



Minutes

Bush Fire Control Officers Committee Meeting
Tuesday 26th August 2025

Date	Tuesday 26th August 2025
Time	3.30pm
Location	Shire of Wickepin 77 Wogolin Road, Wickepin WA 6370
Distribution Date	4 September 2025



Notice of Meeting

Please be informed the Bush Fire Control Officers Committee Meeting of the Shire of Wickepin has been held at 3.30pm on Tuesday 26 August 2025 at the Shire of Wickepin, 77 Wogolin Road, Wickepin WA 6370.

David Burton
Chief Executive Officer
Monday 25 August 2025

Disclaimer

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In particular and without derogating in any way from the broad disclaimer above, in discussion regarding any planning application or application for a licence, any statement or limitation of approval made by a member or officer of the Shire of Wickepin during the course of any meeting is not intended to be and is not to be taken as notice of approval from the Shire of Wickepin. The Shire of Wickepin warns that anyone who has an application lodged with the Shire of Wickepin must obtain and only should rely on written confirmation of the outcome of the application, and any conditions attaching to the decision made by the Shire of Wickepin in respect of the application.

Terms of Reference

1. Name

Bush Fire Control Officers Committee

2. Members

Voting Members

- Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
- Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
- All Fire Control Officers

Non-Voting Members

- Representative(s) from DFES
- Representative(s) from Wickepin Police
- Shire of Wickepin CEO and nominated staff

3. Function of the Committee

To provide advice to Council in regard to all matters relating to bush fire control, prevention and management including recommendations on the annual firebreak requirements, capital (equipment) purchase, review of firefighting/prevention practices, firefighting training, etc.

4. Role and Scope of the Committee

To advise the local government regarding all matters relating to the preventing, controlling and extinguishing of bush fires, the planning of the layout of fire-breaks in the district, the formation of bush fire brigades and the grouping thereof under group brigade officers, the ensuring of co-operation and co-ordination of bush fire brigades in their efforts and activities, and any other matter relating to bush fire control whether of the same kind as, or a different kind from, those specified in this subsection.

5. Meeting Frequency

Twice per annum with scope to call additional meeting if need arises (i.e. post-emergency events) – actual dates to be determined by the Presiding Member in consultation with Committee Members and applicable Shire officers.

6. Delegated Powers

The Committee has no delegated powers and is an advisory committee to Council only. Recommendations of Committee meetings are to be presented to Council by Shire officers for noting or consideration as soon as practicable after unconfirmed minutes of Committee meetings are available.

Contents

1	Declaration of Opening	5
2	Attendance	5
2.1	Present	5
3	Apologies and Leave of Absence	5
3.1	Apologies	5
4	Presentations	5
4.1	Presentations	5
5	Declarations of Members and Officers Interest	6
6	Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meetings	6
6.1	Minutes of the Bush Fire Control Officers Meeting held on 18 March 2025	6
6.2	Business Arising From Minutes	6
7	Status Report	6
8	Motions of Which Notice Has Been Given	8
9	Notices of Motions for the Following Meeting	8
10	Reports and Information	8
10.1	Chief Bush Fire Control Officers Report – Luke Lansdell	9
10.2	Wickepin Central Brigade	9
10.3	Townsendale Brigade	9
10.4	Yealering Brigade	9
10.5	Tincurrin/Toolibin/Harrismith Brigade	9
10.6	Wickepin East Brigade	9
10.7	Shane Harris - Department of Fire and Emergency Services	9
10.8	Shire of Wickepin	16
11	Appointments 2025/2026 Fire Season	16
11.1	Captain – Wickepin Central	16
11.2	Dual Fire Control Officers from adjoining Shires	16
12	General Business	16
12.1	Burning Periods	16
12.2	Harvest and Fire Ban 2025/2026 Season	17
12.3	ROAC update	17
12.4	Lockable Storage Proposal – Winston Dunwell	17
12.5	Other Items/concerns	17
13	For Information/Circulars	18
14	Closure	18

1 Declaration of Opening

The Chair declared the meeting open at 3.36pm.

