



Attachments

Economic And Tourism Development Committee Meeting

Tuesday, 16 September 2025

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17 June 2025

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Agenda Item 5.1.1 - Attachment 1

Minutes of the Economic And Tourism Development
Committee Meeting held 17 June 2025



Published Minutes

Economic And Tourism Development Committee Meeting

Tuesday, 17 June 2025

Date:	Tuesday 17 June 2025
Time:	8:30am
Location:	Clem Thompson Sports Pavilion, Stadium Road,, Tom Price
Distribution Date:	Thursday 19 June 2025



Shire of Ashburton
Economic And Tourism Development Committee Meeting

The Acting Chief Executive Officer recommends the endorsement of these minutes at the next Economic And Tourism Development Committee Meeting.

Chantelle McGurk

Chantelle McGurk
Acting Chief Executive Officer
19 June 2025

These minutes were confirmed by Council as a true and accurate record of proceedings at the Economic And Tourism Development Committee Meeting held on Tuesday, 17 June 2025.

Presiding Member _____

Date _____

Disclaimer

The Shire of Ashburton warns anyone who has an application lodged with Council must obtain, and should only rely on, written confirmation of the outcomes of the application following the Council meeting, and any conditions attaching to the decision made by Council in respect of the application. No responsibility whatsoever is implied, or accepted, by the Shire of Ashburton for any act, omission, statement, or intimation occurring during a Council meeting.

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1 Declaration Of Opening

The Presiding Member declared the meeting open at 8:30am.

1.1 Acknowledgement Of Country

As representatives of the Shire of Ashburton Council, we respectfully acknowledge the local Indigenous people, the traditional custodians of this land where we are meeting upon today and pay our respects to them and all their elders past, present and emerging.

2 Announcement Of Visitors

Nil

3 Attendance

3.1 Present

Elected Members:	Cr M Lynch SP A Smith Cr L Rumble JP	Tom Price Ward (Presiding Member) Shire President Paraburdoo Ward
Observers:	Cr R de Pledge Cr B Healy Cr R Kapor	Ashburton-Tablelands Ward Tom Price Ward Tom Price Ward
Employees:	C McGurk J Sangster D Kennedy G Harris S Allan A Johnston J Bray R Marlborough L Milne	Acting Chief Executive Officer Deputy Chief Executive Officer Director Corporate Services Director Infrastructure Services Manager Business and Economic Development Manager Media and Communications Manager Governance Senior Governance Officer ICT Coordinator
Guests:	Nil	
Members of public:	There were no members of the public in attendance at the commencement of the meeting.	
Members of media:	There were no members of the media in attendance at the commencement of the meeting.	

3.2 Apologies

Cr A Sullivan Paraburdoo Ward

3.3 Approved Leave Of Absence

Nil

4 Declaration By Members

4.1 Due Consideration By Elected Members To The Agenda

Elected Members noted they have given due consideration to all matters contained in this agenda.

4.2 Declaration Of Interest

A member 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 are disclosed –

6.2 The Karijini Experience 2025 Event Report

Name	SP A Smith
Nature of interest	Direct Financial
Interest description	I have received gifts and/or benefits exceeding a cumulative value of \$300, including hospitality and cultural experience provided as part of my engagement with the organisation. Shire of Ashburton has provided sponsorship support to Karijini Experience. This declaration is to ensure my full transparency and uphold integrity of the decision making process.

6.3 Shire of Ashburton - Small Business Grant Program 2025 2026

Name	SP A Smith
Nature of interest	Direct Financial
Interest description	I am a business owner operating within the Shire of Ashburton and a member of the Pilbara Inland Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PICCI). This connection may be seen to impact my impartiality in decisions or discussion relating to the program.

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6.4 2025 Outback Air Race - Onslow

Name	Cr L Rumble JP
Nature of interest	Impartiality
Interest description	Member of the event committee.

5 Confirmation Of Minutes

5.1 Confirmation Of Previous Minutes

5.1.1 Minutes Of The Economic And Tourism Development Committee Meeting Held On 10 December 2024

Committee Decision

Moved SP A Smith

Seconded Cr L Rumble JP

That the Minutes of the Economic And Tourism Development Committee Meeting held 10 December 2024 (Item 5.1.1 Attachment 1) be confirmed as a true and accurate record.

For: M Lynch, A Smith and L Rumble JP

Against: Nil

Carried 3/0

6 Public Agenda Items

6.1 Policy Review - Tourism Support and Promotion

File Reference	139/2022
Applicant or Proponent(s)	Not Applicable
Author	S Allan, Manager Business & Economic Development
Authorising Officer	Dr G Hunt PSM, Chief Executive Officer (Temporary)
Previous Meeting Reference	Ordinary Council Meeting 11 October 2022 - Item 139/2022
Disclosure(s) of interest	Author – Nil
	Authorising Officer – Nil
Attachments	1. Council Policy - Tourism Support and Promotion (as amended)

Report Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present to the Economic and Tourism Development Committee (the Committee) proposed amendments to Council Policy – Tourism Support and Promotion (refer to Attachment 1) to ensure ongoing support of relevant tourism initiatives and developments which build and diversify the Ashburton and Pilbara tourism potential.

The Committee is requested to consider the proposed amendments to Council Policy – Tourism Support and Promotion (the Policy) and to make a recommendation to Council to adopt the amended policy, as presented.

Background

The current Policy was adopted by Council on 11 October 2022.

Historically, Council policies have generally been reviewed every two years to ensure fit for purpose, alignment with legislative framework and the direction of the Council on specific matters.

Reviews may occur outside the scheduled timeframe if legislation changes, where amendment is required to support the direction of Council, where improved guidance is required to support function and operability or where circumstances occur to ensure accurate policy provisions.

As part of the Shire's commitment, as per the adopted 2024-2028 Economic Development Strategy, to facilitate future growth and new industry opportunities within Ashburton and to assist the Shire's vision to become 'A World-Class Tourist Destination', considerable change to the existing policy was required.

Comments

Amendments to the policy as detailed in Attachment 1, provide opportunity to promote greater emphasis and strategic thinking to support current tourism diversification and growth, whilst focusing on facilitating and encouraging investment attraction opportunities.

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The changes proposed will support and encourage future diversification of the local economy through growth in tourism-based business, improved services and initiatives, place activation, event opportunities and tourism focused infrastructure developments.

The policy amendments proposed also highlight the importance of the protection of the Shire's authenticity, it's unique character and natural assets and a place where there is a highly valued community sense of identity and pride, who are privileged to have world class natural assets in their backyard and encourages a strategic high level of stakeholder engagement as to facilitate advocacy and support.

The Committee is requested to support the policy amendments, as detailed Attachment 1 and make a recommendation to Council to formally endorse the amendments, as presented.

Consultation

Chief Executive Officer
Governance

Strategic Community Plan

Shire of Ashburton Strategic Community Plan 2022-2032

Strategic Objective	3. Prosperity - We will advocate and drive opportunities for the community to be economically desirable, resilient, and prosperous.
Strategic Outcome	3.4 Sustainable commerce and tourism opportunities
Strategy	2 Ensure Shire processes support the development of strong and sustainable local business opportunities.

Council Policy

[Council Policies » Shire of Ashburton](#)

This report relates to the review of and proposed amendments to Council Policy – Tourism Support and Promotion, to ensure alignment with the 2024-2028 Economic Development Strategy.

Financial Implications

Current Financial Year

Nil

Future Financial Year(s)

Nil

Legislative Implications

In accordance with section 2.7 of the *Local Government Act 1995*, the Council is responsible for determining the local government's policies.

Risk Management

Risk has been assessed against the Shire of Ashburton Risk Management Framework.

Theme	Risk	Likelihood	Consequence	Inherent Risk Rating	Risk Treatment
Reputation (social/community)	Any future growth (or lack thereof) in the development and diversification for tourism in the area will have a direct impact on community, business, economic outcomes.	Unlikely (2)	Moderate (3)	Low (1-4)	Ensure that a strategic approach to tourism growth and investment attraction in Ashburton is done with inclusivity of community, business and internal and external stakeholders to ensure transparency, clear communication to promote advocacy and community support for a sustainable future.

Based on the inherent risk rating and risk treatments, the residual risk to the Shire is considered to be low.

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Officer Recommendation

That the Economic and Tourism Development Committee recommends that Council supports the review of Council Policy – Tourism Support and Promotion and adopts the policy amendments, as detailed in Attachment 1.

