MINUTES

14th Ordinary Council Meeting

12th Council of Litchfield

Monday 19th October 2026

Meeting to be held commencing 6:00 PM
in Council Chambers at 7 Bees Creek Road, Freds Pass
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdM3M5gfh6-wQ0KiL89_2eg/live

Community Forum
Will be held from 5:30pm-6:00pm

Stephen Hoyne

Chief Executive Officer

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians of the Land 4

2 Opening of Meeting 4

3 Electronic Attendance / Apologies and Leave of Absence 5

3.1 Electronic Attendance 5

3.2 Apologies 5

3.3 Leave of Absence previously granted 5

3.4 Leave of Absence Request 5

4 Disclosures of Interest 5

4.1 Elected Members 5

4.2 Staff 5

5 Public Questions 5

6 Confirmation of Minutes 7

6.1 Confirmation of Minutes 7

7 Business Arising from Minutes 8

7.1 Business Arising 8

8 Petitions 8

9 Deputations and Presentations 8

Nil

10 Accepting or Declining Late Items 8

11 Notices of Motions 8

Nil

12 Mayors Report 9

12.1 Mayors Monthly Report September 9

13 Reports from Council Appointed Representatives 9

14 Officer Reports 9

14.1 Corporate Services 9

14.1.1 Municipal Plan 2026-2027 Quarterlly Performance Review - July to September 2026 9

14.1.2 Litchfield Council Finance Report - September 2026 10

14.1.3 People and Performance Report – September 2026 10

14.1.4 Related Party Disclosure FIN11 11

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14.2 Governance and Community 11
14.2.1 Governance and Community Monthly Report - September 2026 11
14.2.2 DRAFT Strategic Plan 2026 - 2029 12
14.2.3 Recreation Reserve Management Committee Minutes 12
14.2.4 Sponsorship Request: 2026 Rural Carols by Candlelight Event 13
14.2.5 Sponsorship Request: 2026 Mango Festival Event 13
14.2.6 Annual Community Survey Results 14
14.3 Infrastructure and Operations 15
14.3.1 Planning Summary Report - September 2026 15
14.3.2 LGANT Call for Motions - Planning and Development Decision Making 16
15 Other Business 16
16 Confidential Items 17
16.1 Confidential Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 21 September 2026 17
16.2 Remission of Interest - Financial Hardship 17
16.3 Appointment of RMAC Chair 17
16.4 Planning Summary Report - Confidential item 17
16.5 RFT26-564 - Sealed Pavement Maintenance Period Contract 17
17 Report of Confidential Resolutions 18
18 Close of Meeting 19
19 Next Meeting 19
20 Minutes to be Confirmed 19

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Present	Rachael Wright	Mayor (Chair)
	Emma Sharp	Councillor South Ward
	Kris Civitarese	Councillor South Ward
	Kevin Harlan	Councillor Central Ward
	Pauline Cass	Councillor Central Ward
	Daisy Crawford	Councillor North Ward
	Plaxy Purich	Councillor North Ward
Apology		
Staff	Stephen Hoyne	Chief Executive Officer
	Geoff Thomas	Director Infrastructure and Operations
	Ankit Pansal	Acting Director Corporate Services
	Rebecca Taylor	Acting Director Governance and Community
	Deb Boyko	Executive Assistant to Mayor and CEO
	Claire Jones	Executive Assistant to Mayor and CEO
	Allana Fletcher	Executive & Business Support Officer
Public Gallery		As per Attendance Register
Streamed Online via YouTube:		https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sSy2T5m4ArM

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1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS OF THE LAND

On behalf of Council, the Mayor acknowledged the Traditional Custodians of the land on which they meet. The Mayor also conveyed Council's respect to the Elders past, present and future for their continuing custodianship of the land and the children of the land across generations.

2 OPENING OF MEETING

The Mayor opened the meeting at 6:00pm.

The Mayor advised that an audio and visual recording of the meeting was live streamed to Council's online platform and will remain online for public viewing in accordance with Council's Recording of Council Meetings Policy. By attending the meeting, those present agreed to comply by Council's Recording of Council Meetings Policy. It is noted that there were technical difficulties with the visual component of the recording and the meeting proceeded with Audio only.

3 ELECTRONIC ATTENDANCE / APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

3.1 Electronic Attendance

Cr Kris Civitarese

3.2 Apologies

Nil

3.3 Leave of Absence previously granted

Nil

3.4 Leave of Absence Request

Nil

4 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

The Mayor advised that any member of Council who may have a conflict of interest, or a possible conflict of interest regarding any item of business to be discussed at a Council meeting or a Committee meeting should declare the conflict of interest to enable Council to manage the conflict in accordance with its obligations under the Local Government Act and its policies regarding the same.

