

Avon Regional Organisation of Councils

AROC Governance Group Meeting

17 March 2025

Commencing at 11 am

MINUTES

To: AROC Members

Here within are the minutes of the AROC Governance Group (Presidents & CEOs) meeting held on the abovementioned date and commencement time, in Council Chambers at the Shire of Toodyay, 15 Fiennes St, Toodyay.

Aaron Bowman

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

AROC Secretariat

March 2025

Preface

These Minutes will remain "Unconfirmed" until the next AROC Meeting, where the Minutes will be tabled and confirmed subject to any amendments.

The "Confirmed" Minutes are then signed off by the Chairperson.

Attachments that formed part of the Agenda, in addition to those tabled at the Meeting are incorporated into a separate attachment to these Minutes

Distribution

These minutes were approved for distribution on 2025.

Aaron Bowman
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Confirmation

These minutes of meeting were confirmed at a meeting held on
..... 2025.

Signed:

Note: The Presiding Member at the meeting at which the minutes were confirmed is the person who signs above.

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ATTACHMENTS with separate index follows item 5.

1. DECLARATION OF OPENING

The AROC in-person meeting commenced at 11.00 am.

1.1. Announcement of Visitors

- Nancy Bineham, Director Strategy, Change & Service Development, Regional Emergency Management Portfolio, WA Country Health Service
- Basil Paulose, WA Country Health Service (Wheatbelt)

1.2. Record of Attendance and Apologies

Cr M McKeown	Shire President, Shire of Toodyay
Mr A Bowman	CEO, Shire of Toodyay (arrived 12pm)
Cr P Bantock	Shire President, Shire of Victoria Plains (online)
Mr S Bryce	CEO, Shire of Goomalling
Cr J Chester	Shire President, Shire of Goomalling
Cr K Trent	Shire President, Shire of York
Mr L Mellor	A/CEO, Shire of York
Ms A Behan	Executive Manager, Corporate & Community Services, Shire of York
Ms D Terelinck	CEO, Shire of Northam
Mrs K Murray	Executive Officer, AROC

Apologies

Mr S Fletcher	CEO, Shire of Victoria Plains
Mr C Linnell	CEO, Shire of York
Cr C Antonio	Shire President, Shire of Northam

2. MINUTES AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

2.1 Confirmation of Minutes

RECOMMENDATION/AROC RES. NO.01/03/2025

MOVED Cr Chester

SECONDED Cr Trent

That the Unconfirmed Minutes of the Avon Regional Organisation of Councils meeting held on 18 November 2024 be accepted as a true and correct record.

MOTION CARRIED

2.2 Review of Status Report

Review of actions and progress arising from previous meetings and decisions:

- Corella Management Project Steering Group quarterly meeting will be held on 18 March; quarter 2 2024/2025 report circulated to the steering group.
- Notification of the outcome of the State IDF and Federal Housing Support Program grant application will not be known until after the State and Federal elections.
- Waste – EO circulated an overview of ASK Waste Management's suggested approach to developing a future waste disposal strategy for AROC. Members are requested to provide feedback on the approach and contribute to development of a project brief.

2.3 Inward / Outward Correspondence

2.3.1 Financial Report

RECOMMENDATION/AROC RES. NO.02/03/2025

MOVED Cr Trent

SECONDED S Bryce

That the financial report, as forwarded, be received.

MOTION CARRIED

3. OTHER BUSINESS / NEW BUSINESS OF AN URGENT NATURE

3.1 Submissions, presentations or representations from third parties;

3.1.1 WA Country Health Service – access to community transport

Nancy Bineham and Basil Paulose, WA Country Health Service (Wheatbelt)
Please refer to the WACHS slide presentation in the attachments.

