ETHERIDGE SHIRE COUNCIL



CONFIRMED MINUTES

GENERAL MEETING OF
ETHERIDGE SHIRE COUNCIL
HELD AT COUNCIL CHAMBERS, GEORGETOWN
ON WEDNESDAY 14 OCTOBER 2026
COMMENCING AT 9.00AM

ETHERIDGE SHIRE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING
HELD AT COUNCIL CHAMBERS, GEORGETOWN
ON WEDNESDAY, 14 OCTOBER 2026

ATTENDANCE

Cr. Barry Hughes
Cr. Ian Carroll
Cr. Laurell Royes
Cr. Seven Ryan
Cr. Ian Tincknell (via Teams)

OFFICERS PRESENT

Mrs. Louise Knol. Chief Executive Officer
Mr. Alan Clark, Director of Engineering Services
Mrs. Renee Bester, Director of Corporate Services
Miss. Gemma Bethel, Executive Assistant to the Chief Executive Officer

OPEN GALLERY

The Mayor declared the meeting open at 8:59am and welcomed all in attendance.

PRAYER

"We ask that today you give us wisdom to make good decisions to benefit our communities. Help us see what will benefit our shire and give us hearts to serve others. Amen".

ATTENDANCE, APOLOGIES, LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Attendance:
Nil

Apologies:
Nil

Leave of Absence:
Nil

CONDOLENCES AND CONGRATULATIONS

Condolences:
Council wish to send their condolences to the family of the late Mr Noel Pickering.

Congratulations:
Council wish to congratulate the following students on their achievements:
Sheridan Young – School Captain at Blackheath and Thornburgh College
Bailey Moody – Boarding Vice Captain at Blackheath and Thornburgh College
Nikki Bethel – College Vice Captain, Residential Vice Captain, and House Captain at Columba Catholic College

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

6. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

General Meeting Minutes – Wednesday 16th September 2026

RESOLUTION

That the Minutes of the General Council Meeting held at Georgetown on Wednesday 16th September 2026 be confirmed.

MOVED: Cr. Royes **SECONDED**: Cr. Carroll

CARRIED
RESOLUTION #26.10.01
5/0

7. BUSINESS ARISING FROM GENERAL MINUTES

Nil

8. MAYORAL UPDATE

RESOLUTION
That Council receives the Mayoral Update as presented.

MOVED: Cr. Hughes **SECONDED**: Cr. Royes

CARRIED
RESOLUTION #26.10.02
5/0

CONSIDERATION OF OPEN SESSION REPORTS

Chief Executive Officer

ATTENDANCE
Patrick Clifton, Consultant Town Planner joined the meeting via Teams at 9:20am

10.1 Material Change of Use, Battery Energy Storage Facility (including ancillary infrastructure), Gilberton Road Einasleigh

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
At the Ordinary Council Meeting of 12 August 2026, a request from K3W Project Co Pty Ltd as trustee for the K3W Project Trust (Genex) was considered for Council to enter into a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) to facilitate the lodgement of a development application for a Battery Energy Storage Facility at Gilberton Road, Kidston. At that meeting, Council resolved to enter into the CBA and delegated authority to the Chief Executive Officer to finalise and execute the agreement:

The agreement has been duly executed and, on 14 August 2026, an application was lodged with the State Assessment and Referral Agency (SARA) as the Assessment Manager.

As part of the application process, SARA in their confirmation notice, have identified Etheridge Shire Council as an Advice Referral Agency. As an advice agency, Council can only provide advice and cannot direct a refusal or approval and cannot require conditions to be attached to any approval granted; however, SARA are required to consider any representations made in respect of the application by Council.