4.1 Elected Members

Nil

4.2 Staff

Nil

5 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Mandy Hall

Question: Mandy Hall raised concerns about the lack of after-hours ranger services for injured and wandering animals**.**

Response: Council advised that any change to ranger service levels would need to be formally presented to Council for consideration, including assessment of costs and operational impacts.

Jenna Lacey

Question: Could Council please provide an update on the anticipated opening date of the first public park in Asche, including whether any outstanding works, approvals or land transfers are preventing the park from opening to residents?

Response: Council advised that the park forms part of a staged development and is still being completed by the developer. Outstanding works include final playground audits, rectification of defects and other compliance requirements before handover to Council. Council is working with the developer to achieve completion and indicated it expects the park to be opened well before Christmas 2026.

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Andrew Mackay

Question 1: When did Litchfield Council resolve to change the service level being provided to residents on Warren Rd and other Lambells Lagoon Roads?

Response: Council stated that no decision has been made by Council to change service levels on Warren Road or other private/right-of-way roads.

Question 2: Were elected members briefed that council was changing a service level to ratepayers without a vote taking place by council?

Response: Council advised that neither Council nor staff have made a decision to change service levels.

Question 3: What procedures are in place to prevent misinformation being provided to residents by Council Staff when a quick google search can reveal that Council has in fact graded this road historically and in 2017 resheeted the road?

Response: Council acknowledged the importance of accurate communication and advised that improvement opportunities are addressed through feedback and staff training processes

Question 4: Will Council commit to grading Warren Rd and other historical right of way roads as it has done over the past 4 decades?

Response: Staff intend to prepare a report to Council regarding Warren Road and how maintenance aligns with Council's Private Roads Policy. No commitment to grading was made at the meeting.

Question 5: Will the other right of way roads in Lambells Lagoon and within the Council will council no longer be servicing?

Response: Council stated no decision has been made to change service arrangements for private roads

Question 6: Will this proposed cessation of maintenance also include roadside slashing, weed control, drainage and other routine maintenance?

Response: Council again advised that no decision has been made regarding changes to maintenance arrangements for private roads.

Supplementary Question: Will Council commit to grading Warren Road and Canarium Road before the commencement of the wet season?

Response: The CEO acknowledged historical maintenance had occurred on these roads and confirmed Council had not determined that maintenance would cease. However, concerns have arisen regarding ownership, legal status and potential liabilities associated with undertaking works on rights-of-way, not vested in the Council or the public. Council will investigate the history, legal position and risks before bringing a report back to elected members for consideration.

Dave Evans

Question 1: Why were the answers to my questions on 17 August 2026 at the Litchfield Council meeting and replied to by Litchfield Council on the 14 September not recorded in the Agenda minutes?

Response: These were classified as administrative matters. Taken on notice.

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Question 2: Why have the answers to my questions on 21 September 2026 at the Litchfield Council meeting not been replied to?

Response: These were classified as administrative matters. The Mayor and CEO advised that responses to the September questions had been provided via email and would be noted in the meeting minutes. During discussion later in the meeting, councillors agreed that future questions taken on notice should have the responses or summary outcomes recorded in the minutes to improve transparency.

Question 3: Table 1.1 Page 71
Operating Expenses
Employee Expenses 14.9% over budget Why?
Elected Member Expenses 276% over budget Why?

Response: No specific response was provided during public question time. The questions were taken on notice by administration for a written response.

Question 4: Task No. 2026-10 Reserves Page 81
Work is scheduled for completion by late October yet only 8.44% spent. Why hasn't the completion date been changed?

Response: No response was provided during public question time. The question was taken on notice for administration to respond separately**.**

Question 5: Accounts Payable Report Page 93
Chq. 1759.70-0 Annual Memberships $42,060.68
What do these memberships cover?

Response: No response was provided during the meeting. The question was taken on notice by administration for a later response

NOTE: At 6:34 pm Cr Kevin Harlan left the meeting. At 6:34:41 pm, Cr Kevin Harlan returned to the meeting.

6 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

6.1 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLUTION OCM/26/173

Moved: Cr Plaxy Purich

Seconded: Cr Daisy Crawford

That the full minutes (including confidential minutes) of the Ordinary Council Meeting held Monday 21 September 2026, 20 pages be confirmed.

CARRIED 6/1

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7 BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

7.1 Business Arising

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an update on actions arising from previous Council meetings and outlines progress made on outstanding items.