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Committee Decision

Moved **SP A Smith**

Seconded **Cr L Rumble JP**

That the Economic and Tourism Development Committee recommends that Council supports the review of Council Policy – Tourism Support and Promotion and adopts the policy amendments, as detailed in Attachment 1.

For: **M Lynch, A Smith and L Rumble JP**

Against: **Nil**

Carried 3/0

SP A Smith disclosed a direct financial interest in Item 6.2 (detailed in Item 4.2).

At 8:33 am, SP Audra Smith left the meeting.

6.2 The Karijini Experience 2025 Event Report

File Reference	ED01
Applicant or Proponent(s)	Not Applicable
Author	S Allan, Manager Business & Economic Development
Authorising Officer	Dr G Hunt PSM, Chief Executive Officer (Temporary)
Previous Meeting Reference	Ordinary Council Meeting 10 December 2024 - Item 6.4 – 242/2024
Disclosure(s) of interest	Author – Nil
	Authorising Officer – Nil
Attachments	1. The Karijini Experience 2025 Event Report

Report Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide the Economic and Tourism Development Committee (the Committee) The Karijini Experience 2025 Event Report as a Premium Partner of the event.

Council is requested to review and accept The Karijini Experience 2025 Event Report findings (refer to Attachment 1).

Background

The Shire's Economic and Tourism Development Strategy 2024/2028 recognises that tourism is an important driver of the Shire's economy with a vision to obtain international recognition of Karijini National Park and the development of unique attractions, experiences and events with signature event funding to achieve this vision.

The Karijini Experience is one of the premier events in the Shire, serving as an opportunity to showcase high-quality arts, music, and cultural experiences to unite the community and attract visitation.

The Shire has been a platinum sponsor of the event for several years and on 10 December 2024 Council approved a \$50,000 (excl. GST) contribution to become a Premium Partner of The Karijini Experience 2025.

Comments

As per the requirement of the funding arrangement, the organisers of The Karijini Experience event have provided their Event Report for 2025 and is summarised below.

2025 Event Report Key Findings

The 2025 Karijini Experience attracted 3,833 visitors a rise from 3,142 visitors in 2024 (an increase of 22%).

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The event featured 20 artists and held over 70 individual events, with the Village hosting many of these and some held at the Karijini Visitor Centre. Visitation to many of the park's natural attractions was increased due to the completion of sealed roads within Karijini National Park.

The opening *Barlgabi* and main evening entertainment act *Thelma Plum* were both considered successful, with the *Yurlu Lounge Thelma Plum* event receiving 800 attendees.

It was noted there was an increased pressure for booking in the camping areas and will require a review on how this is managed at future events, data of interest is provided below:

- Key age bracket: 25-40 years (55%) (from Pre-Purchase Ticket sales)
- Accommodation: caravan park/camping 44% (58% in 2024), with 23% attending in 2025 who live in the region
- Length of stay: 2-3 Nights (33%)
- First time attending: 72% of attendees (53% in 2024)
- Origin: Gascoyne-Pilbara 50% and 28% from Perth.

Satisfaction Levels

- Very Satisfied: 50%
- Satisfied: 44%
- Unsatisfied: 6%

Economic impact

An estimate of visitor spend in the region is calculated as \$735,540 based on 71% of people being from outside of the Pilbara with an average of 3.35 nights per visitor was spent in the region. Based on an attendance rate of 3,833 visitors, this equates to \$192 per visitor. Further data and reporting is detailed in Attachment 1.

Consultation

Nil

Strategic Community Plan

Shire of Ashburton Strategic Community Plan 2022-2032

Strategic Objective	3. Prosperity - We will advocate and drive opportunities for the community to be economically desirable, resilient, and prosperous.
Strategic Outcome	3.4 Sustainable commerce and tourism opportunities
Strategy	3 Work collaboratively with tourism sector providers, Australia's North-West Tourism and Tourism WA to increase visitor spend, and length of stay, in the Shire.

Council Policy

[Council Policies » Shire of Ashburton](#)

Council Policy – Tourism Support and Promotion

The Shire recognises that tourism will continue to be a major employer and contributor to the economy within the Shire, and that it needs to play an active role to facilitate the growth and development of tourism in Ashburton.

Financial Implications

Current Financial Year

The Shire provided a \$50,000 (excl. GST) contribution to become a Premium Partner of The Karijini Experience 2025.

Future Financial Year(s)

Nil

Legislative Implications

Nil

Risk Management

Risk has been assessed against the Shire of Ashburton Risk Management Framework.

Theme	Risk	Likelihood	Consequence	Inherent Risk Rating	Risk Treatment
Reputation (social/community)	Failure to accept the report.	Unlikely (2)	Minor (2)	Low (1-4)	Accept the findings of the report.

Based on the inherent risk rating and risk treatments, the residual risk to the Shire is considered to be low.

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Officer Recommendation

That Economic and Tourism Development Committee recommends that Council receives and accepts The Karijini Experience 2025 Event Report as detailed in Attachment 1 which will inform future sponsorship proposal requests.

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Committee Decision

Moved **Cr L Rumble JP**

Seconded **Cr M Lynch**

That Economic and Tourism Development Committee recommends that Council receives and accepts The Karijini Experience 2025 Event Report as detailed in Attachment 1 which will inform future sponsorship proposal requests.

For: **M Lynch and L Rumble JP**

Against: **Nil**

Carried 2/0

SP A Smith disclosed a direct financial interest in Item 6.3 (detailed in Item 4.2).

6.3 Shire of Ashburton - Small Business Grant Program 2025 2026

File Reference	ED01
Applicant or Proponent(s)	Not Applicable
Author	S Allan, Manager Business & Economic Development
Authorising Officer	Dr G Hunt PSM, Chief Executive Officer (Temporary)
Previous Meeting Reference	Ordinary Council Meeting 12 December 2023 - Item 218/2023
Disclosure(s) of interest	Author – Nil
	Authorising Officer – Nil
Attachments	1. Economic Development Strategy 2024 - 2028 2. Grant Funding Guidelines Objectives and Eligibility

Report Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide the Economic Tourism and Development Committee (the Committee) a Shire of Ashburton Small Business Grant Program 2025 - 2026 as per Council's decision at the 10 December 2023 Council meeting (Council Decision 218/2023) and request Point 3 '*...to investigate a future small business grant program and report to the Economic and Tourism Development Committee*'.

The Committee is requested to consider the proposed *Objectives, Eligibility Criteria and Guidelines* detailed in Attachment 2 that relate to the '*2025 - 2026 Shire of Ashburton Small Business Grant*' program with further support and recommendation to Council for an allocation of a budget amount of \$50,000 in the 2025/2026 financial year to develop and deliver this grant program in collaboration with the Onslow Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) and the Pilbara Inland Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PICCI).

Background

On 10 December 2023, Council supported and endorsed the Shire reinstating its position as a Small Business Friendly Local Government (SBFLG) with the Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC). Further to this commitment was Council's request (3) at the 10 December 2023 Council meeting (Council Decision 218/2023):

"to investigate a future small business grant program and report to the Economic and Tourism Development Committee"

Delay in Shire officers reporting back to the Committee is attributed to two (2) compounding factors including the resignation of the previous Manager of Business and Economic Development in January 2024, with the new Manager commencing on 20 May 2024 with other priority projects taking precedence.

The other contributing factor was both of the Ashburton Chambers of Commerce (OCCI and PICCI) undergoing change of Chief Executive Officers or Chair within their organisations at the commencement of 2025, further delaying the ability to progress the investigation effectively.

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However, both the Chambers (OCCI and PICCI) are now in a position, and have the capacity, to engage in the delivery of an Ashburton Small Business Grant program for 2025-2026.

Small Business Key Data

Key data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) reports that approximately 60% of small businesses in Australia will fail within their first 3 years of operations, with 20% failing within the first year, according to the Australian Banking Association, the reasons for small business failure include:

- Insufficient leadership and management.
- Inadequate market research.
- Poor financial management.
- Underestimating competitors.
- Product and services issues.

Shire of Ashburton commitment to Small Business:

The Shire's Economic and Tourism Development Strategy 2024-2028 (refer to Attachment 1) was endorsed in March 2024 and was developed to compliment and assist with delivering outcomes aligned to the Strategic Community Plan with an objective to support small and medium sized business.