2 Attendance

2.1 Present

Members

L Lansdell	Chief Bush Fire Control Officer	(Townsendale)
T Russell	Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer	(Wickepin)
P Russell	Fire Control Officer	(Wickepin)
C Sims	Fire Control Officer	(East Wickepin)
T Leeson	Fire Control Officer	(Townsendale)
D Bird	Fire Control Officer	(Tincurrin/Toolibin/Harrismith)
D White	Fire Control Officer	(Tincurrin/Toolibin/Harrismith)
M Pockran	Fire Control Officer	(Yealering)
P Milne	Wickepin Police Sergeant	
A Spencer	Wickepin Police	
S Harris	Department of Fire and Emergency Services	
S Wettenhall	Department of Fire and Emergency Services	
A Keeling	Department of Fire and Emergency Services	

Employees

D Burton	Chief Executive Officer
G Cross	Manager Works and Services
J Harvey	Executive Support Officer

3 Apologies and Leave of Absence

3.1 Apologies

W Astbury	Fire Control Officer	(Tincurrin/Toolibin/Harrismith)
D Stacey	Fire Control Officer	(Yealering)
W Astbury	Fire Control Officer	(Tincurrin/Toolibin/Harrismith)
D Stacey	Fire Control Officer	(Yealering)
R Butler	Fire Control Officer	(Townsendale)
G McDougall	Fire Control Officer	(Tincurrin/Toolibin/Harrismith)
T Mullan	Fire Control Officer	(East Wickepin)
J Hamilton	Fire Control Officer	(Yealering)

4 Presentations

4.1 Presentations

5 Declarations of Members and Officers Interest

A member or officer who has an impartiality, proximity or financial interest in any matter to be discussed at this meeting must disclose the nature of the interest either in a written notice given to the Chief Executive Officer prior to the meeting or at the meeting immediately before the matter is discussed.

A member who makes a disclosure in respect to an interest must not preside at the part of the meeting which deals with the matter, or participate in, or be present during, any discussion or decision-making process relative to the matter, unless the disclosing member is permitted to do so under Section 5.68 or Section 5.69 of the *Local Government Act 1995*.

The following declarations of interest have been disclosed – Nil.

6 Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meetings

6.1 Minutes of the Bush Fire Control Officers Meeting held on 18 March 2025.

Officer Recommendation

Moved D White, Seconded C Sims that the minutes of the Bush Fire Control Officers Meeting held on 18 March 2025 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

CARRIED

6.2 Business Arising From Minutes

7 Status Report

Where a resolution is formal, procedural or lost it has not been recorded (e.g. confirmation of minutes, meeting behind closed doors, lapsed, etc.).

Subject/Action	Officer	Progress	Status	Comment
Additional Fire Radios	CEO	That the Committee recommends to Council to purchase an additional two (2) base station fire radios and four (4) transferable vehicle radios to provide additional radio coverage for Bush Fire Control Officers, some of which are in light radio coverage areas.	✓	Funds allocated in the 2023-2024 Annual Budget. No further radios can be issued unless the Shire is to pay as the number of radios have been issued for the Shire of Wickepin.
Comments				
2024 Radio transfers completed. Any changes required for new bush fire season				

Update of Radio Listing is required. Please advise Shire of your details to admin@wickepin.wa.gov.au with details. For servicing of radios, contact RadioComms 94788222 to organise.				
Great Southern Fuels	CEO	Can there be fuel supplies during an emergency	✓	CEO & WMS has met with GSF on this matter and advice for the best situation possible in the case of an emergency. GSF and the Shire will work together to achieve this outcome during an emergency with a point to be able to link in the generator.
Comments				
GSF are able to provide at any time a generator in case of any emergency. Shire will require to activate through GSF if ever required.				
Blackspot Areas	CEO	To investigate the blackspot areas	○	CEO has discussed with WALGA on this matter, pending further information. To also be addressed at LEMC. Telstra looking at satellite services rather than new towers.
Comments				
To be followed up in 2025 for further assistance since 3G has closed off. Further information will be required to seek for any additional funding.				
Training	CEO	Training to be arranged, FCOS and volunteer members to also log into their portal to access the online training.	✓	CEO has arranged training and has also sent out to secretaries to send advice out.
Comments				
Training has occurred at both Wickepin and Harrismith/Tincurrin. Encourage to continue for AO to visit brigades within the district to continue to further increase members knowledge, training and maintenance of trucks. 2025 training dates were sent out to FCO's and BFB Secretaries and captains. It was noted that Face to Face training is preferable due to difficulties in completing on-line training modules				

