of Council for consideration.*

*The decisions of this meeting are not binding on the Council, but as required by the Local Government Act 1995, the reasons for any Council decision of this meeting are to be recorded in the minutes of the council meeting.*

*As the organiser of the request for the meeting, I give Mr Steve Vallance the first opportunity to address the meeting before inviting electors wishing to address the meeting.*

*In terms of voting, attendees have already been asked to register as electors on entry. I request that if there are any members of the public present that are not electors of the Shire of Chittering that you refrain from voting or influencing the debate.*

Jan Stagbouer stated that under Section 5.26 ratepayers were considered electors and should be eligible to vote.

Cr Hawes thanked Mrs Stagbouer for her information.

### **3.1 The size of rate rises into the future**

Mr Vallance made reference to the Shire's Corporate Business Plan and its financial assumption in relation to future rate increases being unacceptable.

Steve Vallance proposed the following motion:

**That until and unless an agreement is reached with the Chittering electors the Chittering Shire Council will ensure that all future rate rises will be limited to and will not exceed the CPI of the previous year.**

Ian Wheeler seconded the motion.

#### **Officer comment:**

The Shire's Corporate Plan produced in 2012/13 had made an assumption that it would be necessary for an 8% increase to fund the community priorities that were identified in the Strategic Community Plan (SCP). These assumptions are not fixed and can be amended at any time subject to community direction. The Plan is reviewed annually.

**Rates revenue represents (\$5,099,362/\$11,018,280) = 46% of council's total revenue**

The above motion is very broad and would be very difficult to execute, as firstly how many electors constitute enough (10%, 20%.... of the population) to demand the level of future rate rises. Secondly it is the responsibility of Council as a collective group to decide what is an appropriate rate increase, based on the budget process.

The special electors meeting had representation of 148 residents/ratepayers, which represents 2.9% (148/4,996) of the total population. Not all in attendance voted on each and every matter discussed.

Is CPI the most appropriate measure to use when considering future rates rises, given it should really be set to meet the community's priorities as established in the SCP? The amount of rates to be raised is set by the rate setting statement in accordance with the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*.

The rate setting statement is pivotal to determining the amount required to be made up from rates and whether a balanced, surplus or deficit budget is adopted. It has the features of an income statement, the cash flow statement and a capital works program. The financial resources required and applied are summarised in this one statement.

Note, a local government cannot (without the Minister's approval) adopt an annual budget with a surplus or deficit of more than 10% of the budget deficiency.

Councillors have been elected by the electors to represent them, and make appropriate decisions on their behalf, including rate rises based on community priorities. The make-up of a Council can change every two years subject to the results of the election, and with that there could be a change in focus. Therefore, it is not considered appropriate to provide a commitment of this nature for future Councils.

General discussion undertaken before the motion was put

**Graeme Donaldson** (263 Tea Tree Road, Bindoon) a ratepayer of 58years, stated he was speaking on behalf of worried ratepayers, and stated there is a lot of battlers in Bindoon. He felt that we need to tighten our belts and live within our means, and that Council could simply keep increasing the rate in the dollar to rescue themselves out of any financial binds that they get in, no matter how reckless they are with their overspending and he asked the fellows running the Council "what sort of experience have you had in the business world?". He did not expect an answer now. He stated that the receipt of rates notices by people who have no money is a terribly worrying thing. He stated that thought half of the people present at the meeting would be pensioners.

Mr Donaldson asked how many cars were currently used by Council and staff.

*The Shire President advised that there was a total inventory of 20, which the Chief Executive Officer corrected to 16.*

**Officer comment:**

There is currently a total of 17 Shire vehicles, being 9 utilities and 8 sedans.

In 2012 the position of Manager of Parks & Gardens was made redundant when the current incumbent resigned. The vehicle for this position was sold and not replaced.

In 2013 the when we had another resignation the Planners vehicle was sold and not replaced.

Mr. Donaldson asked for clarification of how many staff were employed.

*The Chief Executive Officer advised that there were approximately 42.*

**Officer comment:**

2010/11 - 41 FTE

2011/12 – 40 FTE – Executive Manager Technical Services position vacant as at 30 June 2012.

2012/13 – 43 FTE – Appointment of Executive Manager Technical Services, Economic Development Officer and a Community Development Officer.

2013/14 - 44 FTE – An additional work crew position was created.

These FTE's are as at 30 June of each financial year.

A new position (Compliance Officer) was created in 2014/15 to deal with growing complaints received in relation to breaches of Development Approvals, inappropriate land uses, building issues, and Fire Mitigation services (Fire break inspections).

Currently there are no identified additional staff positions in the Shire Workforce Plan for 2015/16.

Mr Donaldson asked how much the staff owed on the vehicles.

*The Chief Executive Officer advised that there was nil owing by staff on vehicles.*

Mr Donaldson asked for clarification that there was no hire purchase or lease.

*The Chief Executive Officer advised that the grader was purchased through a loan.*

Mr Donaldson stated that he was trying to get the message through that he felt that there was over expenditure on staff and equipment meaning a need to crack down.

**Officer comment:**

An appropriate level of plant and equipment must be maintained to ensure staff can undertake their roles. Council has a 10 year Plant & Equipment replacement program that is reviewed annually.

In reply to a statement questioning his qualifications the Chief Executive Officer advised that he had been a "CEO" for approximately fifteen years with a Bachelor of Commerce with a double major in Accounting and Finance. He further advised that none of the Local Governments for which he had been responsible had ever faced financial difficulty and nor is the Shire of Chittering facing any financial difficulties, we are currently running a balanced budget.

**Michael Savy** (196 Philmore Street, Muchea) stated that he moved in 1993 as this was a friendly area and the prices were right. Over the last ten years rates have quadrupled and the Muchea community aren't seeing a lot for it, a little oval down the road, a bit of work on the Hall, not much happening to roads and the verge gets mowed once a year – this for \$2,400 in rates. What are you going to do to benefit us?

**Officer comment:**

Proposed 2014/15 Budgeted expense for Muchea (Op & Capital) \$939,568

Total 2014/15 Budgeted GRV rates to be collected from Muchea \$658,724

**Bill Nobes** (74 Pioneer Drive, Bindoon) stated that he had lived in Bindoon since 1986/87 (house was built) and that since that time there had been no development in Chittering that has benefitted us in any way. Always read about what a magnificent job the Council is doing but compared with a lot of Council's it stinks, he suggested that there should be a vote of no confidence. He suggested that he would like to table a paper with the Council tonight for others to read [not received]. He stated that he was at the point of packing up and leaving Bindoon. He felt that it wasn't only the rates that were

an issue; it was what the Council were planning for the future, taking the gross rate instead of the UV rate and what will come from this. He felt that old people don't want to live under a threat of this unknown impact.

**Officer comment:**

Council has received numerous requests over the years to introduce a more equitable way of charging rates across the Shire. In fact this matter has been a KPI/KRA of a number of previous CEOs since 2004.

Currently, many rural residential properties are being rated on the same basis as broad acre farms.

The basis for local government rates is the unimproved value (UV) for land used predominantly for rural purposes, and gross rental value (GRV) for land used for predominantly non-rural purposes.

It is Council's view that the distribution of the rate burden under the existing Uniform General Rating System is unfair/inequitable.

At the Ordinary Council Meeting held 20 February 2013, Council endorsed the Information Paper prepared by Dominic Carbone & Associates and conducted workshops in Lower Chittering on 15 May 2013 and Bindoon on 21 May 2013 to discuss matters addressed in the information paper.

The Shire of Chittering is now investigating its current rating strategy and is undertaking a land use study of rural properties to ascertain current land use, trends in rural valuation and the appropriate methods of rating according to land use as required pursuant to section 6.28 of the *Local Government Act 1995*.

In implementing a suitable rating system Council will observe the principles of:

- (1) Objectivity
- (2) Fairness and Equity
- (3) Consistency
- (4) Transparency
- (5) Administrative Efficiency

The Department of Local Government Operational Guidelines No 2 – Changing Methods of Valuation of Land identifies four key factors to be considered when assessing the predominant use of land-

- (1) Activity conducted on the land
- (2) Development of the land
- (3) Income
- (4) Town Planning Scheme restrictions

Once the review of predominant land use has been completed, it will be necessary to request a revaluation from the Valuer General's Office (Landgate) of those properties identified for a change of valuation method.