Vision 4 of the Shire's Economic and Tourism Development Strategy 2024-2028 highlights the Shires commitment to provide "*A Great Place to Have a Small Business*" below are the 3 main areas of focus:

1. Small business can grow with access to affordable land, skilled local workforce, and local supply contracts.
2. Council attracts investment through proactive incentives and forward-planning.
3. Local entrepreneurship, innovation and collaboration is encouraged/supported.

Focus on creating a supportive business environment is crucial to local investment attraction, economic development and growth, and in this transient environment, small enterprises are the backbone to economic stability, community vibrancy, diversity and sustainability.

Actions from the Shire's Economic and Tourism Development Strategy 2024-2028 also outlines the Shires commitment to support the Onslow Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) and Pilbara Inland Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PICCI) initiatives and to also support start up home-based businesses.

Comments

The Shire's commitment to the Small Business Friendly Local Government (SBFLG) initiative with the Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC) and an ongoing commitment to participation of the initiative involves committing to adherence to the overarching SBFLG Charter.

With Council's commitment to small business support and request for further investigation towards a small business grant program, the current Manager for Business and Economic Development has liaised with both OCCI and PICCI in developing a Small Business Grant Funding Program for start-up and already operational small businesses endeavouring to grow and/or diversify.

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The proposed Shire of Ashburton Small Business Grant Objectives, Eligibility Criteria and Guidelines are outlined in Attachment 2.

Ongoing Business Support for successful applicants

Grant funding will include an allocation towards membership of the respective Chamber of Commerce's (for those without a membership), ensuring ongoing support for the applicants, providing a greater chance of success.

If approved, OCCI and PICCI have both committed to the following terms for the duration of the small business grant initiative 2025 - 2026:

- Assisting successful applicants in overcoming the barriers of business startup and business commencement/launch.
- Assisting businesses access professional skills, services, or knowledge to advance their business concept and/or launch.
- Provide business support where appropriate.
- Provide access to the Chamber's business hub and facilities as per the respective Chamber policies.

Ongoing support and promotion:

Promotion of the grant initiative will be done by the Shire's Corporate Communications and Media team with digital and physical promotional assets provided by the Shire to the Chamber's for further promotional dispersal. All promotional material will include the Shire, OCCI and PICCI logos and contact details.

Support and questions during the application process can be made to the respective Chamber of Commerce's with applications uploaded via the Shire's website.

Consultation

Onslow Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI).
Pilbara Inland Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PICCI).

Strategic Community Plan

Shire of Ashburton Strategic Community Plan 2022-2032

Strategic Objective	3. Prosperity - We will advocate and drive opportunities for the community to be economically desirable, resilient, and prosperous.
Strategic Outcome	3.1 Coordinated delivery of economic services and projects for the community
Strategy	1 Develop and maintain key economic services partnerships, both internally and externally, to support Council's vision.

Council Policy

[Council Policies » Shire of Ashburton](#)

Council Policy – Community Donations, Grants and Funding

The Shire is committed to a vision of being a welcoming, sustainable, and socially active district, offering a variety of opportunities to community.

Direction and guidance will be taken from the Community Donation, Grants and Funding policy in the development and delivery of a Shire of Ashburton Small Business Grants Program.

Council Policy – Fraud and Corruption

The prevention and detection of fraud and corruption is a collective responsibility of all persons engaged, or closely associated, with the Shire in any capacity.

This policy applies to all elected members, committee members, candidates, working group members, employees, agency staff, volunteers, third parties - such as a consultants, contractors, and suppliers and the community.

Council Policy – Tourism Support and Promotion

The Shire recognises that tourism will continue to be a major employer and contributor to the local economy, and that it needs to play an active role to facilitate the growth and development of tourism.

Financial - Support tourism initiatives which build the Pilbara tourism potential.

Financial Implications

Current Financial Year

Nil

Future Financial Year(s)

Financial support for the Small Business Grant Program will require a budget allocation of \$50,000 (Excl. GST) for the 2025/2026 financial year.

Consideration to future financial year budgets will be dependent on the success and need for an Ashburton Small Business Grant Program.

Legislative Implications

Nil

Risk Management

Risk has been assessed against the Shire of Ashburton Risk Management Framework.

Theme	Risk	Likelihood	Consequence	Inherent Risk Rating	Risk Treatment
Reputation (social/community)	Council requested in December 2023 for a Small Business Grants program initiative to be investigated in collaboration with the respective Ashburton Chamber of Commerce's. Not supporting this initiative provides opportunity of risk within the local and business community as a view of non-support from Council for small business growth and diversification in the area.	Possible (3)	Moderate (3)	Moderate (5-9)	Support the proposed Shire of Ashburton Small Business Grant Objectives, Eligibility Criteria and Guidelines or a variation of these recommendations, for further development and delivery.

Based on the inherent risk rating and risk treatments, the residual risk to the Shire is considered to be medium.

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

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Officer Recommendation

That the Economic Tourism and Development Committee recommends that Council:

1. Supports the Shire of Ashburton 2025 - 2026 Small Business Grant program to be delivered in collaboration with the Onslow Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Pilbara Inland Chamber of Commerce and Industry.
2. Endorses the objectives, eligibility criteria and guidelines of the Shire of Ashburton 2025 - 2026 Small Business Grant program, as detailed in Attachment 2.
3. Lists for consideration an amount of \$50,000 in the 2025/2026 Annual Budget for this program.

Committee Decision

Moved Cr L Rumble JP

Seconded Cr M Lynch

That the Economic Tourism and Development Committee recommends that Council:

1. **Supports the Shire of Ashburton 2025 - 2026 Small Business Grant program to be delivered in collaboration with the Onslow Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Pilbara Inland Chamber of Commerce and Industry.**
2. **Endorses the objectives, eligibility criteria and guidelines of the Shire of Ashburton 2025 - 2026 Small Business Grant program, as detailed in Attachment 2.**
3. **Lists for consideration an amount of \$50,000 in the 2025/2026 Annual Budget for this program.**

For: M Lynch and L Rumble JP

Against: Nil

Carried 2/0

At 8:41 am, SP Audra Smith returned to the meeting.

Cr L Rumble JP disclosed an impartiality interest in Item 6.4 (detailed in Item 4.2).

6.4 2025 Outback Air Race - Onslow

File Reference	ED24081
Applicant or Proponent(s)	Not Applicable
Author	S Allan, Manager Business & Economic Development
Authorising Officer	Dr G Hunt PSM, Chief Executive Officer (Temporary)
Previous Meeting Reference	Nil
Disclosure(s) of interest	Author – Nil
	Authorising Officer – Nil
Attachments	Nil

Report Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present information regarding the Outback Air Race 2025 together with a request from the event organisers for the Shire to fund a function to acknowledge the fundraising efforts of the participants.

The Committee is requested to support a funding allocation for a 'Meet and Greet' event in Onslow in September 2025.

Background

The Outback Air Race is an aviation time trial through the remote Australian Outback and has raised close to \$4 million in funds for the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) since 1996.

The Outback Air Race commences from Yulara (Northern Territory) on 23 August 2025. A 2-night stopover in Onslow is scheduled for 3-4 September 2025,

Onslow is one of ten locations across the Northern Territory and Western Australia as a rest stop for the participants. Refer to the below map for the complete race route.



[The Outback Air Race | A race around Australia supporting the RFDS](#)

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Comments

It is anticipated that there will be more than 100 participants flying into Onslow Airport on Wednesday 3 September. Participants are of varying professions and walks of life and their visitation provides an opportunity for positive exposure of Onslow and the Ashburton region.

Organisers have approached the Shire for consideration of an evening event on Thursday 4 September prior to their departure to Exmouth the following day.

A proposed 'Meet and Greet' event will provide an opportunity for the Shire to champion the dedication of the RFDS for our region, support the participants, and acknowledge our own local emergency services and volunteers.

Overview of the 'Meet and Greet' event

If supported by Council it is proposed that the 'Meet and Greet' event would be held at the ANZAC Memorial Park with light catering and refreshments at sunset.

Invitees to the event would include Outback Air Race participants, local emergency services volunteers, local business community representatives, Shire delegates and officers.

The total anticipated costs for 100 participants and guests is \$5,000 (excl. GST).

Funding would be allocated from the 2025/2026 Advocacy and Investment Attraction operational budget.