The application is subject to Impact Assessment, requiring the following public notice steps:

- giving notice to all affected local governments as:
  - identified in the social impact assessment for the development; or
  - nominated by the chief executive, if the chief executive decided not to require a social impact assessment for the development, and
- giving notice to the adjoining owners of all lots adjoining the premises the subject of the application; and
- giving notice to all owners of lots located within 1500m of the premises the subject of the application; and
- if a community notice board exists and permission is given by an authorised person, placing a notice on community notice boards for the period of time up to and including the stated date; and

- giving notice on the assessment manager's website for the period of time up to and including the stated day.

The purpose of this report is to advise the Council of the nature of the application and to recommend a referral response to be provided to SARA as the assessment manager for consideration in the determination of the application.

RESOLUTION

That Council:

1. Advise the State Assessment and Referral Agency that the proposed development does not conflict with the Etheridge Shire Planning Scheme;
2. Request that any development approval be conditioned to require a detailed Social Impact Management Plan (SIMP) and, in particular compliance with the outcomes identified in Table D-1 SIMP Framework of the Social Impact Assessment;
3. Note that Council may make a submission to the State Assessment and Referral Agency regarding the Social Impact Assessment; and
4. Delegate Authority to the Chief Executive Officer to provide the referral response to the State Assessment and Referral Agency.

MOVED: Cr. Tincknell **SECONDED**: Cr. Royes

CARRIED
RESOLUTION #26.10.03
4/1
Against: Cr Tincknell

ATTENDANCE

Patrick Clifton, Consultant Town Planner left the meeting at 9:26am

10.2 Chief Executive Officer Briefing Report

RESOLUTION

That Council receives and notes the Chief Executive Officer's Briefing Report for the period September 2026.

MOVED: Cr. Carroll **SECONDED**: Cr. Royes

CARRIED
RESOLUTION #26.10.04
5/0

10.3 Closure of Shire Offices, Depot Administration, Workshop, Outside Work Crews, Town Crews, Terrestrial Centre & Childcare

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Each year Council has closed the Shire operations over the Christmas and New Year period to allow Council team members to enjoy the festive season with family and friends.

RESOLUTION

That Council endorse the closure of Council operations as follows subject to appropriate on call arrangements with senior staff being put into place for emergency matters:

1. The Shire and Depot Administration Offices, Terrestrial Centre, Little Gems Childcare Centre, Town Crews and Workshop from Saturday 19th December 2026 to 3rd January 2027 with the return to work date being Monday 4th January 2027; and
2. The Road and RMPC Crews from Sunday 20th December 2026 to 18th January 2027 with the return to work date being Tuesday 19th January 2027.

MOVED: Cr. Ryan **SECONDED**: Cr. Royes

CARRIED
RESOLUTION #26.10.05
5/0

10.4 Councillor Workshop Policy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A review of Council's existing arrangements for Councillor workshops has identified an opportunity to strengthen governance, transparency, accountability and role clarity through the adoption of a formal Councillor Workshop Policy. The proposed policy replaces the existing workshop Terms of Reference and establishes clear governance requirements relating to workshop purpose, attendance, conduct, conflict of interest management, confidentiality, meeting records and workshop administration.

The policy reinforces that Councillor Workshops are non-decision-making forums intended to inform Councillors, facilitate strategic discussion and assist future decision-making through formal Council meetings. Any decisions requiring Council authority must continue to be determined at an Ordinary or Special Meeting of Council.

To ensure consistency across Council's governance framework, the Council Monthly Meeting Framework has also been updated to formally recognise Councillor Workshops as a recurring monthly activity and reinforce that Council Meetings remain the sole decision-making body of Council.

RESOLUTION
That Council:

1. Adopt the ESC-C068 Councillor Workshop Policy as amended with this report;
2. Resolve that the existing Briefing and Strategic Workshop Terms of Reference be superseded upon commencement of the policy;
3. Note the updated Council Monthly Meeting Framework, incorporating Councillor Workshops as a standing component of Council's governance framework; and
4. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to undertake any administrative updates required to implement the adopted policy and associated governance documents.