When the revaluations have been completed Council will undertake Rate modelling to adjust the rate in the dollar to achieve a more equitable rating system, whilst maintaining close to historical rate increases.

**Mark Penketh** (222 Holstein Loop, Lower Chittering) stated that he had purchased land in 2006 when he was the Shire Engineer. He gave information regarding the fact that his land was currently “UV” and he would get a rate decrease when “GRV” was imposed, however his rates would double when a house was built on the land as a result of the way that “GRV” works. He felt that that kind of rate shock would stifle new development, particularly in the southern part of the Shire. He felt that because the Shire does not have differential rating by locality there would be a “GRV” rate shock every time the Valuer General revalues rates. He indicated that if the property was valued every three to five years and the *valuation goes up 15%, and even if the Shire kept the rate at 3% CPI, there would be a rate shock of 18.5% every three years.* Mark stated that there were a number of things under various codes of practice that fall under Corporate Governance which in this country generally works on the principle that the organisation follows the Code of Practice and if it can’t offers an explanation of why not. Given that WALGA have written the *Systematic Sustainability Study* (Revenue Expert Team, October 2007), the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australia has written *A Quick Guide Meeting ISO 55001 Requirements for Asset Management* (February 2014) and the Australian Centre for Excellence for Local Government has written *Service Delivery Review, A How To Manual for Local Government* (June 2014). Mark asked “can the Council explain why it is not using these codes, guidelines as they address all the issues affecting costs and future rate increases?”

**Officer comment**

Council has no control over the revaluation process, as it is undertaken by Landgate (Valuer General) every year for UV properties and every five years GRV properties (Townsites – Muchea, Bindoon & Wannamal).

In relation to the question asked above the following information is provided;

The Western Australia Local Government Association (WALGA) released a report titled “*In Your Hands*” *Shaping the Future of Local Government in Western Australia (SSS Report) Dec 2006.* This report contained several recommendations aimed at creating practical responses to the range of challenges faced by local governments. Since this time the Department of Local Government has introduced the Integrated Planning Framework.

The Framework has been developed as part of the State Government’s Local Government Reform Program.

They reflect a nationally consistent approach to integrated planning as expressed by the Council of Australian Governments’ Local Government Planning Ministers’ Council.

The Framework and Guidelines have been developed with input from:

- Institute of Public Works Engineering Australia
- WA Local Government Association
- Local Government Managers Association (WA Division)
- Department of Planning
- Department of Treasury and Finance
- Department of Regional Development and Lands

Council has recently had two of its plans assessed (Corporate Business Plan & Strategic Community) by the Department of Local Government who advised they met the guidelines.

**Justin Dawson** (96 Ayrshire Loop, Lower Chittering) advised that he had built in Lower Chittering in 2002 and loved it. He attended the last Ordinary Meeting of Council [August] and was interested in the item regarding investigating the administration charges of the Shire, which was defeated on a 4/2 vote against having a look at the charges. He felt that the Shire was not pulling back on expenditure like private business was currently doing. The motion was put back to January. Justin asked “why wait until then [January] until looking in the charges, they should be checked out now?”

*The Chief Executive Officer advised that as per Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations there is a requirement for a Budget Review, between January and March each year. Whilst I was away for the last Council meeting it's my understanding that a Councillor had requested that this process (Budget Review) be brought forward so that administration costs and plant purchases could be looked at, and whether there could be any reallocations made.*

**Robert Taylor** (903 Wells Glover Rd, Bindoon) believed that at a recent Council meeting a Councillor who is elected by the ratepayers put forward a motion to trim the Budget. He congratulated the Shire on balancing the budget, but suggested that a surplus would be better which could subsidise the recent imposed rubbish collection charges. This charge has resulted in rate increases of 30% to 50%. He asked “did anybody second that motion?” ... “no”. He stated that there was no discussion. It was Cr Gibson that put that motion forward.

Robert asked “can you please explain to me why you and the other Councillors refused to even discuss that matter, because wouldn't a surplus in a Budget be fantastic, if you'd been able to trim down some of these expenses as Mr Donaldson has said”.

**Officer comment**

In reference to Cr Gibson's motion (25 June 2014 - OCM) there was no discussion on the matter as the motion lapsed for want of a seconder.

The Shire of Chittering (Council Meetings) Local Law 2014 states:

**10.2 Motions to be supported**

- (1) A substantive motion or an amendment to a substantive motion is not open to debate until it has been seconded.

Robert asked “42 staff, do they do 35 to 40 hours work or are they just in attendance?”

Robert asked “16 vehicles, who drives them? The CEO naturally, and a couple of important people should have a vehicle but it's time to tighten your belts..”

He felt that as times are tough the Shire couldn't afford to have 16 cars sitting around (in the sun, depreciating in value) and that if Shire staff wanted to live in Perth they should work in Perth.

**Graeme Donaldson** asked the Chief Executive Officer “do you have a house in Bindoon?”

*The Chief Executive Officer advised that he did rent a house in Bindoon.*

Graeme asked “is the house subsidised by the Shire.

*The Chief Executive Officer confirmed that it was.*



Graeme stated that this was wastage and that there was no future for a business run like that.

**Steve Vallance** (86 Archibald Street, Muchea) advised the meeting that when the motion had been voted on there would still be opportunity to speak about rate rises into the future, and solutions / problems. He clarified that this was the first motion of potentially as many as the meeting would like to put.

*The Shire President put the motion to the meeting.*

**Cr Barni Norton** (4 Bottlebrush, Bindoon) requested that the motion be read again to ensure that everyone was clear on what was being voted on.

Mr Vallance read the motion out aloud.

**ELECTORS' MOTION (3.1.1)**

**Moved Steve Vallance / Seconded Ian Wheeler**

**That until and unless an agreement is reached with the Chittering electors the Chittering Shire Council will ensure that all future rate rises will be limited to and will not exceed the CPI of the previous year.**

**THE MOTION WAS PUT AND DECLARED CARRIED  
BY A SHOW OF HANDS**

**Recommendation**

***That Council***

- 1. receive and note the motion (3.1.1)***
- 2. subject to community priorities, give consideration to future proposed rate increases when reviewing its Corporate Business Plan.***

*The Shire President called for further motions on the subject.*

Mark Penketh proposed the following motion:

**All future budgets will have transparency in reporting on income and expenditure in order to allow the community to better understand the level of costs being associated to cost centres.**

Gordon Carter seconded the motion.

**General discussion undertaken before the motion was put**

**Mark Penketh** spoke to the motion, stating that there were a number of costs that had come up in recent budget analysis, namely, the President's allowance has increased from \$8,000 to \$15,000 in this financial year – an 87.5% increase. He noted that under the maximum Local Government Allowance, under the *Salaries and Tribunals Act 1975*, it is linked to the operating revenue of 2013-2014 which was \$7,110,282. It is times'd by point two of one percent, meaning that the maximum rate that the President can be paid this year is \$14,220.56



### Officer comment

This matter has been discussed with the Department of Local Government and UHY Haines Norton (Council's auditors). The operating revenue used in the calculation as determined by SAT is to include grants and contributions for the development of assets. Therefore, the calculation is as follows:

Operating Revenue (as per Operating Statement)	7,162,116
Grants for development of assets (as per Operating Statement)	<u>1,238,383</u>
Total Revenue	8,400,499

\$8,400,499 x 0.02% = \$16,800 (as per the 13/14 financial report). The figures quoted in the budget were an estimate as the year end process had not been finalised, which is often standard practice.

Therefore, the above statement made by Mr Penketh is not correct; the maximum rate that the President can be paid is \$15,000 as this is the lesser of the two amounts stated in the SAT determination.

He further stated that the Deputy President's allowance had increased by 50%, from \$2,000 to \$3,000. It is set, under the Salaries and Tribunals Act to 25% of the President's figure. He continued, advising that Elected Members costs increased from 2013-2014 by 23%, from \$259,852 to \$320,874.