Consultation

Manager Airport Services

Outback Air Race 2025 Destination Coordinator (Onslow) – Linton Rumble JP

Strategic Community Plan

Shire of Ashburton Strategic Community Plan 2022-2032

Strategic Objective	3. Prosperity - We will advocate and drive opportunities for the community to be economically desirable, resilient, and prosperous.
Strategic Outcome	3.1 Coordinated delivery of economic services and projects for the community
Strategy	1 Develop and maintain key economic services partnerships, both internally and externally, to support Council's vision.

Council Policy

[Council Policies » Shire of Ashburton](#)

Tourism Support and Promotion

Endeavour to assist community groups or tourist organisations conduct events which have the potential to develop tourism in the area.

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Financial Implications

Current Financial Year

Nil

Future Financial Year(s)

A maximum allocation of \$5,000 (excl. GST) from account ED24078 - Advocacy and Investment Attraction, 2025/2026 financial year operational budget. Additional budget funding is not being requested.

Legislative Implications

Nil

Risk Management

Risk has been assessed against the Shire of Ashburton Risk Management Framework.

Theme	Risk	Likelihood	Consequence	Inherent Risk Rating	Risk Treatment
Reputation (social/community)	Lack of support or acknowledgment for a large group visiting as part of a reputable fundraiser.	Possible (3)	Minor (2)	Low (1-4)	Committee and Council support of funds being allocated to this event.

Based on the inherent risk rating and risk treatments, the residual risk to the Shire is considered to be low.

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Officer Recommendation

That the Economic and Tourism Development Committee recommends that Council:

1. Supports a Shire funded 'Meet and Greet' event on Thursday 4 September 2025 to support the Outback Air Race 2025; and
2. Allocates \$5,000.00 (excl. GST) from the Advocacy and Investment Attraction Account ED24078 in the 2025/2026 operational budget.

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Committee Decision

Moved **Cr L Rumble JP**

Seconded **SP A Smith**

That the Economic and Tourism Development Committee recommends that Council:

- 1. Supports a Shire funded 'Meet and Greet' event on Thursday 4 September 2025 to support the Outback Air Race 2025; and**
- 2. Allocates \$5,000.00 (excl. GST) from the Advocacy and Investment Attraction Account ED24078 in the 2025/2026 operational budget.**

For: **M Lynch, A Smith and L Rumble JP**

Against: **Nil**

Carried 3/0

7 Confidential Agenda Items

Nil

8 Next Meeting

The next Economic and Tourism Development Committee Meeting will be held at 9:00am on Tuesday 16 September 2025 at Barry Lang Centre, Deepdale Drive, Pannawonica.

9 Closure Of Meeting

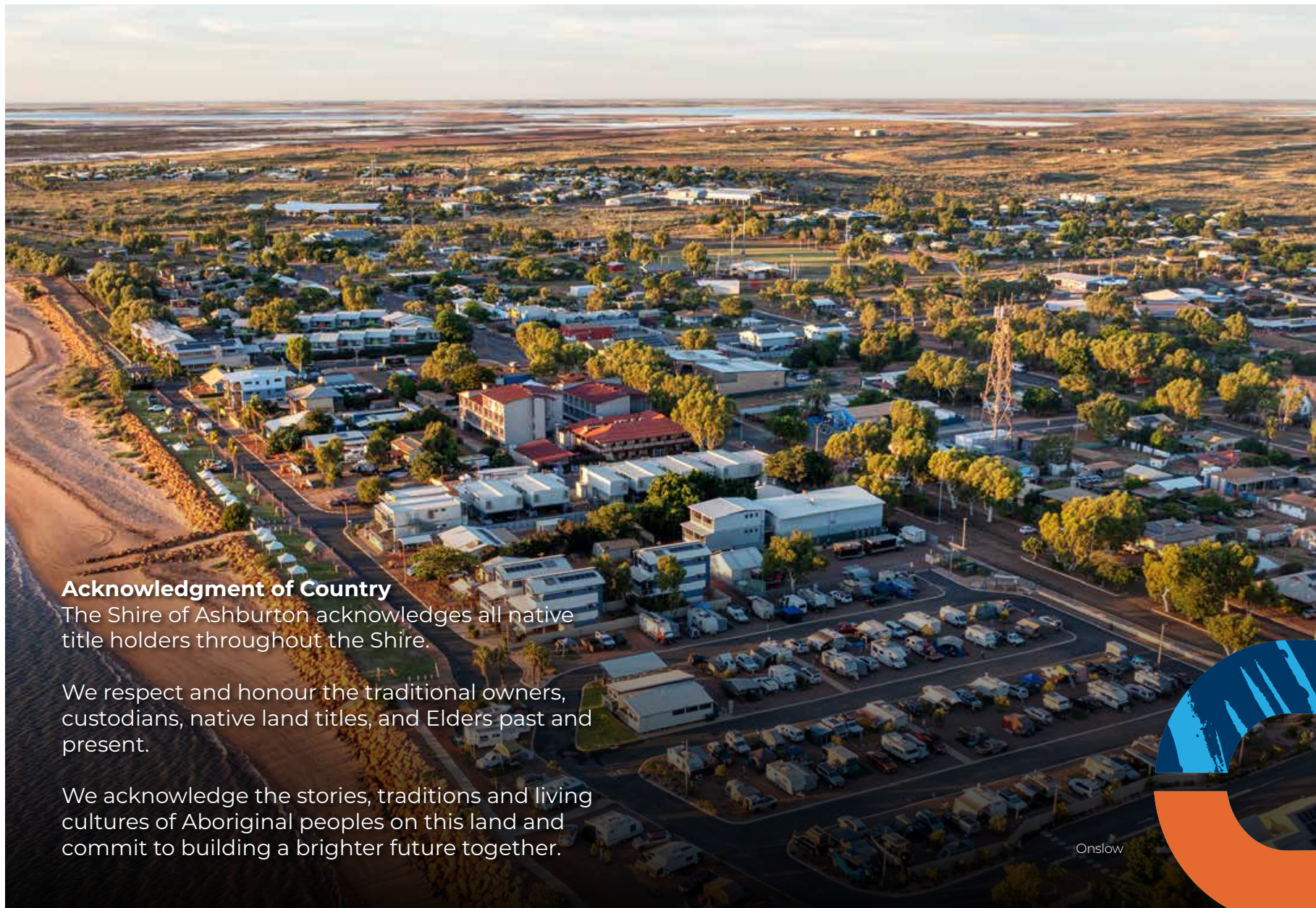
There being no further business, the Presiding Member closed the meeting at 8:44am.



Agenda Item 6.1 - Attachment 1

Shire of Ashburton Economic Development Strategy 2024
- 2028



**Acknowledgment of Country**

The Shire of Ashburton acknowledges all native title holders throughout the Shire.

We respect and honour the traditional owners, custodians, native land titles, and Elders past and present.

We acknowledge the stories, traditions and living cultures of Aboriginal peoples on this land and commit to building a brighter future together.

The Economic Development Strategy

The Economic Development Strategy 2024-2028 complements and assists with delivering **Opportunity to Community**.

Section 5.56 of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996 and Section 3.1 of the Local Government Act 1995 give legislative mandate to Local Government to focus on economic development in their core agenda.

The Shire of Ashburton is committed to supporting economic development outcomes for the region, including maximising our resource industry whilst expanding emerging sectors, creating liveable and vibrant communities, achieving economic prosperity, attracting investment for expansion/ industry growth, and becoming a place of choice to live/ visit/ invest.

This Economic Development Strategy is a refresh of the Shire of Ashburton's Economic and Tourism Development Strategy 2019.