MOVED: Cr. Carroll **SECONDED**: Cr. Hughes

CARRIED
RESOLUTION #26.10.06
5/0

10.5 Terrestrial Centre Upgrade – Variation Request Staff Kitchen

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
This report seeks Council approval for a contract variation associated with the Georgetown Terrestrial Centre Upgrade project. The variation as provided by Hutchinson Builders provides for the conversion of an existing small meeting room area into a dedicated staff kitchen and amenities space at a cost of $39,421.80 (ex GST). Note that the project currently maintains a contingency balance of approximately $250,000 post the allowance for this variation.

RESOLUTION
That Council:

1. Approve the contract variation provided by Hutchinson Builders for Meeting Room Conversion to Staff Kitchen for the Georgetown Terrestrial Centre Upgrade project for the amount of $39,421.80 (excluding GST);
2. Notes that the variation will be funded from the Growing Our Region - Georgetown Terrestrial Centre Upgrade project's available budget; and
3. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to execute all necessary documentation associated with the approved variation.

MOVED: Cr. Carroll **SECONDED**: Cr. Tincknell

CARRIED
RESOLUTION #26.10.07
5/0

10.6 First Quarter Review – Annual Operational Plan 2026/27

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Consideration of the First Quarter Annual Operational Plan 2026/27 for the period ended 30th September 2026.

RESOLUTION

That pursuant to section 174(3) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, Council receive the first quarter written assessment of Council's progress towards implementing the Annual Operational Plan 2026/27.

MOVED: Cr. Royes **SECONDED**: Cr. Hughes

CARRIED
RESOLUTION #26.10.08
5/0

CONSIDERATION OF OPEN SESSION REPORTS

Director of Corporate Services

11.1 Director of Corporate Services Briefing Report August 2026

RESOLUTION
That Council receives and notes the Director of Corporate Services Briefing Report for the month of September 2026.

MOVED: Cr. Ryan **SECONDED**: Cr. Carroll

CARRIED
RESOLUTION #26.10.09
5/0

11.2 Financial Performance as at 30 September 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
In accordance with section 204 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, a monthly finance report is required to be presented to Council stating the progress made in relation to the budget for the period of the financial year as near as practicable to the end of the month before the meeting held.

RESOLUTION
That Council receives the financial statements for the period ended 30 September 2026 pursuant to, and in accordance with section 204 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

MOVED: Cr. Ryan **SECONDED**: Cr. Carroll

CARRIED
RESOLUTION #26.10.10
5/0

ADJOURNMENT
Council adjourned for morning tea at 10:03am

RESUMPTION
Council resumed the meeting at 10:35am

11.3 Audit Committee Meeting Minutes – 25th September 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
In accordance with section 211, Council's Audit Committee met on 25th September 2026. A copy of the meeting minutes is provided as a written report about the matters reviewed at the meeting.

RESOLUTION
That Council:
Receive the unconfirmed minutes of the Audit Committee Meeting as amended held 25th September 2026, and note the business resolved therein.

MOVED: Cr. Royes **SECONDED**: Cr. Carroll

CARRIED

RESOLUTION #26.10.11
5/0

11.4 First Quarter Budget Review FY2026/2027

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Pursuant to section 104 of the *Local Government Act 2009* and section 169 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, Council adopted its annual budget in July. A review of Council's budget has been completed as of 30th September 2026. It is proposed the Council amend the adopted budget to address any organisation change that has occurred since its adoption. Pursuant to section 170(3) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, Council may amend its budget at any time by resolution prior to the end of financial year.

RESOLUTION
That Council, in accordance with section 170(3) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, amend its 2026/2027 budget as presented.