He suggested that statements made about the population growth in the Shire were incorrect due to the fact that only 28 new rateable properties were produced in the last financial year. He observed that if you equated this to an average 2.7 persons per property it would equal 76 additional people, or a 1.5% population growth. He felt that the budget increases were based on huge population growth which is not being seen. He stated that current Council documents referred to estimated population predictions for 2016 of 5,900 (from 4,996 now). He referred to previous Council documents, including sporting facilities, which quoted that figure at 8,000 in 2016. He explained that to 'hit the target' we would need 335 new rateable properties to be created in this financial year. He stated that only 508 new rateable properties had been created in the last 8 years (average 64 per year), this would mean the Shire would need a 528% increase in subdivisions this year. He felt that in comparison to the Shire of Capel (a high growth Shire similar to Chittering) which had a 4% population increase, a 3% increase in dwellings and a 4% increase in rateable properties that this would be unlikely.

### Officer comment

The above statement ignores rateable properties that previously existed as vacant land which have now constructed family homes on them. In time the growth rate may slow when all vacant land has been built on and no new rateable properties are created. However, this is not expected for some time yet.

Building Type	2011	2012	2013	2014*	Total
Approved Class 1a (House)	70	39	82	60	251
Other - patios, shed, pools..	41	84	108	144	377
<b>Total building applications</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>628</b>
Average 2.7 persons per home x class 1a	<b>189</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>678</b>

\* 2014 figures are year to date as at the end of September 2014.

It can be seen from the table above that 251 new homes have been created in the last 4 years, which equates to 678 new residents, based on 2.7 persons per dwelling (as used by Mr Penketh).

Lastly, Council never budgets by expected growth in its rates revenue other than a minor provision (2014/15 \$10,000) for interim rates, therefore population growth is not taken into consideration, as has been suggested above by Mr Penketh.

Population growth is considered when considering long term financial plans and services levels, but never in the annual budgeting process.

He stated that planning fees appeared to have gone down from the 2014-2015 Budget from \$142,000 to \$100,000 this year, which would obviously be counterintuitive to a massive growth increase. He alluded to the budget planning costs having increased by 14.9% and the planning fees achieved by Council have decreased by 30%.

He stated that the Shire had 42 staff now, yet he felt that development had peaked in 2007-2008 of 435, he wondered why staff numbers were increasing.

He also questioned why there was a need for a second grader. He advised that in 2007 there was 173km of dirt road in the Shire, whereas now the Shire has 143km. He advised with regards to the firebreaks, and the 3-year contract that has just been issued [for the firebreaks], the Shire used to do both the firebreaks and the road grading with one tractor and one grader, now the Shire needs two graders and have hired out someone else to do the firebreaks.

**Officer comment:**

Council has a total road network of approximately 404kms that it is responsible for maintaining. This network continues to grow with the release of each new subdivision or subdivision stage.

He stated that in 2007-2008 Council had 32 employees who achieved those high numbers.

Mark asked "where has the productivity gone?"

Mark's other concern was that in 2005-2006 the average annual Council employee cost was \$35,980.33 whereas for 2014-2015 the average was \$84,316.07. He surmised that even with a 3% CPI increase from the 2005-2006 figures that would have been \$46,946 or a 180% increase from CPI indexed costs. He advised that that was why he had moved the motion.

**Officer comment:**

The above figures quoted appear to ignore the part time staff and casual staff.

The Shire's fulltime equivalent (FTE) count is currently 45.

Casual staff salary & wages costs accounts for \$106,968 of the total employee costs.

Total employee costs for 2013/14 (Less casual employee wages) = \$72,892 per employee

Total employee budgeted costs for 2014/15 (Less casual employee wages) = \$77,434

This represents a 6% increase from the prior year.

The salary and wage expenses increased by 2% from \$2,937,630 (2013/14 Actual) to \$3,134,030 (Current budget). This equates to an average employee salary/wage cost of **\$68,971** per person.

The Full-Time Adult Average Weekly Total Earnings in May 2014 were \$1,516.90 or \$78,878 pa (Source - Australian Bureau of Statistics)

A large portion of Council works were previously undertaken by external contractors, however, in recent years Council has elected to reduce costs and create local employment opportunities by taking many of the out sourced works back in-house.

*The Shire President asked if there were any other speakers.*

**Mick Minchin** (11 Harsden Close, Muchea) advised that he had been a resident of Muchea for 4 years, he advised that the current population equated to 119 residents (an estimated 60 adults) per employee, he stated that he didn't know what the rate/ratio normally is, however, he felt that it seemed a high proportion of shire employees per-capita in the shire.

**Officer comment:**

Shire of Chittering	113	(4,996/44 - staff)
Shire of Toodyay	100	(4,686/47 - staff)
Shire of Gingin	99	(5,243/53 - staff)
Shire of York	63	(3,581/63 - staff)

Of the 3 other comparable peri-urban sized LG (excluding Northam) the Shire of Chittering has the lowest number of staff and highest number of residents to service per staff member at 116 residents, per staff member.

**Alan Barnes** (364 Forest Hills Parade, Bindoon) commended Mark [Penketh] but defended the amount paid to Councillors as he acknowledged that it wasn't a lot of money for the effort put in. He finished by saying that that wasn't to say that the Shire couldn't be more prudent and thrifty to make the dollar go further.

*The Chief Executive Officer advised that the Elected Members' remuneration is set by the Salaries and Wage Tribunal and each Local Government Area is within a band. Within that band the Council elects by a majority what they will pay themselves. Currently none of the Shire's Elected Members receive what they are fully entitled to under that regime.*

*The Chief Executive Officer advised that in relation to the other figures, he would look into the information provided, noting that in relation to Shire employee numbers related to population, Chittering is on the lower side. For example, to put this into perspective, York has 63 residents per 1 staff member, Northam is 115, Toodyay is 100 and Gingin is 99. This is not to say this is right, just a comparison. We are currently on the lower side of staff numbers for a local government of our size.*

**Graeme Donaldson** asked the Chief Executive Officer "are you satisfied with the way that Council's being run?"

*The Chief Executive Officer replied that as a general rule he thought 'yes', but that was not to say that there isn't room for improvement and things couldn't be looked at closely as things do get missed. He advised that the recent 2-day Audit had been clean with no issues showing that the Shire was*

*financially sustainable and in good shape. He further advised that the purpose of the meeting was for the community to provide feedback and for the Council to listen.*

**Bill Nobes** asked the Chief Executive Officer “are you aware that the CEO of Toodyay is under investigation, not the present one but the one before, and are you also aware in Toodyay that the last 3 CEO’s are under investigation for doing certain things. Please don’t use someone that is under investigation.”

*The Chief Executive Officer advised that he was aware of these matters, and explained that the CEO of York had resigned because of indifferences with the Council. He further stated that his understanding was that the Department of Local Government were looking into the situation through a probity audit. With regards to the Shire of Toodyay he advised that his understanding was that the matter was investigated by the Department of Local Government and the Corruption and Crime Commission, the only remaining option for the now appointed Council was to take Civil action, which is what they have done in relation to the former CEO and Shire President.*

**Mark Penketh** added that the average employee cost rose between 2013-2014 and 2014-2015, from \$69,922.18 to \$84,316.07 - 21% increase. He also compared the population, budget and Elected Member’s payments for Chittering with other Shires in the same Band (3) of the SAT Act.

Shire	Population	Operating Revenue	Average Councillor Cost
Chittering	4,996	\$8,328,000	\$22,700
Murray	16,304	\$19.2m	\$22,000
Serpentine-Jarrahdale	21,162	\$23.1m	\$16,938
Capel	17,854	\$16.5m	\$13,478
Collie	9,692	\$9.7m	\$9,964

*The Chief Executive Officer queried whether the figures quoted included training / refreshments and other expenditure, as this could sway the figures.*

Mark confirmed that it included all of the add-ons except the administration charges.

Mark re-read the motion to the meeting;

**All future budgets will have transparency in reporting on income and expenditure in order to allow the community to better understand the level of costs being associated to cost centres.**

*The Chief Executive Officer sought clarification from Mr Penketh. He advised that the Shire gave a line-by-line account of expenditure and income.*

Mark Penketh referred to the landfill costs for Muchea noting that it was a one-line summary, compared to engineering costs which could be broken down to the grader blades. He felt that the community could not see the staff costs for the landfill nor the depreciation of the equipment, or any other contractual costs.