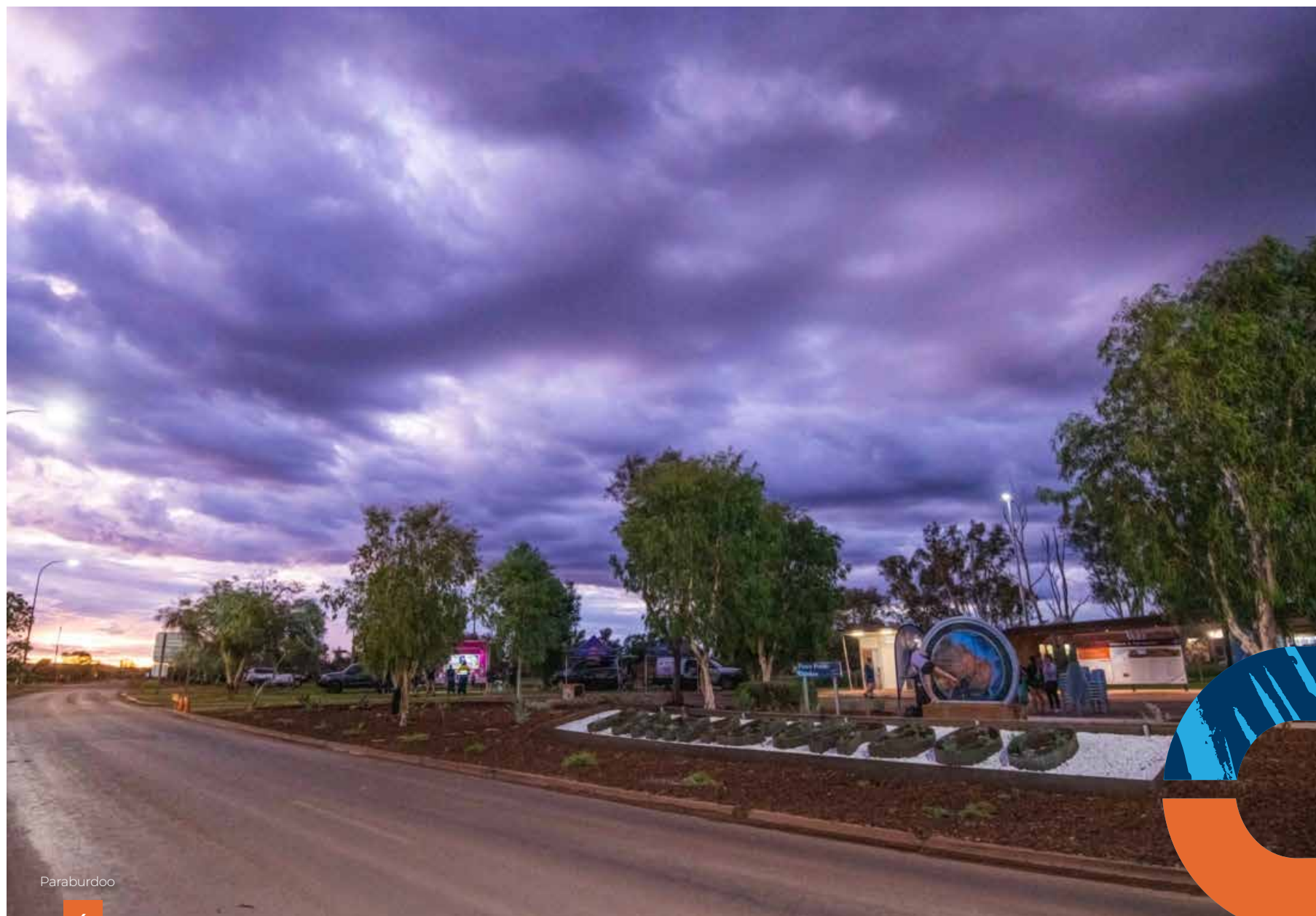
The creation of this Economic Development Strategy was formed on a robust evidence base, which identified the competitive advantages, challenges, and opportunities of the region and formed the basis of the strategy. These technical documents, attached as appendices should be read in conjunction with this strategy.

We would like to thank all contributors and stakeholders involved. In particular, the Onslow Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Pilbara Inland Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Councillors, and all other stakeholders who participated in tourism and economic development workshops over the past few years.

Supporting Appendices

The Economic Development Strategy is supported by technical appendices, which should be read in conjunction with the strategy, including:

- **Appendix A: Evidence Base:** This document provides a summary of the background information and analysis informing the development of the Economic Development Strategy, to support an understanding of future vision and strategic objectives, strengths, challenges, and opportunities. This report can be used to support the development of future business cases, funding applications, and industry contributions requests.
- **Appendix B: Priority Projects:** This document provides an overview of the priority projects for Council, to be updated and endorsed by Council each year.



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We are pleased to present the Economic Development Strategy 2024 to 2028 for the Shire of Ashburton.

As we embark on shaping the future of the Shire of Ashburton, I am pleased to introduce our renewed Economic Development Strategy 2024-2028.

While the contribution of the resource industry remains vital to our economy, we are focused on ensuring value is generated for our residents.

This Strategy's mission is to leverage the continued growth of the resources sector to grow our communities, encourage prosperity, and enhance liveability across the Shire.

In this Strategy, we present our vision for the Shire to deliver more value to locals through new community infrastructure and changes in government and private sector policies. We see our Shire becoming one which is a vibrant and highly liveable place with quality infrastructure, affordable housing, and strong educational opportunities, encouraging the retention of multi-generational residents.

I extend gratitude to all in our Shire and region who have contributed to the development of the Strategy. Let's work together to build a secure, thriving community with improved infrastructure and enhanced liveability.



Audra Smith
Shire President

The Shire of Ashburton Economic Development Strategy 2024-2028 is an important document that sets clear direction to enhance economic and community outcomes across the Shire.

This renewed Strategy underscores our commitment to plan, secure funding, and deliver upon the services and infrastructure required to grow and benefit our community. We recognise the role the resource industry plays in the delivery of this and the enrichment of our society more broadly.

In this Strategy, we identify a pathway to grow the liveability of our community. We also highlight the importance of remaining agile to the changing environment to ensure we consistently provide good governance and deliver quality services and outcomes.

I look forward to working with Shire staff to ensure we have the capability, knowledge and experience to fulfil our vision.

We commit to working with our industry partners to achieve future growth and improvements for our towns and continuing to provide to the State and the national economy as a significant contributor.



Kenn Donohoe
Chief Executive Officer



Our Commitment

Opportunity to Community

We will be a welcoming, sustainable, and socially active district, offering a variety of opportunities to community.

Our Role In Economic Development:

- Supporting continued growth in the resources sector.
- Identifying and pursuing diversification opportunities (particularly high value industries).
- Creating vibrant and liveable towns through new infrastructure and commercial opportunities.
- Advocating for changes to state and federal government policies.

The Economic Development Strategy in Context

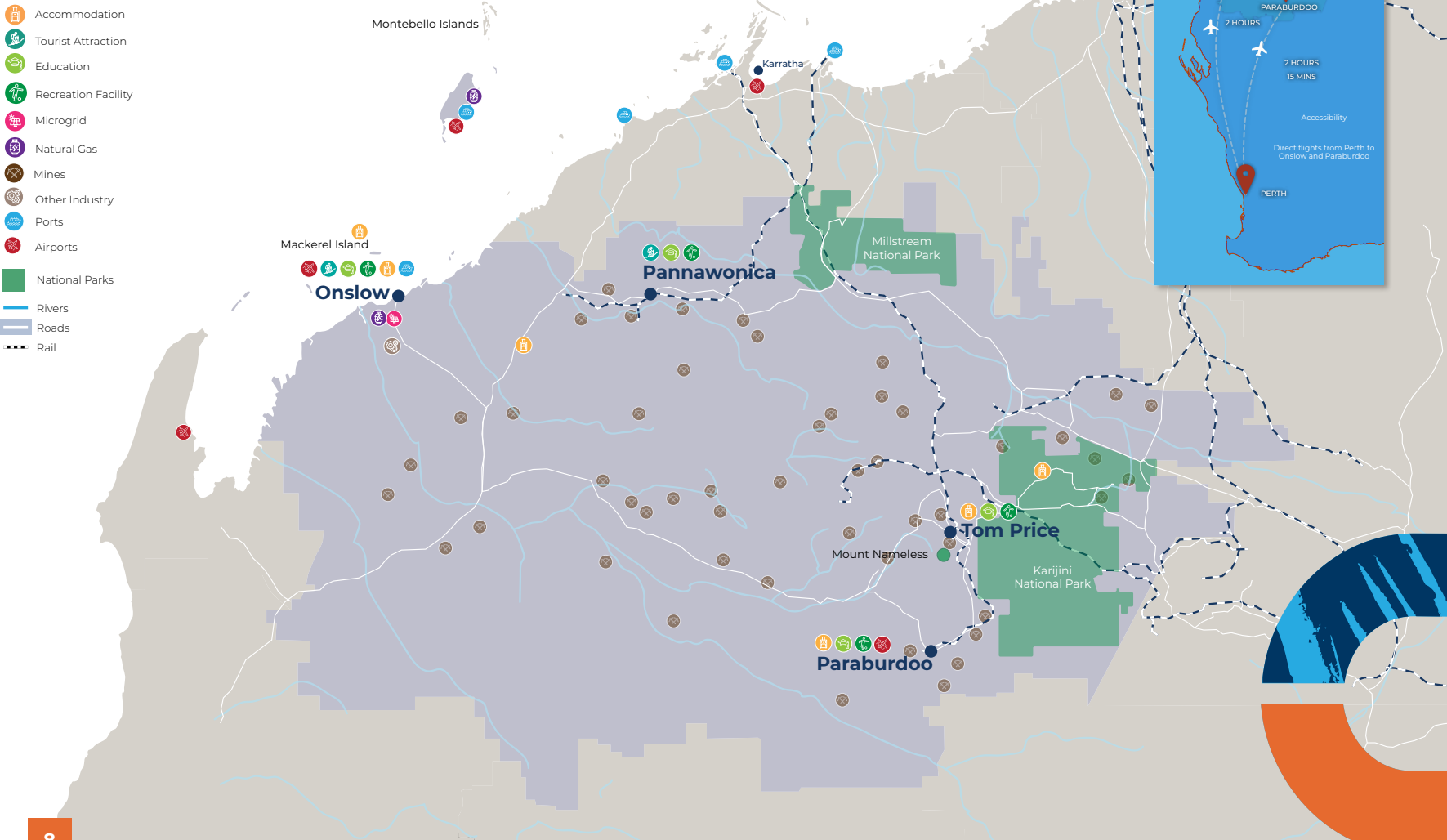
The Economic Development Strategy aligns with Regional, State, and National strategies/ plans as well as complies with Section 5.56 of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996 and Section 3.1 of the Local Government Act 1995.