Presentation slides summary:

- The wicked problem – there are very few, adhoc community transport options; available options can be unaffordable for vulnerable residents e.g. St John's Community Transport costs \$206.80 return from Northam (PATS only reimburses \$30).
- No public transport buses except TransWA (Transperth to Wundowie); only one town with taxis (Northam); no rideshare services (e.g. Uber/Didi); limited rail options; no commercial flights; high fuel costs.
- Shared problem across many country communities with an ageing population (22-26%) that is often less confident to drive long distances or to the city, or cannot drive due to cognitive or physical limitations.
- Affects disadvantaged individuals and families with shared or no access to private cars/transport; people with disabilities and chronic health conditions; single parents/ FIFO partners; people needing to access health, social, shopping and community services/activities (all important for health and wellbeing).
- Big picture – access to transport is a basic human right; improving access requires a regional, rural and remote transport strategy, for

example, the NSW Regional, Rural, Remote Transport Strategy, by the Community Transport Organisation (cto.org.au)

- WA examples include Perth metro based community patient transport services; WA Taxi User Subsidy Scheme (only Northam has a taxi); Patient Assisted Travel Scheme – subsidy only.
- Wheatbelt community transport includes St Johns WA Regional Community Transport Service; York Hospital and Aged Care uses volunteer drivers and WACHS Pool cars for residents funded by Community Aged Care packages; Share and Care; Wheatbelt Aboriginal Health Service; SW Aboriginal Medical Service Narrogin.
- Aged Care and NDIS package holders can fund community transport from the package (if it's available).
- Shire provided community bus/volunteer transport.

Discussion points:

- York model of community transport using WACHS pool cars and volunteer drivers, could be replicated in the region.
- Need to advocate for a regional transport strategy to be developed; starting with mapping of all current services and a discussion paper to present data quantifying the issues and outlining potential solutions.
- Potential partners include RDA Wheatbelt, WDC Wheatbelt, Shires and the CRC networks throughout the region.
- A Behan – referenced a commitment to 'Staying in Place' and the role volunteer drivers could play in achieving this.
- K Murray – asked if expansion of Telehealth could reduce the need for some travel? A: Yes for some appointments.
- Nancy – referenced the District Leadership Group's 'Living Well in the Wheatbelt' strategy, which flags community transport as an issue.
- A Behan – next step is to make information about community transport options readily available to people.
- S Bryce – raised the need to secure more GPs to work in the regions, including on weekends in hospitals and GP practice.
- D Terelinck – asked if people are missing medical appointments in Perth and/or in regional areas? A: in Perth mainly, indicated by DNA.
- Nancy asked what interest AROC has in working collaboratively to address the issue; members responded with great interest.

ACTION: AROC members and WACHS representatives agreed for:

- WACHS to provide information about current community transport services in AROC member Shires, including data on usage and unmet demand for services.*
- WACHS to develop a discussion paper to present data quantifying the issues and outlining potential solutions, including the development of a Wheatbelt Regional Community Transport Strategy to improve access to services.*
- AROC members to invite current community transport providers and stakeholders to a discussion to identify:*

1. *What is working well?*
 2. *What would be even better if?*
 3. *What would help to expand current services?*
 4. *What barriers limit the expansion of services?*
- iv. *Following consultation with community transport service providers, WACHS and AROC are to determine advocacy action to support improved access to community transport services in the region.*

3.1.2 Regional Development Australia - Wheatbelt

See attachments for an update provided by Josh Pomykala, Director Regional Development.

3.1.3 Wheatbelt Development Commission

An update will be provided by Grant Arthur, Director Regional Development for the next Governance Group meeting.

3.2 Matters referred by the Officer's Group for consideration or decision;

3.2.1 Interest from the Shire of Wonagan-Ballidu to join AROC

Following an expression of interest from Mr Sam Dolzadelli, CEO, Shire of Wongan-Ballidu for the Local Government to become a member of AROC, the Governance Group resolved on 18 November 2024 (res.no. 4/11/24), *that AROC review its strategic plan and determine the advantages and disadvantages of expanding its membership.*

The Officers Group considered the probable implications of expanding AROCs' membership and recommended that the addition of the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu would not be advantageous to AROC. Instead, discussions with the Shire of Gin Gin and the Shire of Chittering could be held to ascertain shared priorities and opportunities for collaboration.