**ELECTORS' MOTION 3.1.2**

**Moved Mark Penketh / Seconded Gordon Carter**

**All future budgets will have transparency in reporting on income and expenditure in order to allow the community to better understand the level of costs being associated to cost centres.**

**THE MOTION WAS PUT AND DECLARED CARRIED  
BY A SHOW OF HANDS**

**Officer comment**

A review of the Annual Budget has indicated that a more detailed level of reporting could be introduced and will be in future budgets.

**Recommendation**

***That Council***

- (1) receive and note the motion (3.1.2)***
- (2) Amend its future Annual Budgets to provide a greater level of information in relation to various income and expenditure line items.***

*The Shire President called for further motions on the subject.*

**Clinton O'Neil** (2837 Chittering Road, Chittering) stated that in recent times the Council had approved and entered into community servicing contracts that extend beyond the current budget year, which will by their nature significantly impact on the Shire's total expenditures, to be funded by existing ratepayers, now and into the future. It was his understanding that limited, if any, community consultation was undertaken prior to Council committing ratepayers to significant forward costs.

Clint O'Neil proposed the following motion:

**That Council, as a matter of urgency, develops and implements a community servicing policy that clearly identifies:**

- (1) that prior to Council's consideration of entering into outsourced community service contracts, Council will fully engage and consult with ratepayers on the scope and nature of the proposed service contract and identify the financial implications on ratepayers.**
- (2) that ratepayer funded in-house Shire staff, equipment and resources will always be the first preference for the provision of community servicing.**
- (3) In the event that (2) above cannot be reasonably satisfied (with justification) then as a second preference Council engages the services of local businesses, either alone or as a consortium, to undertake the community service works.**
- (4) In the event that (2) and (3) cannot be reasonably satisfied (with justification) that Council advertises for outsourced community servicing and that where only one tender submission is received, Council withdraws the tender and fully re-examines the scope and nature of the community servicing proposal.**
- (5) that any outsourced community service contracts are limited to a one year rolling renewal and subject to conditions, inclusive of budget constraints.**

Gordon Carter seconded the motion.

The motion was put without discussion.

**ELECTORS' MOTION 3.1.3**

**Moved Clint O'Neil / Seconded Gordon Carter**

**That Council, as a matter of urgency, develops and implements a community servicing policy that clearly identifies:**

- (1) That prior to Council's consideration of entering into outsourced community service contracts, Council will fully engage and consult with ratepayers on the scope and nature of the proposed service contract and identify the financial implications on ratepayers.**
- (2) That ratepayer funded in-house Shire staff, equipment and resources will always be the first preference for the provision of community servicing.**
- (3) In the event that (2) above cannot be reasonably satisfied (with justification) then as a second preference Council engages the services of local businesses, either alone or as a consortium, to undertake the community service works.**
- (4) In the event that (2) and (3) cannot be reasonably satisfied (with justification) that Council advertises for outsourced community servicing and that where only one tender submission is received, Council withdraws the tender and fully re-examines the scope and nature of the community servicing proposal.**
- (5) That any outsourced community service contracts are limited to a one year rolling renewal and subject to conditions, inclusive of budget constraints.**

**THE MOTION WAS PUT AND DECLARED CARRIED  
BY A SHOW OF HANDS**

**Officer comment:**

It has been assumed that Mr O'Neil's motion is in relation to the recently introduced kerbside waste and recycling collection service as this is the only recent tender that had only one tender submission.

The service has been introduced as a compulsory service because of State Government Policy and legislative requirements under the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2007. Like every other local government in the State, it is obligated to meet the targets set to reduce waste to landfill.

The previous system of voluntary separation of recycling materials at the landfills was not working effectively. Before the introduction of the new system the Shire's recovery rate was approximately 3 % which is well short of the 30% target by 2015 or the 50 % target by 2020.

One of the key strategies in the Shire's Strategic Waste Management Plan 2008 and the more recent Strategic Waste Management Review (February 2014) is to introduce the kerbside collection service which will enable the collection, processing and recovery of recyclable materials from the Shire's landfills and re-use in other products. The recovery of recyclable materials plus the compaction of municipal rubbish in the contractor's compaction vehicle will dramatically increase the life of the landfills thereby saving costs to future generations.

Statistics on waste collection for the region indicate that the average amount of waste collected in each bin is 25 kg. While the amount of usage will vary between properties, that is the average. Multiply this by 1500 properties receiving 78 bin collections over the year the annual tonnage is expected to be approximately 3,000 tonnes. Half of this is expected to be recyclable materials. Recyclable materials will be taken to the Materials Recovery Facilities at Bayswater (Transpacific Cleanaway) or Canning Vale (South Metropolitan Regional Council) for further processing. The waste component will be taken to Muchea Landfill.

The saving in landfill space and the proportional increase in the life of the landfill will be of a substantial benefit when you look at the current issue around the state in relation to the lack of such

facilities. When the landfill is full it will cost \$millions to establish new landfill cells by today's environmental standards e.g. membrane lining, gas extraction, leachate recovery, compaction, cover material, etc. This is not to mention the enormous cost of closing and rehabilitating the previous landfill and purchasing new land. Where is this money going to come from?

As a community we could not afford (environmentally or financially) the previous practice of indiscriminately dumping all wastes into landfill. Although there are people in the community who are not happy about paying for the service the overwhelming feedback is that people are in favour and express the opinion that it "is about time".

In relation to point 2 above it is currently our practice to undertake services in-house when it is appropriate for Council to do so.

In regards to point 3 it is always Council's first preference that local business are used provided they are the most advantageous proposal for the benefit of all rate payers. To assist local business tendering, Council has adopted a formal policy on the matter "Regional Price Preference Policy".

The following levels of preference are applied under this policy:

- a) 10% - where the contract is for goods or services, up to a maximum price reduction of \$50,000;*
- b) 5% - where the contract is for construction (building) services, up to a maximum price reduction of \$50,000; or*
- c) 10% - where the contract is for goods or services (including construction (building) services), up to a maximum price reduction of \$500,000, if the local government is seeking tenders for the provision of those goods and services for the first time, due to those goods or services having been, until then, undertaken by the local government.*

Dot point 4 - The document is written to Council's requirements, not to accommodate the needs of tenderers. If the tenderers do not wish to tender that is a commercial decision they make, rewriting a tender to possibility engage more tenderers to tender would not be appropriate. Council did not receive any feedback from any of the Waste tenderers stating that the tender documentation was too complicated.

Lastly, limiting contracts to one year at time for a service that will be ongoing year-after-year for the foreseeable future, generally (in our experiences) results in receiving less interest from tenderers due to the lack of security in tenure, which often leads to this uncertainty being reflected in higher pricing as it is potentially a once off job. Also, the tendering process often requires a substantial investment of resources by Tenderers.

**Recommendation**

***That Council receive and note motion (3.1.3)***

**Jeff Loudon** (2724 Bindoon-Moora Road, Wannamal) queried the meeting, as to why, when there have recently been 7.5% (last year) and 7% rate rises the year before, there were only three people at the Annual Electors Meeting which he thought was held in March in Bindoon, where was everyone



else? He wondered why they were here now complaining about a 6% rise, why weren't you complaining about the 7.5% the previous year?

### **3.2 The encouragement and support of volunteers in the Shire**

**Steve Vallance** stated that there were quite a few activities done by volunteers that the Shire have tried to take over in some ways. He felt that the treatment of the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer was just deplorable, unacceptable. He stated that he was sacked without notice and with no consultation that the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer was going to be replaced. Mr Vallance mentioned somebody he knew who did a voluntary activity over a weekend and had signs out for it who was threatened with fines for not picking them up soon enough after the event. He further stated that there have been a lot of problems with volunteers that they have come to us.

#### **Officer comment:**

Mr Badcock was not relieved from his position without notice.

The matter was brought to Council's attention at its Ordinary Council meeting held on 19 March 2014, for direction 3 months prior to the MOU becoming effective (1/07/14).

In hindsight, the matter could have been handled better, however, at the time it was thought best to get Council direction on the matter first before discussing with the CBFAC & BFAC as the appointment is a Council decision. The CEO has made a personal apology to Dennis (CBFAC) both verbally and in writing, including all CBFAC members.