The Economic Development Strategy is an important informing strategy within the Shire's Integrated Planning Framework.



Introducing the Shire of Ashburton

Ashburton is located in the Pilbara region of Western Australia, about 1,400 km north of Perth, covering 105,000 km2 (nearly half the size of Victoria). Our major towns are Tom Price, Paraburdoo and Pannawonica, originally created to service the needs of the local mining industry, and Onslow which is expanding beyond its heritage to service the expanding resource sector consisting of salt, liquid natural gas and iron ore industries. There are also a number of small remote Aboriginal communities (comprising around 9.7% of the population).



Our Region



7,800
Resident Population
(0.68% growth in 2022
versus 1.45% in WA)

12.5%
ATSI
(3.5% in WA and
3.4% in Aus)

32%
Born Overseas
(35% in WA and
28% in Aus)



12,500
FIFO Workers
(35% of FIFO in the Pilbara)

90.1%
Participation Rate
(15 to 65 Years)
(87% in WA and 80.7% in Aus)



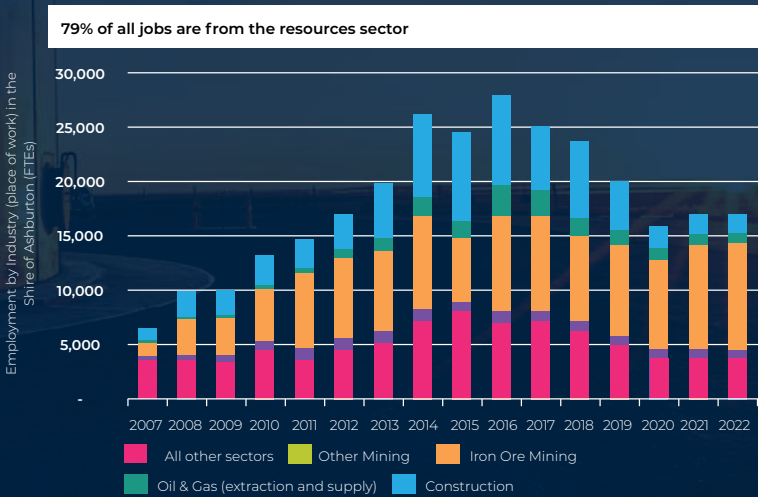
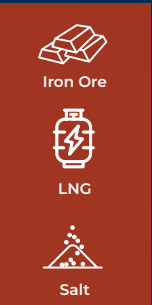
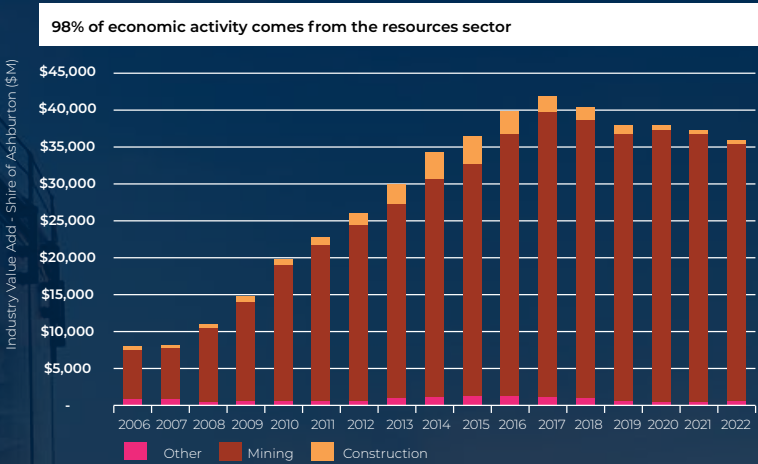
\$37 B
GRP
(9% of WA 1.6 % of Aus)

\$4.7 M
GRP per Capita
(\$145,000 in WA and
\$88,800 in Aus)

\$9.5 B
across the Pilbara
Royalties Generated
(84.7% of WA)



Role of the Resource Sector



Shire of Ashburton
16%
of WA's gas jobs
6%
of WA's iron ore jobs

Our Future Growth

The resources sector will continue to drive growth through:



New Projects
(Construction)



Ongoing
Operations



Decommissioning
& Rehabilitation

Local Opportunities
can be maximised by:

-  Local purchasing
of materials and
services
-  Increasing the
local workforce
(reducing FIFO
reliance)

New industry opportunities that exist in Ashburton include:



Culture and
Tourism



Irrigated
Agriculture



Green
Manufacturing



Renewable
Energy



Realising our growth opportunities requires resolution of several challenges:



Reliance on FIFO for workforce



High cost of freight
(retail and industry supply)



Availability and cost of air travel (to/ from Perth)



Availability and cost of housing



Concentrated property ownership (all types)



Limited land ready for development



Limited accommodation options for tourists



Limited social and commercial services



Few local education and training opportunities



Our Economic Development Vision

Our vision is to become:



A Global Resources Powerhouse

- ▶ Continued development of resource industries
- ▶ Gas industry supports global and local decarbonisation efforts
- ▶ Global targets for net zero are achieved through production of green energy, green ore and green chemicals



A World-Class Tourist Destination

- ▶ International recognition for Karijini National Park and growing recognition of Onslow as a visitor destination
- ▶ Development of unique attractions, experiences and events
- ▶ Leisure destination of choice for FIFO workers in the Pilbara



A Thriving Community

- ▶ A vibrant and highly liveable place with quality infrastructure, affordable housing, social clubs, and community events
- ▶ Strong education opportunities with direct links from schools to local workplaces
- ▶ A sustainable population with long-term, multi-generational residents



A Great Place to Have a Small Business

- ▶ Small business can grow with access to affordable land, skilled local workforce, and local supply contracts
- ▶ Council attracts investment through proactive incentives and forward-planning
- ▶ Local entrepreneurship, innovation and collaboration is encouraged/ supported



To achieve the vision:



New community infrastructure that supports both community liveability and tourism has been delivered, including:

- Tom Price/ Paraburdoo Community Liveability Infrastructure Plan
- Marine tourism infrastructure in Onslow (Onslow Towards a Visitor Economy - Gateway to the Mackerel Islands)
- Airport upgrades (Onslow and Paraburdoo)
- Tourism infrastructure (access, park amenity, accommodation, trails) in Karijini National Park
- Ashburton Ranges Mountain Bike Trails
- Millstream National Park (enhancing the visitor experience and road access)
- Onslow arts and cultural centre
- Dreamers Hill Convention Centre and Amphitheatre (Onslow)
- Sealed Manuwarra Red Dog Highway
- Enabling infrastructure to support town growth (roads, sewer, water, drainage, electricity, waste, ICT, telecommunications)
- Health infrastructure (hospitals)
- Education and training (university hub/ training opportunities)