Discussion points:

- D Terelinck – Shire of Cunderdin has also made an informal approach; the Officer's group identified more synergies with peri-urban Shires such as Gin Gin and Chittering.
- A Bowman – Gin Gin, Chittering and AROC members make up the future growth area nearest to Perth; Dowerin left AROC due to a lack of similarities.
- Cr Chester – Chittering may have been a previous member of AROC some time ago.

RECOMMENDATION/AROC RES. NO.03/03/2025

MOVED Cr Trent

SECONDED Cr McKeown

1. *That AROC declines the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu's expression of interest in becoming a member of AROC.*

2. That Officers contact the Shire of Chittering and the Shire of Gin Gin to ascertain shared priorities and potential opportunities for collaboration.

The motion was put to a vote:

- For: Cr Trent and Cr McKeown (2)
- Against: Cr Bantock and Cr Chester (2)

Cr Antonio was not in attendance.

Cr McKeown used the Chairperson's casting vote in favour of the motion, resulting in 3 for and 2 against.

MOTION CARRIED

3.2.2 Avon Valley Tourism

D Terelinck - Provided an update on the Shire of Northam's involvement in the Avon Valley Tourism collaboration for 2025:

- Perth Caravan and Camping Show 20th – 23rd March.
 - The Avon Valley has a stand in the Jim Webster Pavilion.
 - Each Shire is providing staff to staff the stand. In previous years, Destination Perth provided staff for the show.
- The Avon Valley website
 - Unable to retrieve the old Avon Valley Tourism website domain so a new website has been created - theavonvalley.com.au
 - Trying to obtain control of the previous Avon Valley Tourism social media accounts, however this has not yet been resolved.
- May Member Mingle
 - York will be hosting the Destination Perth May member mingle. This will also be the official launch of the new website and 2025 Avon Valley marketing campaign.
 - Destination Perth will run a tourism social media workshop as part of this event (details to be finalised).
- Website launch campaign
 - Destination Perth will manage the 2025 Avon Valley marketing campaign, utilising the remaining \$10,000 in the Alliance's budget.
 - The campaign will include display advertising, Instagram and tiktok video campaign, social media competition with paid campaign.
- 2025/2026
 - The main aim is to do an updated photo shoot for marketing use, and continue with the current initiatives.
- Destination Perth's proposal for a Tourism Development Manager is considered to be over the top and not affordable at \$30,000/annum from each Council.
- The Alliance reported not having seen the Wheatbelt Regional Tourism Development Strategy.

A Behan – Destination Perth’s proposal to locate an officer in the Wheatbelt seeks member Shires to contribute ~\$20,000 in project funds, \$40,000 in-kind and \$30,000 towards employment costs of an Officer. Alina also noted staff had not seen the the Wheatbelt Regional Tourism Development Strategy.

D Terelinck – suggested waiting to see how successful the 2025 Destination Perth campaign is before committing to co-funding an officer in the Wheatbelt.

3.2.3 State Government election results – implications and opportunities

- Election results are still to be decided in some seats.
- The Government will not have control of both houses.
- No particular implications or opportunities were identified.

3.3 Matters raised by individual member local governments for consideration;

3.3.1 AROC Strategic Priorities Review

Refer to agenda attachments for Schedule 1 – AROC Strategic Priorities, which includes comments on actions undertaken within priority areas.

Current commitments within priority areas / actions include:

- Corella Management project
- Regional housing initiatives (pending approval of Federal and State funding)
- Collaborative development of an AROC Waste Management Strategy

Discussion reaffirmed the current commitments, with waste management and planning for future waste servicing as a major priority for AROC.

D Terelinck – reported that ASK will shortly be presenting to Council on options to extend the life of Northam’s current landfill; and identified landfill capacity as an immediate issue for AROC members.

Cr McKeown - spoke about the importance of education and training opportunities and the need to improve accessibility (e.g. transport to and from) for people in the regions.

K Murray – mentioned that RDA Wheatbelt has identified investment in education as a priority business activity.