On Wednesday 9 April 2014, Council held an informal meeting with Mr Badcock and the Community Emergency Services Manager.

A special meeting of the Chittering Bush Fire Advisory Committee (CBFAC) was held on Tuesday, 6 May 2014 to discuss the proposed MOU with CBFAC members before signing and returning the document to DFES.

Council gave final consideration to this matter at its meeting held on 21 May 2014.

Steve Vallance proposed the following motion:

**Council is to actively encourage and support activities undertaken by community Volunteers in the Shire of Chittering.**

Ian Wheeler seconded the motion.

The President asked if anyone would like to speak to the motion.

The motion was put without discussion.

#### **ELECTORS' MOTION 3.2.1**

**Moved Steve Vallance / Seconded Ian Wheeler**

**Council is to actively encourage and support activities undertaken by community volunteers in the Shire of Chittering.**

**THE MOTION WAS PUT AND DECLARED CARRIED  
BY A SHOW OF HANDS**



**Officer comment:**

Council has always and will continue to actively support local volunteers.

**Recommendation**

***That Council receive and note motion (3.2.1)***

Steve Vallance proposed the following motion:

**Any task previously done by Volunteers and taken over by Shire employees will be done to at least the same standard as the Volunteers maintained.**

Wendy Gellard seconded the motion.

**Steve Vallance** stated that his reasoning for the motion was that the Shire has a Community Emergency Services Manager who has taken over the role of the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer without anybody bothering to tell the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer that it was going to happen. A further example is that whereas the Volunteers and the Bush Fire Control Officers used to do firebreak inspections, in this budget the Shire has just employed somebody to do that job. Part of the Compliance Officer's job will be to inspect the firebreaks, which was done by Volunteers and would be to this day without the intrusion of this Community Emergency Services Manager. That's the reason I want to put that motion, if we are going to be paying somebody they should be doing at least the same as the volunteers were doing.

The motion was put without discussion.

**ELECTORS' MOTION 3.2.2**

**Moved Steve Vallance / Seconded Wendy Gellard**

**Any task previously done by volunteers and taken over by Shire employees will be done to at least the same standard as the volunteers maintained.**

**THE MOTION WAS PUT AND DECLARED CARRIED  
BY A SHOW OF HANDS**

**Officer comment:**

Council is not aware of any circumstance where a task that was previously done by volunteers has not continued to be undertaken to at least the same standard. Recent comments received by various CBFAC members and general brigade members suggests that the expected standard is being achieved and they are very happy with the CESM program.

**Recommendation**

***That Council receive and note motion (3.2.2)***

Steve Vallance proposed the following motion:

**The Council and Shire employees will not interfere with the running and management of groups within the Community.**

Maurus Ward seconded the motion.

**Steve Vallance** gave the example of the Anzac Day group that run the Anzac Day have had the Shire trying to take that off them. There are similar things he stated that if someone is running something as Volunteers get off their backs.

General discussion undertaken before the motion was put

**Cr Sandra Clarke** (8 Rangeview Rise, Bindoon) sought clarification on the motion from Steve Vallance, and asked which groups were being referred to.

**Steve Vallance** advised that he had received plenty of feedback, with the Muchea Fire Brigade being particularly unhappy some of them. Anzac Day was another one, but he suggested that he could not list them all.

**Cr Michelle Rossouw** (287 Ayrshire Loop, Lower Chittering) offered to assist the clarification. She reiterated that the motion stated "Council and Shire should stay out of Volunteer groups", however every Councillor is involved in one or more volunteer groups.

**Steve Vallance** clarified that he wasn't saying that Council and Shire employees shouldn't be volunteering, but that Council (as a body) should not take over the activities.

He suggested that he might need to amend the motion to:

**The Council, as a body, will not attempt to take over the running of activities and groups that are currently run by volunteers.**

**Cr Barni Norton** asked for a point of clarity from Steve Vallance. She explained that one of the things that Council (Administration) has put in place are User Groups, so that is the Council Community Development Officer managing User Groups to help them communicate, She asked Steve if he was OK with that.

**Paul Martin** (51 Faull, Muchea) stated that he had been a Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade member since age 16 (30 odd years). He advised that a Fire Control Officer who was elected by the Fire Brigade was put to Council and rejected after he had volunteered for 28 years and as a Fire Control Officer for 8 to 10 years. He stated that he had been rejected because he upset one person. Paul further advised that he then resigned as a Fire Control Officer because there was no support as a Fire Brigade.

*The Chief Executive Officer advised that to his understanding there was more to the story. Muchea Fire Brigade members provided feedback that there had been issues on the fire ground on a couple of occasions. There was reference to a breach of the code of conduct in relation to behaviours and comments made in relation to the Shire and certain staff. Lastly during a Special Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting the same person got up and said the Shire was a joke, nobody gets disciplined. Unfortunately he left Council with no other option after stating that 'you could say whatever you like and nothing's going to happen to you.' Council did not reject him, they advised that for the balance of his term (12 months) he could sit on the sideline. He has not been banned from re-applying at the end of the 12 months. Council is very grateful for the services of all Volunteers, and certainly would not do anything to damage their relationship with local Volunteers.*

**Lee Martin** (6335 Great Northern Highway, Bindoon) stated that he felt that the Fire Brigade was being run by bureaucrats and the Shire. They lack in local community skills. The issues that the Shire has become obsessed with, the Shire has Compliance Officer's and this and that. At one time the Fire Brigade was our community, our ladies when there was a serious incident or something would make scones and run toasted sandwiches out, if someone turned up to a fire in thongs you wouldn't say go home and put a uniform on, you'd tell to shoot down there and direct traffic. Everyone had a purpose. It was an organisation to be proud of. The Council needs to butt out of the little incidents and let a few of the Senior Fire Control Officers handle the matter, there is no value in having an

outside chap as a Chief Fire Control Officer. He will probably be away in the city when there is a fire. Good members are being lost. He stated that he loved and supported the district and volunteerism.

*The Chief Executive Officer advised that action was taken as a last resort. He (the CEO) had met with the person on a prior occasion and then spoke with the previous Chief [Bush Fire Control Officer] a couple of times to deal with the matter in-house as it is not Council's place to get involved in the matter. As a Brigade matter it should be dealt with by the Brigade. The issue was that the situation continued, with the public statement made during the special Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting being the 'straw that broke the camel's back'.*

**Jan Stagbouer** (973 Wells Glover Road, Mooliabeenee) stated that she was appalled with what had happened with the Fire Brigade. In the past the men had sorted out their own problems, it didn't need Shire interference, the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer sorted it out. Now it is a paid person in that position it looks like the Shire is doing the reprimanding. When issues were sorted unofficially we didn't lose anyone. A paid employee shouldn't deal with Volunteers.

*The Chief Executive Officer thanked Jan for her comments and confirmed that the first point of contact had been the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (CBFCO); it was referred to the CBFCO. He (the CEO) advised that his comments were exactly what Jan had just said, that the Shire shouldn't be part of the process and that the Shire don't want to be part of the process, it's a matter for the Brigades to sort out. But unfortunately this situation went on and on and on, culminating in the statement being made at a public meeting which Council could not accept.*

**Wendy Gellard** (Lower Chittering) shared that during the 'bad Swan fire' some years ago which was FESA controlled in Lower Chittering, it started in Swan. Her (Chittering – Swan boundary) property in Swan was in danger and the Lower Chittering 'boys' were not informed. The Lower Chittering 'boys' contacted the District Officer and were told to 'use their head'. That saved my place, that saved my dog and that probably saved me. That's what I'm concerned about we have people coming here not using common sense. I drove past 4 trucks that were waiting for FESA to tell them to go through, I drove through and got to my place, you don't get that type of thing when you have got people from outside from Mundaring that really don't have a clue, local people will go that extra bit and then provided an example of the advantages of local knowledge on a fire ground. We need locals that want to support locals.

**Officer comment:**

The current CESM has been a Bush Fire Brigade member of Kalamunda for approximately 15 years, and has generally established a healthy working relationship with the majority of Chittering Fire Services members.