Standpipe – Yealering & Keys		Standpipe at Yealering 86 to be fixed. Does all FCO's have keys?	✓	Standpipe fixed at Yealering 86. Standpipe keys are listed for Fire truck use at present. Shire controls the standpipes via internet with DCEO. Keys to all FCO's
Comments				
Full check in 2025 of standpipe keys required. Recent incident needs to help identify best practice during fires and also reporting if cut etc during the fire season. It was considered that training on the operation of Standpipes should be provided. It appears that all FCO's do not have keys. Manager Works suggested that a Procedure Manual (laminated sheet) be provided at each Standpipe to assist in operation.				
Weather Stations	CEO	Request to be considered in the 25/26 Budget.	○	Looking into this as a part of the budget.
CESM/ Fire Liaison Officer	CEO	Request for Shire to be engaged in a CESM or Fire Liaison Officer.	○	In discussions with shire of Kulin. DFES advised the possibility of 6 CESMs over the next 3 years. We have placed an application in, waiting to be confirmed.

If not noted, please insert numbers of items once attended to and return sheet to CEO.

○ = in progress ✓ = completed ✕ =superseded

8 Motions of Which Notice Has Been Given

Nil.

9 Notices of Motions for the Following Meeting

Nil.

10 Reports and Information

10.1 Chief Bush Fire Control Officers Report – Luke Lansdell

With no fires or emergencies since March, my report is short and sweet.

I would like to acknowledge and thank Trevor Leeson for his work and dedication as outgoing CBFCO after 3 years. He's left big boots to fill, and his ongoing assistance and support is greatly appreciated.

Thanks to the Facey Group who I have been working with to get details on the current Origo Weather Stations in our area from, and the Shire who are discussing upcoming budget item in the near future for the purchase of more weather stations. Ideally we can use the live weather information from these stations around our Shire to make decisions during the fire season.

All local brigades should be holding their annual meeting in the next few months, these are a great chance to connect with your local volunteers and update your brigades contacts and information.

Thanks also to all Fire Control Officers as we go forward into the 25/26 season.

10.2 Wickepin Central Brigade

Captain Toby Russell reported that the radio unit on the Wickepin Fire Truck has been serviced. He also advised that structural firefighting training was recently attended in Kulin.

10.3 Townsendale Brigade

A request was made to consider upgrading the fast fuel pump. It was suggested that the fuel pump system implemented in Lake Grace be reviewed as a potential model, as it has been noted for its effective design.

10.4 Yealering Brigade

Structural firefighting training was recently attended in Kulin. Additionally, two new water tanks have been acquired for use in Yealering. A request has also been submitted for the installation of a new 2m x 2m x 2m shed.

10.5 Tincurrin/Toolibin/Harrismith Brigade

Daniel Bird noted that structural firefighting training was attended in Kulin. He also requested a 2-inch male camlock fitting for the Tincurrin/Harrismith fire truck.

10.6 Wickepin East Brigade

Captain Todd Mullan received base radio from Tim Heffernan.

10.7 Shane Harris - Department of Fire and Emergency Services

Bush Fire Advisory Committee Department of Fire and Emergency Services Report Pre-Season 2025/2026

Key DFES Contacts

Name	Area of Responsibility	Phone Number
All Hours Emergency Contact		
DFES COMCEN	All Hours Emergency Contact - For Turnouts and Providing Incident Information	1800 198 140
DFES UGS Regional Duty Coordinator	All Hours Regional Contact – For Support and Assistance	1800 865 103
DFES Public Information	All Hours Contact – For Issuing Alerts and Warnings	1800 718 288