RESOLUTION OCM/26/174

Moved: Cr Kevin Harlan

Seconded: Cr Plaxy Purich

1. That Council receive and note the business arising as at attachment.

CARRIED7/0

8 PETITIONS

Nil

9 DEPUTATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Nil

10 ACCEPTING OR DECLINING LATE ITEMS

RESOLUTION OCM/26/175

Moved: Cr Plaxy Purich

Seconded: Cr Kevin Harlan

THAT the following late reports be accepted and included under Officer's Reports Section of the meeting for consideration;

- 14.3.6 Annual Community Survey Results
- 14.4.2 LGANT Call for Motions - Planning and Development Decision Making

CARRIED7/0

11 NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Nil

12 MAYORS REPORT

12.1 Mayors Monthly Report September

RESOLUTION OCM/26/176

Moved: Mayor Rachael Wright

Seconded: Cr Daisy Crawford

CARRIED7/0

13 REPORTS FROM COUNCIL APPOINTED REPRESENTATIVES

14 OFFICER REPORTS

14.1 Corporate Services

14.1.1 Municipal Plan 2026-2027 Quarterly Performance Review - July to September 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Municipal Plan 2026 - 2027 Quarterly Performance Report July to September 2026 is presented to Council to highlight the organisation's progress towards implementing the Municipal Plan.

RESOLUTION OCM/26/177

Moved: Deputy Mayor Kris Civitarese

Seconded: Cr Emma Sharp

1. That Council receive the Municipal Plan 2026 - 2027 Quarterly Performance Report for the first quarter ending 30 September 2026 to include specific data on KPI tables.

CARRIED 6/1

CONFIRMED

14.1.2 Litchfield Council Finance Report - September 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the Litchfield Council Finance Report for 30 September 2026. Annual Budget 2026/27 figures are shown.

Operational Income reflects the entire year of rates levied. As expenses are incurred over the year, the current surplus position will gradually decrease.

The Balance Sheet has been updated in accordance with 2025/26 unaudited financial statements and Financial Reserves has been updated with original budget figures 2026/27.

The annual rates and waste charges were levied in July 2026. As instalment dates pass, the outstanding rates ratio will continue to decline.

RESOLUTION OCM/26/178

Moved: Cr Kevin Harlan

Seconded: Cr Emma Sharp

1. That Council note the Litchfield Council Finance Report 30 September 2026.

CARRIED6/1

14.1.3 People and Performance Report – September 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides Council with key staffing information, workplace health and safety information and proposed major policy updates and reviews.
This report provides a monthly update to ensure that both staffing and budget measures are in accordance with the Council approved staffing plan and budget. The metrics provided in this report track activity and report full-time equivalent (FTE) numbers, retention and Work Health and Safety performance

RESOLUTION OCM/26/179

Moved: Cr Emma Sharp

Seconded: Cr Plaxy Purich

1. That Council note the People, Performance and Governance Report for September 2026.

CARRIED7/0

14.1.4 Related Party Disclosure FIN11

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This policy assists Council in complying with the disclosure requirements under AASB 124 Related Party Disclosures.

This policy provides the tools to:

- Identify related parties, information, and transactions about those parties;
- Establish a system to capture and record transactions and information about those transactions;
- Identify circumstances in which a disclosure is required; and
- Determine the disclosures to be made about those items in the Annual Financial Statements for complying with AASB 124.

RESOLUTION OCM/26/180

Moved: Cr Emma Sharp

Seconded: Cr Daisy Crawford

1. That Council adopts the revised FIN11 Related Party Disclosure Policy, as attached to this report.

CARRIED7/0

14.1 Governance and Community

14.2.1 Governance and Community Monthly Report - September 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides a monthly update on key activities and services across the Governance and Community for September 2026.

RESOLUTION OCM/26/181

Moved: Cr Daisy Crawford

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Kris Civitarese

1. That Council receive and note the Governance and Community Monthly Report for September 2026 as at attachment 1 and 2.

CARRIED7/0

14.2.2 DRAFT Strategic Plan 2026 - 2029

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's approval to release the draft Strategic Plan 2026–2029 for community consultation.

RESOLUTION OCM/26/182

Moved: Cr Kevin Harlan

Seconded: Cr Emma Sharp

THAT Council endorse the Litchfield Council Draft Strategic Plan 2026-2029 as provided in Attachment A for the purpose of public exhibition and consultation for 28 days commencing 21 October 2026 and concluding 17 November 2026.

CARRIED7/0

14.2.3 Recreation Reserve Management Committee Minutes

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the minutes from recent meetings of the Knuckey Lagoon Recreation Reserve Management Committee and Howard Park Recreation Reserve Management Committee for Council to receive and note.