Private investment has been attracted to key sectors:

- Tourism and liveability (accommodation, guided tours, retail and food services)
- Iron ore, gas, salt, rare earths, uranium extraction, processing and export
- Green industry manufacturing (green iron, green hydrogen, green chemicals)
- Renewable energy generation



Government policy has changed, improving the business environment and supporting a larger resident population:

- Local/ resident worker requirements in major project approvals
- Subsidised Regular Public Transport flights to Onslow and Paraburdoo
- General goods freight subsidy for the Pilbara (similar to the Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme)
- Cyclone reinsurance pool reform to reduce insurance costs
- Remote Tax Allowance changes and Fringe Benefits Tax concessions to support local workforces



The policies of major companies:

- Encourage opportunities for workers (and their families) to move to the Shire of Ashburton
- Support continued investment in community (contribution policies)
- Encourage local worker "staycations" / enable workers to be tourists in the Shire
- Incentivise local procurement of goods and services



Continue to deliver business as usual activities:

- Visitor marketing
- Business friendly Council support
- Signature event funding

Our Economic Development Mission

Our mission is to leverage the continued growth of the resources sector to grow our communities, encourage prosperity, and enhance liveability across the Shire whilst supporting the diversification of our economy.

Actions We Will Deliver

Annual Priority Setting

- Confirm annual priorities
- Community liveability survey
- Publish annual priorities

Advocacy

to ensure we have our fair share of essential services.

- State and Australian Government Budget/ Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook submissions
- Host in-bound delegations of ministers and senior bureaucrats
- Attend regional delegations to Parliament (Perth and Canberra)

Land Use Planning

- Update planning scheme to accommodate identified opportunities
- Engage with local traditional owner groups to resolve native title in priority development areas

Infrastructure Planning

- Review and expand the Onslow Towards a Visitor Economy document to encompass projects promoting liveability (i.e., a consolidated Onslow Community Growth Plan)
- Deliver capital projects in the long term financial plan
- Deliver the actions in the Community Lifestyle and Infrastructure Plan for Tom Price and Paraburdoo

Company Engagement

- Maintain Industry Contribution to Social & Community Infrastructure Policy
- Develop a pipeline of planned projects for investment





Development Leadership

- Consider the establishment of a not-for-profit entity to support affordable residential and commercial property development (such as a “housing trust”)
- Unlock the barriers to developing new tourism product including sustainable marine tourism opportunities on the Pilbara Inshore Islands and mountain bike trails in Tom Price, Paraburdoo, and surrounds

Investment Attraction

- Investigate new industry opportunities in emerging sectors including but not limited to Agriculture, New Technologies (Green Energy, Steel and use of critical minerals), Defence and Tourism.
- Develop a business in Ashburton brand
- Develop investment/ business opportunities prospectus
- Identify and engage with investors on targeted opportunities
- Develop partnerships with relevant industry associations
- Develop and implement an investment incentives policy
- Attend relevant trade shows

Small Business Support

- Support the Onslow Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Pilbara Inland Chamber of Commerce and Industry initiatives
- Become a Business Friendly Local Government in line with the State Government process
- Produce guides to support local supply of Council procurement
- Create guides to support businesses in supplying Council (doing business with council guide) and starting up a home-based business (home based business guide)

Regional Promotion

- Lead regional tourism promotion through the continued growth of the Visit Ashburton Brand
- Develop and execute a tourism marketing strategy (including a digital media asset renewal program)
- Maintain Visitor Information Centre services in Tom Price and continue providing funding to the Onslow Tourism & Progress Association to run the Onslow Visitor Centre
- Grow the level of events in the region and support signature events such as the Karijini Experience
- Expand the ‘Inside Ashburton’ guide into a liveability brand, and develop/ execute a campaign

Measuring Success

We will measure the success of this Economic Development Strategy in the following ways:

1. **Performance** – Undertaking the actions we said we would do
2. **Effectiveness** – Realising the vision/ outcomes we set out to achieve
3. **Impact** – measured by real-world change in:
 - ▶ Resident population
 - ▶ Non-mining economic activity
 - ▶ Diversification of employment (health, education, retail, etc.)
 - ▶ Regional visitation (leisure, business, VFR)
 - ▶ Qualitative evidence, which may include community satisfaction (Community Liveability Survey)

The Community Liveability Survey can provide an understanding of...

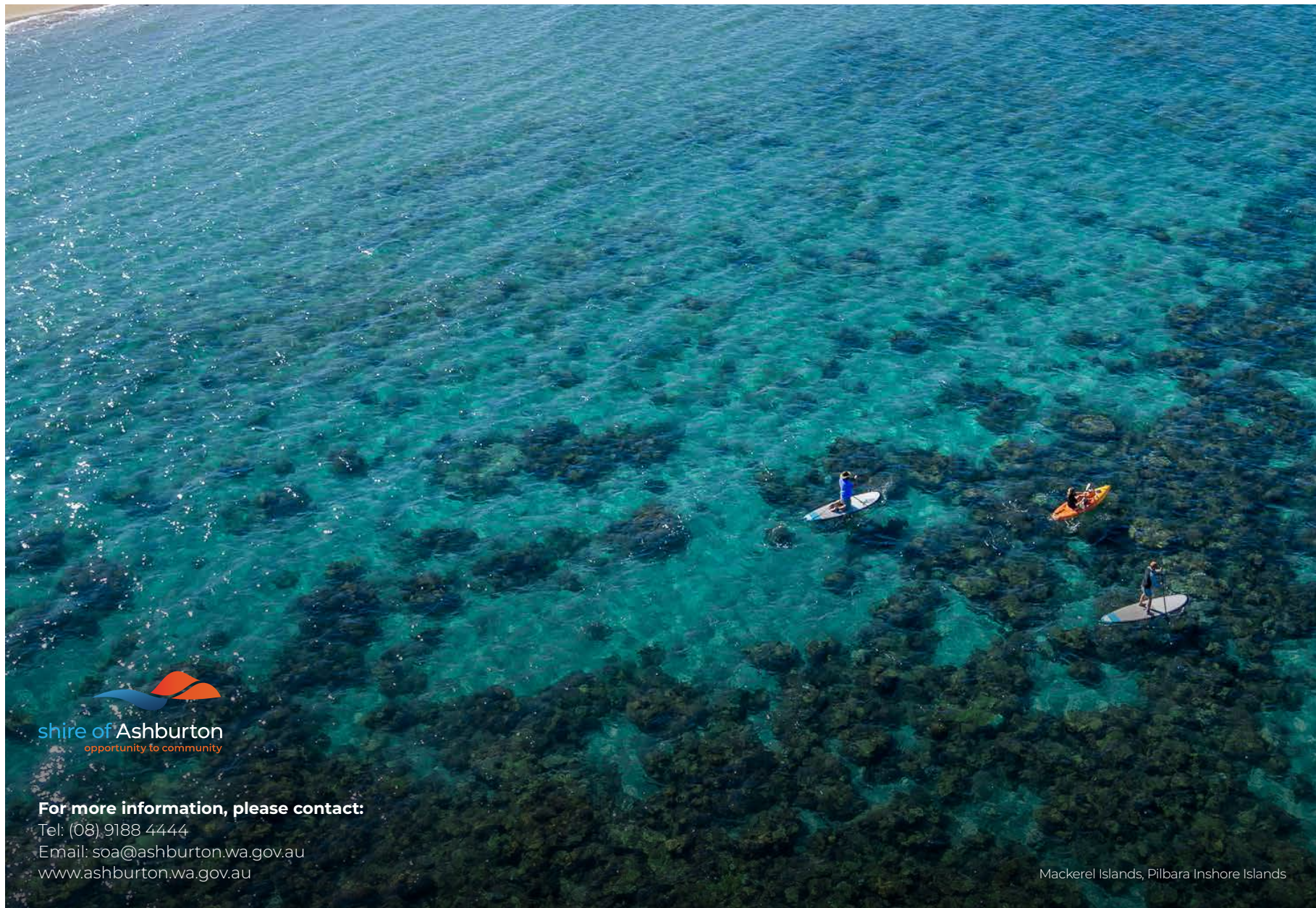
- General perception of the Shire
- Likelihood to recommend the Shire as a place to live to a friend or relative
- Likelihood of moving away from the Shire within the next five years
- Satisfaction with access to community services (health, education, retail, recreation)
- Satisfaction with the condition/ design of public spaces and realm
- Sense of personal safety
- Satisfaction with access and safety of walking, cycling, and/ or public transport
- Satisfaction with house prices, tenures, and structures
- Satisfaction with access to employment opportunities
- Sense of a welcoming and connected community

Our Partners In Progress

The key to the success of this Economic Development Strategy is collaboration between local stakeholders, all tiers of government, and private sector proponents.