**Ruth Loudon** (2724 Bindoon-Moora Road, Wannamal) stated that she had been volunteering in the Chittering community for 42 years. She felt that the motion should be reworded as there wasn't an issue with volunteers; it seemed to be just the Fire Brigade. She added that she quite often worked within her local body with the Shire on projects and found the outcomes to be very productive. She requested that not all volunteers like herself be included, as she did not believe that this motion was relevant to all volunteers, rather just a fire brigade.

**ELECTORS' MOTION 3.2.3**

**Moved Steve Vallance / Seconded Maurus Ward**

**The Council, not Councillors, will not interfere with the running and management of groups within the Community.**

**THE MOTION WAS PUT AND DECLARED CARRIED  
BY A SHOW OF HANDS**

*Note: this is not the original nor the amended motion, but was the final motion read aloud by Mr Vallance for the meeting to vote on*

**Officer comment:**

Council is not aware of any circumstance where the Council or a Councillor has tried to interfere with the running and management of groups within the community. No verbal or written complaint has been received by Council in relation to this matter. Council provides a supportive role when requested to assist a community group.

**Recommendation**

***That Council receive and note motion (3.2.3)***

Steve Vallance proposed the following motion:

**People contacting Shire officers will have calls and emails and requests for meetings responded to, not merely acknowledged.**

Graeme Donaldson seconded the motion.

**General discussion undertaken before the motion was put**

**Steve Vallance** stated that an email saying that your email has been received is not a response. The number of people that complain about trying to get in touch with various staff members and administration people and can't, and don't get their messages, emails, letters responded to when people are just trying to get things done in the community.

**Cr Barni Norton** suggested that community members who feel like they are not being heard should "cc" Councillors, all Council addresses are on the Council website. If the community "cc" Councillors they know that their concerns are being heard. She stated this offer was made not because the staff were not doing their job.... if you feel like you are not being heard, I encourage you to "cc" your favourite councillor.

**ELECTORS' MOTION 3.2.4**

**Moved Steve Vallance / Seconded Graeme Donaldson**

**That people contacting Shire officers will have calls and emails and requests for meetings responded to, not merely acknowledged.**

**THE MOTION WAS PUT AND DECLARED CARRIED  
BY A SHOW OF HANDS**

**Officer comment:**

A review of the Shire's Customer Service Charter has been undertaken and is considered appropriate.

Whilst it is unfortunate that occasionally for various reasons, some communications are not responded to in the required timeframe, a stronger focus will be placed in this area to ensure a higher internal compliance rate is achieved in-line with the standards set.

**Recommendation**

***That Council receive and note motion (3.2.4)***

**Jan Stagbouer** stated that the meeting had heard about the 43 or 42 staff members etc, which seemed like 'an awful lot of people'.

Jan Stagbouer proposed the following motion:

**That the number of staff employed in executive and administrative positions to be reduced immediately to reflect the lack of assets in the Shire of Chittering and to allow funds to be put aside to pay for these assets in the future.**

Graeme Donaldson seconded the motion.

**General discussion undertaken before the motion was put**

**Mick Minchin** asked for a point of clarification, "if we are going to be doing that what services are we going to lose?"

*The Shire President advised that any reduction in staff would result in a reduction in services, more than likely.*

**Jan Stagbouer** asked "any reduction in the services, are you saying you haven't got enough staff now, is that what you are saying, what was the question?"

*The Chief Executive Officer felt that the Shire were adequately staffed. He acknowledged that people didn't like making comparisons, but, whilst there were 114 development applications in Gingin during last year, the Shire of Chittering had processed 335 during the same period. We can reduce staff but this would adversely impact service levels and timing.*

**Steve Vallance** stated that with the continual comparisons with Gingin they have two recreation centres, multiple golf courses, a swimming pool, Alma Venville Centre and we have 3 bungy old halls built in the 1930's or 40's and the tin shed at Wannamal. The unimproved rate in the dollar in Gingin is approximately 50% of Chittering's. They have things that we don't have and are paying less for it.

*The Chief Executive Officer advised that the Council was working on the priorities identified in the Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, this includes recreation facilities. He agreed that the Shire of Chittering would like to have fantastic facilities like Gingin does, but Gingin has a different rate base and a different history. A number of Council facilities (Town halls) in the last 12 months have had significant upgrades, more recently the Bindoon Town Hall upgrade, a half a million dollar project, with \$438,000 being provided from Lotterywest. He assured the meeting that Council is looking at the issues identified, and stated what will drive the level of future rate rises will be the standard of services and facilities the community want. The purpose of the SCP was to identify the community's priorities; this document is a community document.*

*The CEO stated he couldn't comment on the decisions of the past. He noted that the Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022 was a community document but there were only 147 responses to two workshops, the mail out and other calls for submissions. He urged that the community become involved in the scheduled review.*

**Maurus Ward** (21 Sandalford Drive, Chittering) stated that he only wanted two things from the Shire, a serviced access road to my property and some place to dump rubbish. He confirmed that he wanted nothing more from the Shire at all.

**Colin Mattingly** (Carl Street, Muchea) stated that he had lived in Carl Street for 10 years in the last few years junior football [training] at night and felt that it was a waste of money to spend \$50,000 to repaint the [Muchea] Hall meanwhile little kids, our future, are running around on the road with no proper parking on Archibald / Carl Street. No secure area is dangerous; it is ridiculous to spend so much money on your town. The junior football are trying to make proper parking, is it going to be looked at next year?

*The Chief Executive Officer advised that investigation and design work (for parking) was being undertaken this year, with a proposed budget item for the 2015-2016 financial year, which will of course be subject to other priorities at the time whether it gets funded or not. It's up to the people of Muchea to push that case to the councillors prior to the 2015/16 budget deliberations.*

**Jan Stagbouer** stated that even if staff levels in other peri-urban Councils such as York, Northam, Toodyay, Gingin are higher. I think Chittering could still afford to have a look at itself and the staff levels.

**ELECTORS' MOTION 3.2.5**

**Moved Jan Stagbouer / Seconded Graeme Donaldson**

**That the number of staff employed in executive and administrative positions be reduced immediately to reflect the lack of assets in the Shire of Chittering and to allow funds to be put aside to pay for these assets in the future.**

**THE MOTION WAS PUT AND DECLARED CARRIED  
BY A SHOW OF HANDS**

**Officer comment:**

Council has developed a "Workforce Plan" in accordance with the State Government's Integrated Planning Framework. The number of staff and the services provided by Council are reviewed annually.

A table is provided below that provides a comparison of employee numbers to similar (relevant) peri-urban local governments as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2014;

Shire of Chittering	44	(4,996 – estimated population – ABS Dec 2013)
Shire of Toodyay	47	(4,686 – estimated population – ABS Dec 2013)
Shire of Gingin	53	(5,243 – estimated population – ABS Dec 2013)
Shire of York	63	(3,581 – estimated population – ABS Dec 2013)

Council as at the 30 June 2014 had Reserves of \$1,071,931. These funds are used to fund future asset needs. Council when adopting its Annual Budget gives consideration to making appropriate allocations to these Reserves each year.

**Recommendation**

***That Council receive and note motion (3.2.5)***



### 3.3 The transparency, accuracy and accountability of Shire communications\*

#### General discussion undertaken before the motion was put

**Steve Vallance** gave a number of examples of poor communications from the Shire. Those examples are summarised as follows:

- A media release that was issued prior to this meeting stating that council is not aware of complaints in relation to any communications that were not transparent or accurate.
- The Agenda released for this meeting was diabolical due to being a cut and paste and stated what could and couldn't be done, how the meeting would be run;
- The Media Release following the last [Muchea] meeting was an amateur personal attack;
- The Notice to residents in the compulsory kerbside collection area should have said "compulsory to maximise the profit for the one tenderer";
- The Council report regarding the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer stated that there were "no significant economic implications" (\$200,000 over several years) and "no significant social implications" (the sacked volunteer is an implication);
- The Council report (18 March 2014) listed reasons for having the Community Emergency Services Manager, when every single one of those reasons was already in place and being done by Volunteers, more misinformation;
- In the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 21 May, it states that one of the reasons for changing to a paid Community Emergency Services Manager was that the current Chief Bush Fire Control Officer had announced his intentions to resign from the position 12 months ago. However he never made an announcement that he was going to resign from the position, he had considered leaving the position, but when he found out that a paid person was going to come in instead he stated he would continue on;
- Public Question Time, in Council Minutes, flyers and Media Releases there are mistakes and spelling errors; and; In Public Question Time you are lucky if your question is answered. A straight answer needs to be given to questions. A person was recently fined \$7,500 for living in a shed whilst he was saving up for a house, he had his septic application inspected. The question I asked was how many complaints had been received from the neighbours. Mr Vallance stated no one cares if anyone lives in a shed, and provided the example of his own neighbour who lives in a shed. He further stated that this person was fined \$7,500 on a technicality. When a straight question is asked a straight answer must be given.