Pre-Season Forums

Date:	Location:	Time:
Tuesday 14 th October 2025	Brookton – Eva Pavillion	TBA - Afternoon (Lunch Provided)
Wednesday 15 th October 2025	Woodanilling Sports Complex	TBA - Afternoon (Lunch Provided)
Thursday 16 th October 2025	Hyden Sports Complex	TBA - Afternoon (Lunch Provided)

The Upper Great Southern Region will be holding 3 Pre-Season Planning Forums ahead of the 2025/2026 High Threat Bushfire Period. These events will include important presentations from different areas, all relative to the upcoming season. **We are currently still planning and as well as organising the finer details, so still confirming times, and presenters etc. With official invites coming out soon.** However, we are looking at including the following information on:

- Seasonal Outlook
- Regional Duty Coordinator Role
- Transfer of Control (LG to DFES, LG to DBCA)
- Aviation Services and Grain Harvest Strategy
- Australian Warning System and Public Information
- ComCen and Incident Communication
- State Operational Support Fleet (High Season) Allocations

Key Learnings from Last Seasons After Action Reviews

- **Information Flow** – Ensuring that Sitreps and Incident information are being communicated to the DFES Comcen as soon as possible when arriving at an incident, the Regional Duty Coordinator is responsible for monitor the quicker they get information, the better informed everyone is, and we can ensure you are being supported and resources appropriately.
- **AIIMS Training and IMT (Incident Management Team)** – One of the key themes out of a few debriefs have been around IMT structures and when to start delegating functions and roles. One process that some Shires are implementing is the 2 tanks rule for FCO's. Meaning if an FCO is having to leave the fire ground to fill their fire unit up and the fire is still not contained or controlled, then that FCO should step back and assume the role of an Incident Controller and start delegating some tasks and functions, as other FCOs should be doing the same. .



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- **Communication Support** – A few Challenges around communication in remote areas, use of WAERN radios and Comms plans – pre-set sectors and use of command channel key
- **BFB/FCO Powers** – There has been a few instances where fires have not actioned due to Brigades not knowing whose land it is, ie. being in a reserve or near DBCA land, Under the Bushfires Act 1954, The Bushfire Brigade can enter the tenure and property to prevent the spread of fire as long as they are taking due care and informing the property owners of attendance.
- **Asset Protection**
-

Incident Information, Communication and Sit-Reps

Calling 000 – Reporting Incidents

Providing incident information to DFES Comcen, Required as per State Hazard Plan Fire

Ongoing Sit-reps

When, how, who

Public Information and Warnings

During the response to an incident, the responsibility for management of public information remains with the Controlling Agency. The IC is responsible for authorising and issuing alerts and warnings related to a fire, this includes authorising the release of information to the broader public and to those directly affected by the incident.

Bushfire Alerts and Warnings	
Warning Level	When to Issue Warning
ADVICE	There is an active incident in the area. There is no immediate danger. The Community needs to stay up to date in case the situation changes.
WATCH AND ACT	There is a possible threat to lives and homes. The Community needs to take actions now to stay safe.
EMERGENCY WARNING	There is an immediate threat to lives and homes. The Community is in danger and need to take immediate action.

A Bushfire Trigger Point Document is available [here](#)

Emergency Management Agencies must share public information with the community during an incident. A single and coordinated approach for communicating public information and warnings is required when fire impacts multiple areas of responsibility.

How to Issue Bushfire Alerts and Warnings		
Issuing Bushfire Advises		
Contact	Number	Actions
DFES COMCEN	1800 198 140	
Issuing Bushfire Advises, Watch and Acts and Emergency Warnings		
Contact	Number	Actions



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DFES PUBLIC INFORMATION	1800 718 288	
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Transfer of Control

As per Bushfires Act 1954 and State Hazard Plan – Fire, **Local Government is the Controlling Agency for all Fires outside of the Gazetted Fire District.**

In some circumstances the Controlling Agency of an incident can be transferred to another agency.

Reasons for Transferring Control

For bushfires, circumstances that may trigger a change of Controlling Agency include:

- At the request of the Current Controlling Agency
- Beyond the capacity of the Controlling Agency
- Level 3 incident
- Complexity of the incident / multiple hazards
- Multiple local government areas
- DFES Officer authorised under section 13 of the Bush Fires Act 1954

4.14 Controlling Agencies

Controlling Agencies for fire suppression are determined by their area of responsibility in accordance with Western Australian legislation.