MOVED: Cr. Royes **SECONDED**: Cr. Ryan

CARRIED
RESOLUTION #26.10.12
5/0

CONSIDERATION OF OPEN SESSION ADDENDUM REPORTS

Director of Corporate Services

10.1 2026 External Audit Final Closing Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Etheridge Shire Council's final closing report was prepared by BDO Partner, James Gaustad and Queensland Audit Office (QAO). QAO issued an unmodified audit opinion on the 2025/2026 financial statements. The final closing report includes the results of the 2025/2026 audit, the status of audit issues, identified audit misstatements, and other matters in accordance with the audit plan. The closing report was endorsed by the Audit Committee at its meeting held 12th October 2026.

RESOLUTION
That Council, pursuant to section 213 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, receive and endorse the 2026 External Audit Final Closing Report and note the contents therein.

MOVED: Cr. Royes **SECONDED**: Cr. Ryan

CARRIED
RESOLUTION #26.10.13
5/0

10.2 Final Audited FY2026 Financial Statements

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Etheridge Shire Council prepares Annual General Purpose Financial Statements in accordance with applicable legislation and Australian Accounting Standards. The financial statements have been finalised, endorsed by Council's Audit Committee and certified by QAO on 9th October 2026. The financial statements are required to be adopted by Council, signed and returned to QAO for lodgment by 31st October 2026. Where a Council has an audit committee, the draft General Purpose Financial Statements must be reviewed by the Audit Committee prior to certification.

RESOLUTION
That Council:
- receive the 2025/2026 Financial Statements as presented, and;
- make publicly available through inclusion within the 2025/2026 Annual Report.

MOVED: Cr. Ryan **SECONDED**: Cr. Hughes

CARRIED
RESOLUTION #26.10.14
5/0

10.3 Audit Committee Meeting Minutes – 12th October 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
In accordance with section 211, Council's Audit Committee met on 12th October 2026. A copy of the meeting minutes is provided as a written report about the matters reviewed at the meeting.

RESOLUTION
That Council:
Receive the unconfirmed minutes of the Audit Committee Meeting held 12th October 2026, and note the business resolved therein.

MOVED: Cr. Hughes **SECONDED**: Cr. Royes

CARRIED
RESOLUTION #26.10.15
5/0

CONSIDERATION OF OPEN SESSION REPORTS

Director of Engineering Services

12.1 Director Engineering Services - Briefing Report September 2026

RESOLUTION
That Council receives and notes the Director of Engineering Services Briefing Report for the month of September 2026.

MOVED: Cr. Royes **SECONDED**: Cr. Ryan

ATTENDANCE
Cr Ryan left the meeting at 11:26am

CARRIED
RESOLUTION#26.10.16
4/0

Cr Hughes requested it be noted that Council formally acknowledge and thank Alan Clark, Director of Engineering, for his dedicated service and valuable contributions to Council, and wish him all the very best for the future.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST
Cr Royes
Informed the meeting of a possible conflict of interest in agenda item 12.1 Director of Engineering Services Briefing Report (being a discussion item only with no decision-making being undertaken) due to Cr Royes' in-laws owning a property on the Van Lee Road. In accordance with S150ED(2) of the *Local Government Act 2009* in relation to a councillor's interest in a matter, if the interest of the councillor, or an associate or related party of the councillor, is no greater than the personal interests in the matter of a significant proportion of persons in the local government area. the Conflict of Interest does not actually exist. Therefore, there is not a Conflict of Interest in this instance.

Cr Royes
Informed the meeting of a possible Material Personal Interest (MPI) in agenda item 12.1 Director of Engineering Services Briefing Report (being a discussion item only with no decision-making being undertaken), as the discussion concerned two-creek crossings on a road listed on Council's Road Register being located on property owned by Cr Royes. In accordance with S150ED(2) of the *Local Government Act 2009*, the MPI does not apply in relation to a councillor's interest in a matter if the interest of the councillor, or an associate or

related party of the councillor, is no greater than the personal interests in the matter of a significant proportion of persons in the local government area. Therefore, an MPI does not exist.