Meanwhile we have a major development on Chittering Road & Brand Hwy where a development has gone ahead without council approval and done a whole lot of things, a hard stand area and built sheds in contravention of a number of conditions that were put to him one of them included a condition he could drive his trucks out onto Brand highway, but apparently Main Roads will not let that happen, so now the shire wants to change the conditions even though previously they said they would not allow access out from Energy Place or Chittering Street, now because it suits them (Council) they instead of going after this bloke, have gone after the easy pinch with the guy living in Maryville in his shed for a bit, nothing whatsoever has been done about the development that has taken place in contravention of shire things. In the next Council meeting there is recommendation that he can come out of Energy place because Main Roads has changed their view.

Steve Vallance proposed the following motion:

**The accuracy and relevance of Shire Minutes is to be a major assessment area of the CEO's Key Performance Indicators.**

Mike Savy seconded the motion.

General discussion undertaken before the motion was put

**Mick Minchin** advised that inconsistent advice had been given through Development Services. He stated that one next door neighbour living in a tin shed had a septic tank on the fence line so a complaint was made about the smell but nothing was done for ages despite an order for eviction being put in place.

He further advised that another neighbour sold a property without a tank on it when he had been advised that he had to have one. Also, his Enviromax alarm is in the laundry whereas his son was able to put one on a post outside. He also stated that he had been advised that the Shire was an absolute mess, that the Planner and the Health Officer had given him conflicting stories and that he was told that there was a huge backlog of work.

*The Shed prosecution was a result of a site inspection for an ATU connection that revealed the shed had been fitted out for living without any approval to do so or a building licence. The owner was requested to stop work on at least one occasion, if not twice, which he ignored. Living in a shed is not generally permitted. The average property price in Maryville is around \$670,000 which is a substantial investment, as we heard from the last speaker not everyone wants to live next to someone that lives in a shed, can't be good for the amenity and property prices.*

*The Chief Executive Officer advised that the development on Brand Hwy was subject to SAT Mediation process and a Development Approval was issued. The applicant has recently come back to Council requesting a change to their Development Approval, as they could not access Brand Hwy. These are two very different situations.*

*The Chief Executive Officer advised that the backlog referred to was most probably in relation to the issue of building licences, this matter related to a situation with a former employee that was currently being rectified. He further advised that the timeframe for the Department was 10 days for certified applications and 21 days for uncertified applications. However I would have to double check those dates as I'm not a building surveyor*

**Officer comment:**

Certified Building Licence applications are to be dealt within 10 days on being received, Uncertified Building Licence application are to be dealt within 25 days.

There is currently no backlog of work from Planning, Building or Health services.

**Mark Penketh** stated that a lot of Council documents have been produced using high population increases, but there were only 28 properties created last year which equate to 76 people or 1.5%, not the 7% that was quoted by Cr Douglas in the August Councillor Column. He felt that this was another example of misinformation.

*The Chief Executive Officer advised that figures quoted by the Shire were sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the forecasting from WA Planning Commission. The most recent figures quoted by the ABS (website) as December 2013 had a growth rate of 5.6%.*

**Gavin Rutherford** (180 Forest Hills Parade, Bindoon) stated that he was fortunate enough to be part of Council starting in 2003, when Council made things happen. He felt that this evening felt like 'groundhog day' eleven years on, due to bureaucratic inertia sweeping through Chittering. He stated



that he was sure that Gary [Tuffin] was adequately credentialed and qualified to do his job, his assertion was that there had been a consistent flow of people making business value judgements about the Shire, he therefore followed through by referring to a 'standard business mantra' *the fish rots at the head*. He felt that the meeting needed to look at the way the CEO was being led. He stated that this forum is formed by a group of passionate people who are having to drive down into micro-analysis of what is going on in the Shire and therefore there is a divide and conquer culture that is coming through by rote. He advised that the meeting should be looking at the big picture. He thought that the group needed to think about what is coming on from tonight, the group shouldn't vent and leave – the group needed to look at the way the whole show was being run.

He further stated "if there's a fire I want Harvey and Badcock on my side fighting that fire" that's big picture stuff. He felt that if there were communication problems with the Shire it shouldn't be up to a Councillor to ask to be cc'd into emails as that is just tacit acknowledgement that there are communication problems, the Shire needs to deal with these. He referred to his nearly-ninety year old Mum who would think that a CC was a corn chip! He further advised that his Mum would share her story about a letter that was rejected by the Shire because it was handwritten. He stated that the meeting needed to compare Chittering with Chittering, not interested in York, Toodyay etc and that he wanted to see a functioning Council who leads the Chief Executive Officer the way he deserves to be led. The WA Local Government Act is not a book of KPI's, it is not the ultimate rule book on how things should be done. He applauded the people who attended with facts and figures, but felt that it would be better to look at the reason why the meeting had to be called tonight. He respected Jeff Loudon's statement about the Electors Meeting, but felt that the reason that people didn't attend was because they trusted their Councillors to run things effectively, the very fact this forum has been held is adequate proof that there is probably now a lack of trust. He observed that the group here needs to provide follow through to assist the Council to provide adequate leadership. He felt that the organisation was not being effectively led.

*The Chief Executive Officer responded to the comment regarding the Shire not accepting handwritten correspondence, he advised that he was baffled as handwritten correspondence was received 'all the time'.*

**Officer comment:**

An email was circulated to all staff advising that hand written correspondence from community members is acceptable at all times unless a statutory requirement prevents it.

**June From** ratepayer for 40 years, advised that she handwrote a letter to the Shire as a submission objecting to the proposed drug rehabilitation clinic on Valley View Road in Lower Chittering. She said that she took it to the Council front desk and was told by the 'girl' "it's not much good handing in a handwritten letter as they won't bother reading it", so she had it typed and resubmitted. She was surprised to see the word "exasperate" used in the reply instead of the correct word "exacerbate".

**Officer comment:**

Whilst a staff member did not come forward and state they were the responsible officer. An investigation into this matter was undertaken and we can only assume a staff member may have provided incorrect advice, believing it needed to be in a typed form for statutory reasons. To ensure this does not happen again this issue along with many other communication issues will be addressed at staff communication workshops scheduled for this month.

**Kylie Hughes** (87 Chittering Street, Muchea) advised that she sent a letter to the Shire and all the Councillors (only two acknowledgements of receipt were received) regarding the development on

Chittering Street (Brand Hwy), she further advised that she was only made aware by someone from her street knocking on her door. She advised that she received a notice from the Shire that was cc'd to Shire contact list organisations, three times through involvement with Volunteer organisations. However, she felt that it appeared that none of the fifteen, or so, residents that might be affected by the development received any information, until we asked what was going on. She felt that this means that Shire communications area not open and that if people do speak up they are victimised for it.

*The Chief Executive Officer advised that his understanding was that the development started without approval therefore Council requested that works be ceased. The organisation went on to get a Development Approval; generally in relation to any development application that is lodged it is standard practice to contact adjoining / possibly affected landowners. The CEO promised to check Shire records to ascertain what had happened in this situation.*

**Officer comment:**

Council records confirm the following;

- The application was advertised in the local paper on 5 September 2012 for a period of 21 days which closed on 26 September 2012.
- 38 affected and adjoining landowners were notified in writing (5/09/12) of the proposal inviting comments.
- Letters were also sent to relevant agencies ( Main Roads WA, Department of Water, DEC, Gas Pipeline Custodian and Chittering Landcare).
- On 31 August 2012, Complaints received from nearby residents of works commencing prior to Planning Approval being granted.
- 17 September 2012, Inspection of site undertaken by Council officers of the unauthorised activity.
- 18 September 2012, letter sent to the applicant of unauthorised work and requesting they cease immediately.
- 20 September 2012, received a letter from the Applicant stating that all activity on site had ceased.