Where the response requirements exceed the owners and/or occupier's capabilities, the relevant Controlling Agency takes control in accordance with their legislative responsibilities.

Table 2: Initial controlling agencies

Area of responsibility	Initial Controlling Agency
Within Gazetted Fire Districts	DFES
On DBCA managed land outside Gazetted Fire Districts	DBCA
Within local government districts outside of Gazetted Fire Districts and outside DBCA managed land	Local governments

LG to DFES

Transfer of control to DFES can only occur under a Section 13 of the Bushfires Act 1954 which requires authorisation at State Level by the Duty Assistant Commissioner (DAC).

The process involves:

1. Incident must be recorded (000), Incident sitrep and up to date details of incident provided to ComCen
2. The Current Incident Controller can request a DFES Bushfire Liaison Officer attend for support, if rapidly escalating incident and potential for a Level 2 Incident or if a Change of Control is going to be requested.
3. The Local Government CEO/CBFCO or the Incident Controller contacts the DFES RDC and requests a Transfer of Control (s13). A DFES BFLO at the incident can assist with this request and may speed up the process.
4. The RDC then puts request through the correct chain to the State Level.
5. The Change in Controlling Agency/s 13 is accepted or declined by the Duty Assistant Commissioner, Controlling Agency advised of outcome.

During this time Local Government retains control of this incident. It is important to appreciate that a transfer of control will not happen following every request; there are a range of reasons why a Section 13 may not be issued.



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LG to DBCA

Transfer of control to DBCA can occur under a Section 45 of the Bushfires Act 1954. Generally, if the fire involves DBCA Tenure. The Current Incident controller can contact the DBCA Duty Officer or the DFES RDC who can assist in facilitating this. **Please note – This Process is between DBCA and LG, however, Comcen need to be made aware of this.**

Asset Protection and Incidents Requiring Additional Capability

What is asset protection

When to ask for asset protection

Who to request

How

Incidents requiring additional capability

ie Header Fires, Car fires, house/structure fires

DFES Bushfire Liaison Officer

The RDC may consider deploying a DFES Officer (Bushfire Liaison Officer – Section 12 & 13 Bushfire Act 1954) for the following:

- If the IC / controlling agency requests the presence of a DFES Officer
- The incident has potential to escalate to Level 2.
- Significant resources are deployed
- No communication established/PAFTACS/Sitrep received from IC within 1 hour of arrival to incident.
- Significant assets or private property is under threat.
- There are injuries or fatalities to responding crews.
- When there is possible impact on critical infrastructure.
- Significant road closure which results in disruption to traffic movement.

Note: On arrival the attending DFES Officer will:

- Liaise with the IC to develop and provide a situation report
- Provide advice, support and assistance as required including identifying risks, and necessary actions.
- It may be necessary to provide advice to Local Government concerning the process for transferring control of the incident to DFES or DBCA (Section 13 and 45A Bushfires Act 1954)

DFES Support for BFBs/LGs

RDC Support



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Air Support

Incident Weather Forecasts

Predictions

Resources

DFES Officer

Requesting Aviation Services / Air Support

Process

The State Hazard Plan – Fire (Update)

The State Hazard Plan - Fire provides an overview of arrangements for the management of fire in Western Australia (WA) and contains information on fire prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. The State Hazard Plan has now been reviewed, updated and republished (21st August 2025).

State Hazard Plan - Fire can be found here: https://www.wa.gov.au/system/files/2025-08/shp_fire_v3.00.pdf

A Comprehensive Review Summary can be found here: <https://www.wa.gov.au/system/files/2025-08/shp-fire-review-amendments-summary.pdf>

State Operational Support Fleet High Season Allocation



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Checklist and Supporting Documents



PPE

Additional Updates

- **Emergency WA** – Use Emergency WA as your source of Truth for Incident Information. Stay up to date with [Emergency WA](#), with the New Emergency WA App now available on IOS and Android devices. Allowing you to stay up to date with real-life live data and updates. Able to set watch zones and receive updates if an incident occurs nearby.