CONSIDERATION OF CLOSED SESSION REPORTS

RESOLUTION
That Council go into closed session at 11:39am, pursuant to section 254J (3) (g), of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, to discuss the following items:

- Riverview Causeway
- Construction of Unmade Paper Roads
- Variations to Sandy Creek Bridge
- Plant Replacement – Light Vehicle Tender
- Plant Replacement – Roller Tender
- DRFA Project Management Services

MOVED: Cr. Royes **SECONDED**: Cr. Carroll

CARRIED
RESOLUTION#26.10.17
4/0

ADJOURNMENT
Council adjourned for lunch at 12:55pm

RESUMPTION
Council resumed the meeting at 1:38pm

RESOLUTION
Council resolves to come out of closed session at 1:39pm

MOVED: Cr. Royes **SECONDED**: Cr. Carroll

CARRIED
RESOLUTION#26.10.18
4/0

13.1 Riverview Causeway

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
The Riverview Causeway was constructed in mid-2020 without any of the necessary approvals. The owners of Riverview Station were asked to cease all work, they did not do so, and Council's response was to remove the section of road on which the causeway was constructed from the Road Register. The early 2026 flooding event damaged the causeway, and the owners have since requested that Council take the causeway back into the Road Register.

RESOLUTION
That Council decline to take the Riverview causeway into the Road Register.

MOVED: Cr. Royes **SECONDED**: Cr. Tincknell

LOST
1/3
Against: Cr Royes, Cr Carroll, Cr Tincknell

Note to Resolution: That Council's intention is not to reinstate the Riverview Causeway to the Etheridge Shire Council Road Register at this time. This matter will be subject to ongoing engagement with relevant stakeholders.

12.2 Construction of Unmade Paper Roads

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Occasionally Council receives requests to construct new roads to access land that has no formed road access. Sometimes there may be a road reserve showing an unconstructed road corridor, commonly called a paper road, and on others the request may be on freehold/leasehold land. Currently Council has three such requests. This report seeks to address the current requests, and to formalise Council's position on such requests

RESOLUTION

1. That the construction of, and all associated costs for the construction of unmade or paper roads are the responsibility of the developer or owner of the land that benefits from the construction.
2. That the construction of all roads is to be to Council's specification.
3. Advise the applicants of Council's decision.
4. That Council form a Policy dealing with the construction of unmade roads.

MOVED: Cr. Carroll **SECONDED**: Cr. Royes

CARRIED
RESOLUTION #26.10.19
4/0

12.3 Variations to Sandy Creek Bridge

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Sandy Creek Bridge contract was issued as a Design and Construct contract. Within the contract, allowances were made for latent conditions such as encountering harder rock than expected and the need to excavate deeper to reach a suitable base material. These items were included in the contract as provisional items but were not included in the contract price. These provisional items would normally be in the contract price but only paid if needed or be covered by a larger than normal contingency. In this case they were not included in the contract price and there was no contingency added to the contract price.

RESOLUTION

That Council

1. Pursuant to section 228 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, accepts the tender variation proposals 002 and 003 submitted by Civil Build Design (CBD) Consultants for Contract ESC 2025-019 being Design & Construct Sandy Creek Bridge – Airstrip Back Road, Georgetown for amount of $93,429.00 (Ex-GST); and
2. Resolves that this variation report, its attachments and all discussions in relation to this matter remain confidential, but the resolution be made public immediately.

MOVED: Cr. Carroll **SECONDED**: Cr. Royes

CARRIED
RESOLUTION #26.10.20
4/0

12.4 Plant Replacement – Light Vehicle Tender

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Plant replacement program is an integral part of Council ‘s service provision to community and is provided for in Council’s 2026-2027 budget.

RESOLUTION

That Council:

Approve the purchase of six Isuzu SX Dual Cab Utes ESC2026-024 from Mt Isa Isuzu Utes for the sum of $414,954.78 Excluding GST;.