RESOLUTION OCM/26/183

Moved: Cr Daisy Crawford

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Kris Civitarese

That Council receive and note:

1. the Knuckey Lagoon Recreation Reserve Management Committee meeting minutes 13 August, as attachment 1.
2. the Howard Park Recreation Reserve Management Committee meeting minutes 09 September 2026 as attachment 2.

CARRIED7/0

14.2.4 Sponsorship Request: 2026 Rural Carols by Candlelight Event

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's consideration of a $4,657.00 sponsorship request from the Darwin Rural Community Carols by Candlelight Committee in support of their Rural Carols by Candlelight Event October 2026.

RESOLUTION OCM/26/184

Moved: Mayor Rachael Wright

Seconded: Cr Pauline Cass

1. That Council approves a one-off sponsorship of $4,657.00 to the Darwin Rural Community Carols by Candlelight Committee towards the delivery of the 2026 Rural Carols by Candlelight event.
2. That Council approves the allocation of $4,657.00 from the 2026/27 Sponsorship budget and authorises the Chief Executive Officer to enter into a sponsorship agreement with the Committee.

CARRIED7/0

14.2.5 Sponsorship Request: 2026 Mango Festival Event

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's consideration of a $5,000 sponsorship request from the Berry Springs Community Market NT in support of their Mango Festival Event on the 25th of October 2026.

RESOLUTION OCM/26/185

Moved: Cr Pauline Cass

Seconded: Cr Kevin Harlan

1. That Council approves a one-off sponsorship of up to $5,000 to Berry Springs Community Market NT towards the delivery of the 2026 Mango Festival.
2. That Council approves the allocation of up to $5,000 from the 2026/27 Sponsorship budget and authorises the Chief Executive Officer to enter into a sponsorship agreement with Berry Springs Community Market NT.

CARRIED6/0

COI TO NOTE: Deputy Mayor Kris Civitarese - Declared a COI (Conflict of Interest) for 14.2. 5 and advised he would abstain from the item. The Mayor directed that he be muted during consideration of the item as he was attending electronically.

At 7:28 pm, Deputy Mayor Kris Civitarese left the meeting.

At 7:30 pm, Deputy Mayor Kris Civitarese returned to the meeting.

14.2.6 Annual Community Survey Results – Late Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents to Council the results of the 2026 Litchfield Council Community Survey.

RESOLUTION OCM/26/186

Moved: Cr Kevin Harlan

Seconded: Cr Pauline Cass

That Council

1. thank the community members that provided feedback via the survey; and
2. receive and note the Litchfield Council 2026 Community Survey Report, as at Attachment A, and open responses at Attachment 2.

CARRIED7/0

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14.2 Infrastructure and Operations

14.3.1 Planning Summary Report - September 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide to Council a summary of applications received, and comments provided, for the period of 1-30 September 2026. The following is a summary of all applications during the noted period.

Type of Application	No. Applications
Planning Scheme Amendment	0
Development Applications	6
Clearances for Development Permit Conditions	4
Sale, Lease, or Occupation of Crown Land Applications	0
Development Permits Issued	4
Liquor Licence Applications	2
Water Licence Applications	0
Mining Applications	0
Stormwater (Building Certification)/ Driveway Plan Reviews	28
Works Permits	41

Letters of comment for the noted development applications are provided for information in the attachments to this report.

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RESOLUTION OCM/26/187

Moved: Cr Daisy Crawford

Seconded: Cr Kevin Harlan

THAT Council:

1. Receive the Summary Planning and Development Report for 1-30 September 2026.
2. Note for information the responses provided to relevant agencies within Attachments A to F of this report.

CARRIED6/0

COI TO NOTE: Councillor Emma Sharp - Declared a COI (Conflict of Interest) due to prior involvement with a DCA matter being considered under Item 14.3.1

At 7.36 pm, Cr Emma Sharp left the meeting.

At 7:42 pm, Cr Emma Sharp returned to the meeting.

14.3.2 LGANT Call for Motions - Planning and Development Decision Making

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council has an opportunity to submit a motion to the Local Government Association of the Northern Territory (LGANT) seeking reform of the Northern Territory planning and development framework to strengthen local government participation in decisions affecting matters of local significance.

The proposed motion responds to the disconnect between Territory-level planning decisions and the responsibility of local governments for managing resulting impacts on local infrastructure, services and communities. It seeks a review of the allocation of planning responsibilities, including consideration of defined local decision-making, concurrence or referral powers where appropriate, while retaining the Territory Government's responsibility for Territory-wide and regional planning policy and specialist regulation.