Preparedness

- **Rural Fire Awareness Course** – Rural Fire Awareness Training Course is still available online – This is the minimum recommended requirement for Farm Response Unit. Training Link [Here](#).



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10.8 Shire of Wickepin

The Shire will be looking at formalising some information including the following:

Members check – volunteers

Policy – minimum requirements for attending officers

SMS service ceasing in Nov, we are looking for a substitute.

Firebreak notices – rural inspections done by FCOs Town by Rangers

Rangers will be looking at starting notices soon

Burning permits will not be issued by CEO (does not know area) – referred to FCO's

11 Appointments 2025/2026 Fire Season

11.1 Captain – Wickepin Central

11.2 Dual Fire Control Officers from adjoining Shires

Noting that the following persons have so far been endorsed by Council for the 2025/2026 Bush Fire Season as Dual Fire Control Officers;

TBC		Shire of Narrogin
Craig Jespersen	0427 887 075	Shire of Corrigin
Joel Bell	0429 657 097	Shire of Corrigin
Brett Blechynden	0473 879 022	Shire of Pingelly
Brodie Cunningham	0488 008 444	Shire of Pingelly
Robert Lee	0428 879 049	Shire of Pingelly
Rodney Shaddick	0427 871 328	Shire of Pingelly
Sam MacNamara	0427 693 275	Shire of Pingelly
Clinton Mullan	0429 001 651	Shire of Kulin
David Lewis	0429 001 651	Shire of Kulin
TBC		Shire of Dumbelyung
TBC		Shire of Cuballing
TBC		Shire of Wagin

Officers Recommendation

Moved T Leeson, Seconded T Russell That the BFCO notes the advice of Dual Fire Control Officers for the surrounding local governments.

CARRIED

12 General Business

12.1 Burning Periods

Restricted Burning – 1 October 2025 to 13 November 2025

Prohibited Burning – 14 November 2025 to 7 February 2026

Restricted Burning – 8 February 2026 to 14 April 2026

Officers Recommendation

Moved T Leeson, Seconded C Sims that the restricted, prohibited and restricted periods are noted for the season.

CARRIED

Consideration for the future, the Restricted period changed to:

Restricted Burning – 1 October to 31 October 2025

Prohibited Burning – 1 November to 7 February 2025

Restricted Burning – 8 February to 14 April 2025

Department of Fire & Emergency services noted that the changed to the burning periods are required to be gazetted. An email is required to be sent to the DFES Area Officer with request for Permanent change to the burning periods.

Officers Recommendation

Moved T Leeson, Seconded C Sims that the updated restricted, prohibited and restricted periods are to be actioned for change.

CARRIED

12.2 Harvest and Fire Ban 2025/2026 Season

Shire to advertise dates for media posts.

Harvesting is banned on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

Lighting of fires is banned on Good Friday and Easter Sunday.

12.3 ROAC update

No information at this time.

12.4 Lockable Storage Proposal – Winston Dunwell

The Yealering 86-Gate Fire Brigade president is seeking feedback upon a proposal for having a lockable storage near the water tanks for the purpose of the new pumps and hoses for access in emergency situations. Storage is only required to be 2m x 2m and 1m in height.

2m x 2m x 2m height / same lock as standpipes

12.5 Other Items/concerns

Concerns with tyres being dumped.

Trever:

Tip closure for tyres – tyres are being dumped on the side of roads and on farms. Raises another hazard. Does the Shire have plans for dumping tires?

CEO response: Rubbish tips can only hold 100 tyres. The tyres will need to be taken to the exchange facility.

Concern with radios

Radio interference – email to all FCO to check whether their radios are experiencing the interference; channel 273.

Email to all FCO's that a handpiece is not locked on FCO's

Phil Russell:

Truck radio service – cel call

PPE for BFB

Luke Lansdell:

PPE needs to be checked that it is stocked for fire season.

Require more helmets for the trucks.

Flashing red/blue lights for trucks for incidents.

13 For Information/Circulars

Nil.

14 Closure

The next Bush Fire Control Officers Committee meeting will be held in March 2026.

There being no further business the Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 5.06pm.