4. CONFIRMATION OF MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2025

2025	Officer's Group (CEO) Meetings	Governance Group (President's) Meetings
	11.00am	11.00am
	Zoom Meetings	Council Chambers
JAN	No meeting	No meeting
FEB	17 February (1pm)	
MAR		17 March
APR	7 April	
MAY		12 May
JUNE	9 June	
JULY		7 July
AUG	11 August	
SEPT		1 September
OCT	13 October	
NOV		17 November
DEC	No meeting	No meeting

5. CLOSURE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 12.32 pm.



AROC Governance Group Meeting

Attachments to Minutes – Monday 17 March 2025

Minutes and additional information

2.2 Status report

2.3 Inward / outward correspondence

2.3.1 Financial report to 28 February 2025

Other business / new business of an urgent nature

3.1 Submissions, presentations or representations from third parties;

3.1.3 WA Country Health Service – The Wicked Problem of Community Transport in the Wheatbelt

AROC STATUS REPORT

Avon Regional Organisation of Councils

Secretariat
CEO - Shire of Toodyay

Purpose	Meeting Date	Resolution	Target date for completion	Actioned by	Completion Date	Meeting Commentary
2.1 Confirmation of Minutes	2/9/2024	That the Unconfirmed Minutes of the Avon Regional Organisation of Councils Governance Group meeting held on 18 November 2024 be accepted as a true and correct record.	3/2024	EO		10.3.25: Minutes to be confirmed and signed at the 17 March 2025 Governance Group meeting.
Corella Management	13/03/2023	AROC RES. NO.02/03/23: That AROC members individually commit \$5,000 per annum in 2023, 2024 and 2025, and commit \$25,000 pa from AROC funds for three years, towards corella management activities.	2026	ALL	2026	17.3.25: Jacquie circulated a draft Corella Management Plan to steering group members. Feedback was due 31 January. Next steering group meeting is scheduled for 18 March 2025. Jacquie is meeting with Local Governments to seek feedback on draft local Corella management plans.
Housing shortage	16/05/2022	AROC to advocate to relevant Ministers and Shadow Ministers (Housing & Local Government) to address a critical shortage of housing in the Avon Region.	August 2024	EO	Ongoing	17.3.25: State IDF (stream 3) on behalf of Victoria Plains, Goomalling, Toodyay and Dandaragan - a decision will not be made until after the State election in March. Federal Housing Support Program (stream 2) application for ten local governments (Toodyay, Goomalling, Victoria Plains, Dandaragan, Moora, West Arthur, Narrogin, Williams, Dumbleyung and Lake Grace) – a


Purpose	Meeting Date	Resolution	Target date for completion	Actioned by	Completion Date	Meeting Commentary
						decision is unlikely to be made until after the Federal election.
Regional Collaboration on Waste	13/11/2023	That AROC submit a motion to the WALGA Avon Zone meeting to advocate for a metropolitan waste levy to fund investment in alternative waste management locations and technologies in regional areas.	2024	EO	Motion completed. Waste strategy continues.	17.3 25: Discussions with RDA Mid-West Gascoyne, WEROC and NEWROC, all recommended ASK Waste Management as a consultant to lead the development of a regional waste strategy for AROC members. ASK is experienced in collaborative planning for the provision of waste services for multiple LGs in regional areas. EO circulated an approach summary provided by ASK to the Governance Group to inform development of a project brief. Members requested to provide feedback to EO.
Branding & Promotions	2/9/2024	RES. NO.03/09/24: That the Officer's Group prepare a branding brief for AROC to be considered by the Governance Group.	18/11/2024	Officers		17.3.25: The panel selected Market Creations, and recommended that the Governance Group postpone commencement of branding work until the strategic plan has been reviewed to determine the advantages and disadvantages of expanding AROCs membership. Market Creations has advised that they will be available to work with AROC when required.