We look forward to working with you as we realise the aspirations of the different communities in our shire.





For more information, please contact:

Tel: (08) 9188 4444

Email: soa@ashburton.wa.gov.au

www.ashburton.wa.gov.au

Mackerel Islands, Pilbara Inshore Islands



Agenda Item 6.1 - Attachment 2

2024 - 2025 Completed Projects and Actions

ATTACHMENT 3.**2024 – 2025 Completed Projects and Actions:**

Actions Complete 2024 - 2025	Economic Development Strategy Action Item	Particulars	Cost
Multi Modal Transport Network Study	4.2 Deliver capital projects in the long term financial plan.	Aim to provide a technical basis from which the Shire can undertake representations to progress initiatives meeting a range of future transport network objectives. Endorsed May 2025	\$ 452,687.00
Local Government Bank of Australia feasibility study	2.3 Attend regional delegations to Parliament (Perth and Canberra)	The Shire of Ashburton called upon the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) National General Assembly (NGA) to pass a motion to further investigate the feasibility of establishing a Local Government Bank of Australia or an alternative banking model for regional Australia. The Shire engaged consultants KPMG to conduct the feasibility study including online and in person workshops, printed material, attended 2024 WALGA conference and presented the final study to Parliament in 2025.	\$ 200,000.00
Ashburton Mountain Bike Trails Concept Plans	6.2 Unlock the barriers to developing new tourism product including sustainable marine tourism opportunities on the Pilbara Inshore Islands and Mountain Bike Trails in Tom Price, Paraburdoo and surrounds.	On ground familiarisations conducted to help develop the concept plans	\$ 104,000.00
Shop Ashburton – Buy Local Campaign	8.1 Support the Onslow Chamber of Commerce and Pilbara Inland Chamber of Commerce Industry initiatives.	Council endorsed the contributions to the Shop Ashburton Campaign Proposal for delivery in partnership with the Onslow Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Pilbara Inland Chamber of Commerce and Industry: including the initial seed funding to purchase program subscription that covers five years	\$ 17,000.00
Signature Event funding - Karijini Experience	9.4 Grow the level of events in the region and support signature events such as the Karijini Experience.	Council approved sponsorship funding for the April 2025 Event	\$ 50,000.00
Small Business Friendly Local Government Alliance Membership	8.2 Become a Business-Friendly Local Government in line with the State Government process.	Membership with the Regional Small Business Advisory Group - Pilbara. A non-voting body of key stakeholders providing localised input and guidance on topics relevant to small businesses in their regional communities, to help inform and guide the services of the SBDC as well as enhance collaboration at a regional level to improve outcomes for small business.	\$ -
Funding Support for the Onslow Tourism and Progress Association and the Onslow Visitor Centre.	9.3 Maintain Visitor Information Centre Services in Tom Price and continue to provide funding to the Onslow Tourism & Progress Association to run the Onslow Visitor Centre.	2024 - 2025 Funding support for the Onslow Tourism & Progress Association - council approved an additional \$60,000 to support the ongoing management and operations of the Onslow Visitor Centre	\$ 175,000.00
Tom Price Visitor Centre	9.3 Maintain Visitor Information Centre Services in Tom Price and continue to provide funding to the Onslow Tourism & Progress Association to run the Onslow Visitor Centre.	2024 - 2025 Operational Management of the Tom Price Visitor Centre.	\$ 783,500.00
Develop Partnerships/Advocacy	7.5 Develop partnerships with relevant industry associations.	Attendance and Australia North West Tourism Forum (Manager Business and Economic Development) and Annual Tourism Conference (Shire President Smith, Manager Business and Economic Development, Coordinator Tom Price Visitor Centre. Costs for conference registrations, staff flights accommodation and attendance. Provided opportunity to develop critical Tourism Stakeholder engagement with State Government agencies (Tourism WA, Tourism Council WA, Regional Tourism Organisation's, Pilbara Development Commission, Regional Development Australia, DBCA, WAITOC, other Pilbara LGAs)	\$ 8,000.00
Trade Show Attendance	7.7 Attend relevant trade shows	Shire Officers attendance at Perth 4WD and Camping Show (Nov 2024) and Caravan and Camping Show (March 2025)	\$ 10,000.00
TOTAL INVESTMENT BY COUNCIL			\$ 1,800,187.00



Agenda Item 6.1 - Attachment 3

2024 - 2025 Tourism Marketing and Promotion

ATTACHMENT 4: 2024 – 2025 Strategic Tourism Marketing and Promotion

Title	QTY	COST
Visit Ashburton Destination Book 2024 (delayed completion) 64pp	20000	\$ 23,000.00
Visit Ashburton Destination Book 2025. 64pp. Includes external artwork design costs	30000	\$ 40,700.00
Destination Book at Perth Airport Terminals		\$ 1,200.00
Vanguard Warehousing and Distribution of Destination Book to Visitor Centres		\$ 7,000.00
Hello Perth WA Map - Advert	100,000	\$ 1,950.00
TV Advertising - Reef to Range 15 seconds - Summer of Cricket	1	\$ 10,000.00
Australians Golden Outback (RTO) Holiday Planner (2 page sread)	50000	\$ 7,260.00
Australians Golden Outback (RTO) Map and Guide	100000	\$1,375.00
Western 4WD Driver Magazine (4issues) 1 page (886.25 per issue)	6000	\$ 5,703.00
Western 4WD Driver Magazine (1 issue) Double page spread	6000	\$ 1,886.00
Australia's Coral Coast (RTO) (full page)	50000	\$ 7,260.00
Australia's North West (RTO) Full Page advert 2025 Holiday Planner (Gold Member Rate)	50000	\$ 4,549.00
Australia's North West (RTO) Map & Guide - DL size advert		\$ 1,375.00
Map Printing (Onslow and Tom Price)		\$ 1,500.00
Commissioned Art work for 100 Years of Onslow - Emma Blyth	1	\$ 8,250.00
The 4WD and Adventure Show (TV) (\$35,000 rolled over to 2025/2026)	1	\$5,000
Visit Ashburton Website Update	1	\$ 14,000.00
Visit Ashburton App	1	\$ 10,120.00
SoCo Photo Shoot - Tourism Content Development (Photo/Film/Production)		\$ 73,150.00
SoCo Other Film/Photo/Content development		\$ 9,240.00
TOTAL		\$ 234,518.00



Agenda Item 6.1 - Attachment 4

Projects Underway 2025 - 2026

Shire of Ashburton Projects Underway 2025 - 2026

Projects Underway	Economic Development Strategy Action Item	
Onslow Town Centre transformation - Main Street Stage 1	4.2 Deliver capital projects in the long term financial plan	
Onslow Ocean View Caravan Park Stage 3 Extension	4.2 Deliver capital projects in the long term financial plan	The Shire's objective is to design and construct the Phase 3 Ocean View Caravan Park development, to satisfy the increasing demand for holiday accommodation in Onslow, providing broad economic benefits through increased accommodation capacity and seasonal tourism.
Minna Oval	4.3 Deliver the actions in the Community Lifestyle & Infrastructure Plan	Upgrading Minna Oval and surrounding facilities to increase utilisation by sports clubs and community groups will reduce the pressure on Clem Thompson Oval and its facilities which are operating at capacity. \$10 million donated by Rio Tinto.
Small Business Grant Program	8.1 Support the Onslow Chamber of Commerce and Pilbara Inland Chamber of Commerce Industry initiatives.	The Shire of Ashburton First Small Business Grant Program as per Council's decision at the 10 December 2023 Council meeting (Council Decision 218/2023) and request Point 3 '...to investigate a future small business grant program and report to the Economic and Tourism Development Committee'.
Strategic Tourism Communications and Marketing Plan	9.2 Develop and execute a tourism marketing strategy (including a digital media asset renewal program)	Tourism was written into the region's <i>Strategic Community Plan (2022-2032)</i> and is addressed under section 3.4, which focuses on "sustainable commerce and tourism opportunities."