**Steve Vallance** advised that he had been asking questions of the Council for years and had rarely had a straight answer. In the past one of the Chief Executive Officer's said that whilst Council / Shire is obliged to answer a question they are not obliged to get it right. He felt that in the past this had been able to get swept under the carpet 'not a problem, move on', all these things are done in isolation. He asked anyone at the meeting who had a problem with the Shire to get in touch with him as he would be putting it on a Facebook page for everybody to see as these things are not going to get swept away anymore.

**ELECTORS' MOTION 3.3.1**

**Moved Steve Vallance / Seconded Mike Savy**

**The accuracy and relevance of Shire Minutes is to be a major assessment area of the CEO's Key Performance Indicators.**

**THE MOTION WAS PUT AND DECLARED CARRIED  
BY A SHOW OF HANDS**

**Officer comment:**

The Councillors present at the Special Electors Meeting workshop which was held on the 3 October 2014 thought the CEOs current KPIs are appropriate. However, the matter raised will be considered during future performance reviews.

The requirement to provide accurate minutes is a requirement covered by the *Local Government Act 1995*.

**Recommendation**

***That Council receive and note motion (3.3.1)***

After stating that he was proud of everyone for turning up and thanking Council for their time, Lee Martin proposed the following motion:

**That Council hold a meeting in the Bindoon Town Hall to discuss the similar items that have been raised and discussed at this meeting tonight.**

Lois Jones seconded the motion.

**Lois Jones** (74 Gray Road, Bindoon) endorsed what Mr Martin had said, but suggested that to suit the older members of the community a meeting should be held during the day. This suggestion was met with a comment from the meeting that people who work are unable to attend daytime meetings.

**ELECTORS' MOTION 3.3.2**

**Moved Lee Martin / Seconded Lois Jones**

**That Council hold a meeting in the Bindoon Town Hall to discuss the similar items that have been raised and discussed at this meeting tonight.**

**THE MOTION WAS PUT AND DECLARED CARRIED  
BY A SHOW OF HANDS**

**Officer comment:**

The Councillors present at the SEM workshop agreed this would be a good idea.

**Recommendation**

***That Council***

***(1) receive and note motion (3.3.2)***

***(2) hold a community meeting in the Bindoon Town Hall to discuss the items that have been raised at the special electors meeting.***

**Bob Rogers** (37 Davern Street, Muchea) stated that the motions put to the meeting tonight have been restricted to comply with the three reasons stated by the Chittering Shire ratepayers and electors for this Special Electors Meeting. He felt that given the response of the community to the motions he stated that he would move a motion of no confidence in the ability of the Chittering Shire Council.

Bob Rogers proposed the following motion:

**That a vote of no confidence be moved, in the ability of the Chittering Shire Council to provide governance required to manage;**

**(1) the size of rate rises into the future**

**(2) the encouragement and support of volunteers in the Shire**

**(3) the transparency, accuracy and accountability of Shire communications**

The Shire President suggested to the meeting that if they wished to pursue that avenue that another Special Electors Meeting would need to be called as that topic was not included on this Agenda.

Maurus Ward seconded the motion.

The motion was put without discussion.

**ELECTORS' MOTION 4**

**Moved Bob Rogers / Seconded Maurus Ward**

**That a vote of no confidence be moved, in the ability of the Chittering Shire Council to provide governance required to manage:**

- (1) the size of rate rises into the future**
- (2) the encouragement and support of volunteers in the Shire**
- (3) the transparency, accuracy and accountability of Shire communications**

**THE MOTION WAS PUT AND DECLARED CARRIED  
BY A SHOW OF HANDS**

**Recommendation**

***That Council receive and note motion (4)***

The Shire President advised that he noted the feeling of the meeting and further advised that advice would be sought from the Department of Local Government.

The Shire President recognised the presence of Mr Shane Love MLA, Member for Moore.

Prior to closing the meeting the Shire President shared that over the last three years the Council has been instructed both for good governance purposes and by direction from the Department of Local Government to create a number of strategies and financial plans on where the Shire is going and what it is going to cost. He advised that each of these had been advertised for community comment and that the reaction to each had been quite low. Within these plans are improvements that Council and staff see are advantageous to the Shire into the future. The proposed 8% rise is to cover these plans. Each of these plans has built into it a timetable for review. He urged the community to look at the proposals and react to those. He felt that this would equate to less reason and less cause to spend an evening such as this.

**4. CLOSURE**

The Shire President thanked the meeting for their attendance. He declared the meeting closed at 9.07pm.

David Stalker

PO Box 111

Bindoon

Dear Mr Tuffin

Re: Special Meeting of Electors

Please accept my apologies for the Special Meeting of Electors to be held on Monday 15 September, 2015 at 7.00 pm due to work commitments.

It is unfortunate that there has only been one opportunity for this issue to be debated in the public forum. If the meeting were held on the weekend I am sure a greater number of rate payers would be in attendance. This seems to me to be an effective ploy to reduce ratepayer input into the running of the shire.

I would appreciate it if you could table the following observations in relation to the agenda:

**Transparency, accuracy and accountability of shire communications.**

This is an area that really needs improvement. I have been a ratepayer for nearly 30 years, and each time I have attempted to contact the shire I have been disappointed by the excessively long time taken for responses, or the vague, jargonised answers I have received.

The latest example is a request for mediation by the shire environment officer (Mr Sargeson). I sent my request by email on 1 September 2014. On September 2 I received an automated response from the shire, simply stating that my request had been forwarded to Mr Sargeson. I have heard nothing since.

I think it is a matter of courtesy that when a shire officer is contacted that that officer should reply as quickly as possible, even if it is to confirm receipt of the request, and to indicate a time line for the resolution.

The process where email messages have to be sent to chatter@chittering appears to be a very effective method of deflecting attempts by members of the public to communicate with the shire. It would be far more effective if direct email access was available to shire officers.

I am also disappointed at the lack of support from the shire ranger at weekends. Recently I contacted the shire ranger in relation to a noise issue and was told that he would not attend on weekends unless there is stock on the road. This is contrary to the information published on the shire website which describes the role of shire rangers as follows:



- assist with the management and support of the Chittering Bush Fire Services, working with the Brigades Fire Control Officers;
- serve as authorised officer under the Dog Act 1976, where appropriate impound dogs, issue warning and infringement notices on offending dog owners, investigate dog attacks and any other matters under the Dog Act 1976;
- **serve as an authorised officer under the control of Off-Road Vehicles Act and to investigate any complaints relating to off-road vehicles and to take the necessary action\*;**
- serve as an authorised officer under the Litter Act 1979, issue warnings and infringement notices to offending persons as and when the need arises, install and refurbish litter bins, signs etc.;
- serve as a Ranger pursuant to Section 450 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1960 and to assist wherever stray stock needs to be impounded, auctioned off;
- perform the enforcement of other relevant Acts and By-laws such as Hawkers and Abandoned Vehicles;

I consider the most appropriate time for the shire ranger to be available to ratepayers is the weekend, considering the rural nature of chittering and the use of the area for recreational pursuits over week ends.

Another issue of concern is the way the shire has been re zoning properties. When I purchased my property the zoning was rural (special rural). Over time this has been re zoned to rural residential, and is now residential. During this time I was notified after the event and was not contacted directly to make comment. My neighbours have also expressed their concerns and have indicated that "they never wanted to live in residential land in the shire."

Another factor that seems to have eroded the ratepayer's ability to engage in effective communication with the shire was the dissolution of the shire ward system. There was a time when I had a shire counsellor I voted for, knew and could contact if I needed help or advice. Currently I vote for people who, when elected, seem to disappear until the next election.

### **The size of rates rises in the future**

I do appreciate the costs that must be incurred to provide facilities for all rate payers in the shire. I think it is appropriate that rate rises are kept to a minimum and where possible to be in line with cost of living rises. I would hope that the shire officers are doing their best to minimise rate rises in the future and that rate payers could have more say about where the money was to be spent. I also hope that the shire officers consider equity in relation to where the money is spent, so all rate payers get and equal access to funding and support.

Thankyou for organising the meeting of electors and I look forward to hearing the outcome.

David Stalker



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