

Procedural Motion – Urgent Business

Procedural motion

Moved _____ **Seconded** _____

That Council accept as Urgent Business Item 11.8 WALGA Sector Consultation – Electoral Reform Discussion Paper Feedback into these meetings proceedings for consideration and decision.

Carried / Lost

For the motion:

Against the motion:

AGENDA NUMBER & SUBJECT:	11.8 – WALGA Sector Consultation - Electoral Reform Discussion Paper Feedback
FILE REFERENCE:	ADM2
AUTHOR:	David Taylor – Chief Executive Officer
REPORTING OFFICER:	David Taylor – Chief Executive Officer
DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST:	Nil
DATE OF REPORT:	24 March 2026
PREVIOUS MEETING REFERENCE:	Nil
ATTACHMENT:	11.8.1 - InfoPage – Sector Consultation Electoral Reform Discussion Paper 11.8.2 - WALGA Electoral Reform Discussion Paper

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:

Council is requested to consider and endorse feedback to WALGA regarding potential reforms to Local Government elections, specifically the introduction of four-year full spill elections and compulsory voting. The endorsed feedback will inform WALGA’s advocacy in advance of anticipated State Government reform proposals.

BACKGROUND:

WALGA is undertaking sector-wide consultation to inform its advocacy response to potential Local Government electoral reforms expected to be proposed by the State Government.

In June 2025, the Minister for Local Government publicly expressed support for moving to a four-year election cycle, citing concerns regarding voter fatigue and increasing election costs. The possibility of compulsory voting at Local Government elections was also raised during the 2025 WALGA Local Government Convention.

WALGA has requested Council-endorsed feedback from Local Governments by 27 March 2026 to inform its position ahead of any formal State Government consultation.

COMMENT:

Attachment 11.8.2 states WALGA’s position in these two items.

Participation in Local Government Elections

Position Statement

The Local Government sector supports voluntary participation in Local Government elections.

Elections

Position Statement

The Local Government sector supports:

1. Councillors serve four-year terms with elections every two years and half of the Council positions spilled at each election.

Feedback on these topics was discussed at a Council Forum whereby elements such as elections administration and costs, Council stability and continuity were discussed and there was a general indication that the Shire of Nannup Councillors supported the current WALGA position.

STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT:

Electoral reforms would require amendments to the Local Government Act 1995 (WA) and associated regulations, which are matters for State Government.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

Any changes resulting from electoral reform would require future review of internal policies and procedures if and when legislative amendments occur.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no immediate financial implications associated with providing feedback to WALGA. Potential future financial impacts may arise should electoral reforms be legislated, particularly in relation to election cost structures. However, WALGA has advised that current cost modelling by the Western Australian Electoral Commission is not sufficiently transparent to accurately forecast impacts at this time.

RISK MANAGEMENT MATRIX:

The Shire, through its adopted Risk Management Framework, has identified a number of risk areas that need to be assessed and where necessary treated, like, but not limited to:

Audit risks	Financial and credit risks
Operational risks	Technological and IT risks
Compliance and regulatory risks	Environmental risks
Legal risks	Strategic risks
Political risks	Sustainability and security risks

Officers have undertaken a Risk Assessment which is shown below:

Risk	Likelihood	Consequence	Risk Rating	Risk Description	Mitigation/Controls
Reduction in local government autonomy	Unlikely (2)	Moderate (3)	Medium - 6	Potentially reducing local decision-making	Engage proactively with WALGA and State agencies
Impact on Council continuity and governance stability	Possible (3)	Moderate (3)	Medium - 9	Higher turnover causing project disruption	Plan for transition and support elected members
Administrative non-compliance during transition	Unlikely (2)	Moderate (3)	Medium - 6	New procedures may cause compliance gaps	Update policies and ensure staff training

Increased election costs following reform	Likely (4)	Moderate (3)	High - 12	Higher administrative or WAEC costs	Budget planning and financial modelling
Election process disruption during reform transition	Unlikely (2)	Moderate (3)	Medium - 6	New systems and timelines may disrupt operations	Plan transition periods and conduct training

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS:

Extract of Shire of Nannup Strategic Community Plan 2021-2036

6.3 Lead, Listen, Advocate, Represent and Provide – Be a role model for cohesive and connected community.

VOTING REQUIREMENTS:

Simple Majority

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:

That Council provides feedback to Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA) that:

- 1. Council supports the current WALGA advocacy position on Local Government Electoral Reforms – 2.5.15 Participation on Local Government Elections; and**
- 2. Council supports the current WALGA advocacy position on Local Government Electoral Reforms – 2.5.16 Elections.**
- 3. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to provide endorsed feedback to WALGA by 27 March 2026.**