RESOLUTION OCM/26/188

Moved: Cr Plaxy Purich

Seconded: Cr Pauline Cass

That Council:

a. resolve to submit the attached motion, *Strengthening Local Government Participation in Planning and Development Decision-Making*, to LGANT for consideration through its Call for Motions process.

CARRIED7/0

15 OTHER BUSINESS

Business raised by Councillor Cass as follows:

- **Lloyd Creek Rural Village Development**: Councillor Cass expressed concerns about the proposed development's environmental impacts, particularly water supply, septic setbacks, bore requirements, staging of the development, and broader planning issues. She requested that Council prepare and submit a response under the EPBC Act consultation process.
- **Humpty Doo Community Gardens**: Councillor Cass sought confirmation that Council would continue mowing services at the gardens due to the age and capacity of volunteers**.** Staff confirmed ongoing.
- **Council KPIs**: Councillor Cass questioned whether some key performance indicators, particularly social media measures, remain contemporary and relevant. Rebecca Taylor (Director Governance & Community) advised KPIs would be reviewed as part of future planning and budget workshops in the next financial year.
- **Produce Road**: Councillor Cass highlighted ongoing complaints regarding the road's condition and drainage issues. Director of Infrastructure (DoI) advised investigations were underway to determine a long-term reconstruction solution rather than relying solely on patching.

Business raised by Deputy Mayor Chris Civitarese as follows:

- Concerns regarding the condition of roads entering the wet season and requested that, if additional staff or financial resources were needed to accelerate repairs, a report be brought to Council for consideration.

Business raised by Councillor Plaxy Purich:

- Referred to concerns raised by residents during Public Question Time about Warren Road and other Lambells Lagoon right-of-way roads and recommended that Council support interim repairs.
- CEO responded that Council must first consider legal, insurance and financial risks associated with undertaking works on roads.

Business raised by Councillor Kevin Harland:

- Requested a list of roads previously maintained by Council that may no longer be maintained.
- Sought updates on Stockwell Road, Lorton Road and the Arnhem Highway/Pioneer Drive traffic signal project. DoI advised work and engagement were progressing on these matters.
- Foreshadowed a Notice of Motion for a future meeting regarding after-hours animal management services, following concerns raised by animal welfare advocate Mandy Hall earlier in the meeting.

Business raised by Councillor Daisy Crawford:

- Thanked fellow councillors for supporting her nomination to the LGANT Municipal Committee.
- Raised the benefit of a clearer Council communications plan, helping residents understand the most appropriate channels to contact Council and seek information.

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16 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

RESOLUTION OCM/26/189

Moved: Cr Kevin Harlan

Seconded: Cr Daisy Crawford

Pursuant to Section 93 of the Local Government Act and Regulation 51 of Local Government (General) Regulations the meeting be closed to the public to consider the following confidential item(s):

16.1 Confidential Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 21 September 2026

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 99(2) - ci of the Local Government Act, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with information that would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to cause commercial prejudice to, or confer an unfair commercial advantage on, any person.

16.2 Remission of Interest - Financial Hardship

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 99(2) - b of the Local Government Act, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with information about the personal circumstances of a resident or ratepayer;.

16.3 Appointment of RMAC Chair

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 99(2) - civ of the Local Government Act, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with information that would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to subject to subregulation (3) - prejudice the interest of the council or some other person.

16.4 Planning Summary Report - Confidential item

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 99(2) - e of the Local Government Act, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with subject to subregulation (3) - information provided to the council on condition that ir be kept confidential and would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to be contrary to the public interest.

16.5 RFT26-564 - Sealed Pavement Maintenance Period Contract

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 99(2) - ci of the Local Government Act, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with information that would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to cause commercial prejudice to, or confer an unfair commercial advantage on, any person.

RECOMMENDATION

Resume in Open Session and note the Mayor's report on Confidential Resolutions.

NOTE: At 8:20 pm, Cr Kevin Harlan declared a COI and left the meeting. He did not return.

17 REPORT OF CONFIDENTIAL RESOLUTIONS

MOTION

RESOLUTION OCM/26/190

Moved: Cr Pauline Cass

Seconded: Cr Plaxy Purich

1. That Council nominates Cr Plaxy Purich to the Local Government Association of the Northern Territory Executive Board for the position of Vice-President and/or President - Municipal.

   CEO advised his understanding from CEO LGANT provided on 16/10/26 that as the deadline for nominations had passed no changes would be accepted.

CARRIED5/0

18 CLOSE OF MEETING

The Meeting closed at 8:42pm.

19 NEXT MEETING

Monday, 16 November 2026

20 MINUTES TO BE CONFIRMED

Monday, 16 November 2026

Mayor

Rachael Wright

Chief Executive Officer

Stephen Hoyne

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