Purpose	Meeting Date	Resolution	Target date for completion	Actioned by	Completion Date	Meeting Commentary
Canberra Advocacy	22/7/2024	Res.04/07/24: That AROC members seek the support of their Council's for the Shire President and CEO to form an AROC delegation to lobby Ministers and Shadow Ministers regarding collective and individual priorities prior to the Federal Election.	30/9/24	ALL		10.3.25: On hold. A delegation to Canberra was deferred until after the Federal election. It will provide adequate time to prepare AROC's advocacy approach, including identifiable branding, an online presence and advocacy materials to explain collective and individual priorities.
Climate Change Initiative	12/07/2021	AROC CEOs to work together to identify a project we could apply for funding on a regional level.	Ongoing	ALL		14.11.24: On hold. WALGA is seeking funding for Regional Climate Alliances in the 2025 State budget and has updated the Climate Change advocacy position.
Road clearing permits and pre-funding for road projects.	08/05/2023	That AROC submit a motion to the WALGA Avon Zone meeting to advocate for specific changes to the native vegetation clearing permit system.	23/06/2023	EO	Ongoing	6.8.24: No further update to that provided 22.7.24: Rebecca Palumbo, Shire of York, met with DWER staff about the Native Vegetation Policy Implementation Roadmap and specifically the Action 4.1 Roadside Vegetation Advice.
Water sustainability	10/05/2021	Avon River health & access to funding.	Ongoing	Northam, York & Toodyay		15.4.24: On hold. No recent action.

Statement of Comprehensive Income

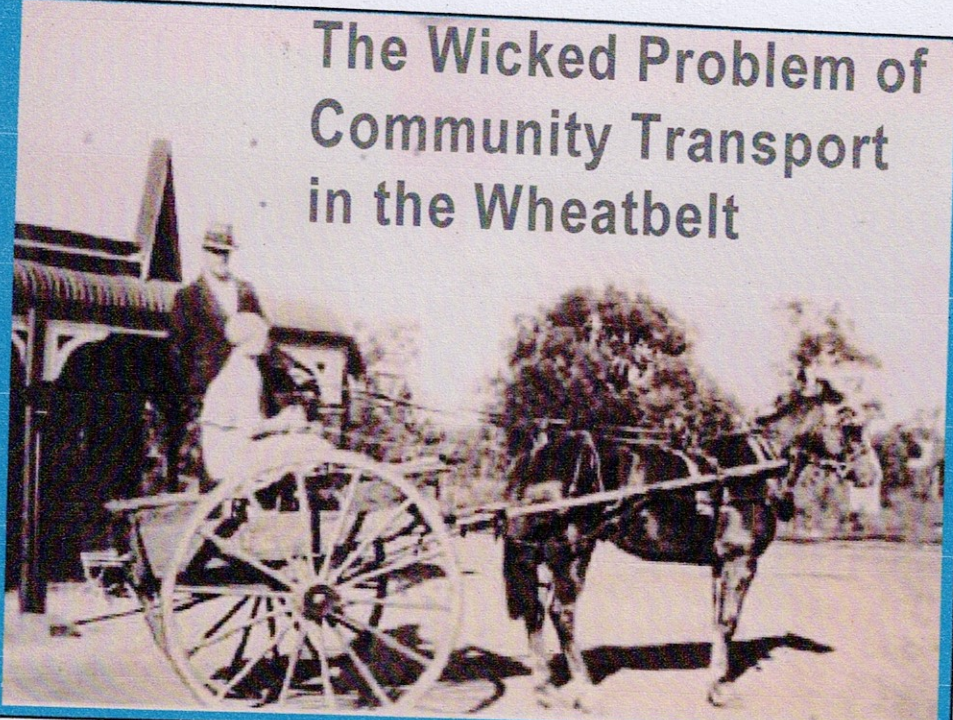
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WA Country Health Service

The Wicked Problem of Community Transport in the Wheatbelt

AROC meeting:
Mon 17th March
11am
Toodyay Council
Chambers, 15
Fiennes St



COMMUNITY | COMMISSION | QUALITY | INTEGRITY | EQUITY

We acknowledge the wisdom of the Traditional Custodians of the Noongar Ballardong Lands on which we meet today, and recognise their continuing connections to Land and community. We pay our respects to their ancestors and Elders past and present.