MOVED: Cr. Carroll **SECONDED**: Cr. Royes

CARRIED
RESOLUTION #26.10.21
3/1
Against: Cr Hughes

RESOLUTION
That Council:
Approve that the six trade vehicles related to the purchase of six Isuzu SX Dual Cab Utes ESC2026-024 from Mt Isa Isuzu Utes are to be disposed of in a method to be confirmed by further council resolution noting that the disposal method does not include trade in of the vehicles.

MOVED: Cr. Tincknell **SECONDED**: Cr. Royes

CARRIED
RESOLUTION #26.10.22
4/0

RESOLUTION
That Council:
Approve the purchase of three Isuzu MUX LS-T SUV Wagons ESC2026-023 from Mt Isa Utes for the sum of $242,959.14 Excluding GST.

MOVED: Cr. Royes **SECONDED**: Cr. Carroll

CARRIED
RESOLUTION #26.10.23
3/1
Against: Cr Hughes

RESOLUTION
That Council:
Approve that the three trade vehicles related to the purchase of three Isuzu MUX LS-T SUV Wagons ESC2026-023 from Mt Isa Isuzu Utes are to be disposed of in a method to be confirmed by further council resolution noting that the disposal method does not include trade in of the vehicles.

MOVED: Cr. Tincknell **SECONDED**: Cr. Royes

CARRIED
RESOLUTION #26.10.24
4/0

12.5 Plant Replacement – Roller Tender

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Plant replacement program is an integral part of Council's service provision to the community and is provided for in the 2026-2027 budget.

RESOLUTION
That Council:
1. Approve the purchase of four Caterpillar Rollers from Hasting Deering Australia for the sum of $1,097,000.00 Excluding GST; and
2. Approve trade value from Hasting Deering Australia for the sum of $471,000.00 leaving a net changeover value of $626,000.00

MOVED: Cr. Royes **SECONDED**: Cr. Carroll

CARRIED
RESOLUTION #26.10.25
4/0

12.5 DRFA Project Management Services

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Council is asked to consider the appointment of Northlane Consulting Engineers as Council's Project Management Services provider for Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) projects for a period of five (5) years under Local Buy procurement arrangements, in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*. The proposed appointment will provide continuity, specialist expertise and efficient delivery of Council's substantial disaster recovery program.

AMENDMENT
Cr Hughes proposed an amendment to change the proposed 5 year term to 3 years.

LOST

1/3

RESOLUTION
That Council:

1. Appoint Northlane Consulting Engineers as Council's preferred Project Management Services provider for DRFA-funded projects for a term of five (5) years;
2. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate and execute the necessary contractual arrangements under the relevant Local Buy procurement arrangements; and
3. Note that the appointment is undertaken in accordance with the provisions of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* relating to approved procurement arrangements.

MOVED: Cr. Royes **SECONDED**: Cr. Hughes

LOST
0/4

GENERAL BUSINESS

Cr.	Item
Cr. Carroll	Daintree st Einasleigh maintenance
Cr. Carroll	1. Einasleigh common (un-used paddock) 2. Einasleigh common policy awareness 3. Einasleigh common bore issues
Cr. Carroll	Council vehicle fleet disposal options
Cr. Royes	Project Management DRFA - package delivery delays and the obvious risk to Council. (Contradicting all 5 Principles of Local Government (*Local Government Act s4(2*))
Cr. Royes	Project Managment DRFA - Justification of decision to "repair" creeks/gullies/river crossings immediatley prior to iminent wet knowing the gravel will wash away (gravel wasted/ no material benefit to road users/ asset owner) (Contradicting all 5 Principles of Local Government (*Local Government Act s4(2))*
Cr. Royes	Lyn French letter regarding signage matters (replacement of private signs)

CONCLUSION

There being no further business the Mayor declared the meeting closed at 2:49pm. These minutes will be confirmed by Council at the General Meeting held on Wednesday 11th November 2026.

Cr. Barry Hughes
MAYOR