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WA Country Health Service

Purpose of this session

1. Outline long standing community transport issues and impacts
2. What's happening elsewhere?
3. Initial mapping of Wheatbelt community transport options
4. Discuss potential opportunities and solutions

COMMUNITY COMPASSION QUALITY INTEGRITY EQUITY CURIOSITY



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WACHS-WHEATBELT MAP

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WACHS WHEATBELT NETWORK MAP



COMMUNITY COMPASSION QUALITY INTEGRITY EQUITY CURIOSITY



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The shared problem

- Very few, adhoc community transport options & can be pricey
- No public transport buses except TransWA (Transperth to Wundowie)
- Only one town with taxis (Northam)
- No rideshare services (e.g. Uber/Didi)
- Limited rail options
- No commercial flights
- Fuel costs

COMMUNITY COMPASSION QUALITY INTEGRITY EQUITY CURIOSITY

Who it affects?

- Ageing population (22 – 26%)
- Disadvantaged individuals and families – shared or no access to private cars/transport
- People with disabilities and chronic health conditions
- Single parents/ FIFO partner
- People needing to access health, social, shopping and community services/activities (all important for health and wellbeing).



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THE BIG PICTURE

- **The Australian Human Rights Commission** recognises transport as a basic human right:

11 Your right to transport | Australian Human Rights Commission

- **NSW:** Regional, Rural, Remote Transport Strategy | Community Transport Organisation (cto.org.au)
- **Port Macquarie Council** NSW Regional Integrated Transport Strategy
- **NSW Gov: Have your Say Surveys**
 - Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plans | Have Your Say (nsw.gov.au) and
 - Transport for Health | Have Your Say (nsw.gov.au)
- **NT:** National remote and regional transport strategy (nt.gov.au)

COMMUNITY COMPASSION QUALITY INTEGRITY EQUITY CURIOSITY



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Community Transport Examples WA & VIC

- Community patient transport services (healthywa.wa.gov.au) – Perth metro
- SE Melbourne Community Social and health Transport (connecthealth.org.au)
- Non-emergency patient transport |VIC
- WA Taxi User Subsidy Scheme (TUSS) (transport.wa.gov.au) (50% off vouchers if eligible but only Northam has access to Taxis)
- Shalom House Perth – provide some community transport services for clients/members in Perth
- Patient Assisted Travel Scheme (PATS) - fuel & accommodation subsidy 16c/km – NOT a transport service. Ineligible if live less than 70-90ks from Perth.



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WHEATBELT COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

- **WA Regional Community Transport Service for Patients St JohnWA**
 - Northam Community Transport Service - St John WA
 - Potentially FREE for pension card holders & \$80-\$140 per one way trip, is subject to volunteer availability and is not available on weekends.
- **York Hospital and Aged Care** – volunteer drivers using WACHS Pool cars – funded by Community Aged Care packages.
- **Share and Care** – assist with transport occasionally – provide fuel vouchers or support to travel by train/bus.
- **Wheatbelt Aboriginal Health Service (WAHS)** - transport service for eligible Aboriginal clients who have WAHS clinic appt in WB or Specialist appointment in Perth.
- **SW Aboriginal Medical Service (SWAMS) Narrogin** – transport service for eligible Aboriginal clients who have SWAMS clinic or Specialist appointment



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MORE WHEATBELT EXAMPLES

- Aged Care and NDIS Package holders – can fund community transport from the package
- A few Shires have volunteer transport – for social or other activities e.g. Northam Shire Community Bus – focussed on Residential aged care residents

COMMUNITY COMPASSION QUALITY INTEGRITY EQUITY CURIOSITY



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DISCUSSION – FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

- What models do LGAs have to assist with community transport?
- Collaborative approaches? E.g. joint volunteer model between WACHS – WB, NGOs and some or all 5 AROC Shires?
- Expand current Shire community transport/bus services for wider community?
- Advocate to WA Government for Regional Transport Strategy
- Mapping of all current services and discussion paper (who – resources?)

COMMUNITY COMPASSION QUALITY INTEGRITY EQUITY CURIOSITY