



COUNCIL MINUTES

LITCHFIELD COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of Ordinary Meeting
held in the Council Chambers, Litchfield
on Tuesday 17 June 2025 at 6:00pm

Present	Doug Barden Mark Sidey Emma Sharp Kevin Harlan Kris Civitarese Mathew Salter	Mayor (Chair) Deputy Mayor, Councillor South Ward Councillor South Ward Councillor Central Ward Councillor Central Ward Councillor North Ward (Electronically)
Apology	Rachael Wright	Councillor North Ward
Staff	Stephen Hoyne Maxie Smith Rebecca Taylor Caitlyn Moulds	Chief Executive Officer Director Corporate and Community Policy and Governance Program Leader Executive Assistant to Directors

Public Gallery As per Attendance Register
Streamed Online via YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sSy2T5m4ArM>

1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

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

2. OPENING OF THE MEETING

The Mayor opened the meeting at 6:02pm

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

3. ELECTRONIC ATTENDANCE / APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

3.01 Electronic Attendance

Moved: Cr Sharp
Seconded: Cr Civitarese

THAT pursuant to GOV02 Litchfield Council's Meeting Procedures, Council provided permission for the following Councillors to attend the Ordinary Council Meeting electronically:

- Councillor Matther Salter

ORD2025 11-378 CARRIED (6-0)

3.02 Apologies

THAT pursuant to GOV02 Litchfield Council's Meeting Procedures Council accept an apology from Cr Rachael Wright.

ORD2025 11-379 CARRIED (6-0)

3.03 Leave of Absence Previously Granted

Nil

3.04 Leave of Absence Request

Nil

4. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

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

4.1 Elected Members

Moved: Mayor Barden
Seconded: Cr Civitarese

As per Section 115 of the Local Government Act 2019, Mayor Barden disclosed an interest in Item 15.01.03 – Eligibility of the Mayor to Hold Office and advised they would leave the meeting whilst the item is under consideration.

ORD2025 11-380 CARRIED (6-0)

4.2 Staff

Nil

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Nil

6. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

6.1 Confirmation of Council Minutes

Moved: Cr Harlan

Seconded: Cr Salter

THAT Council confirms the following minutes as a true and accurate record of those meetings:

- Ordinary Council Meeting held Tuesday 20 May 2025, 11 pages; and
- Confidential Council Meeting held Tuesday 20 May 2025, 4 pages.
- Special Council Meeting held Monday 26 May 2025, 2 pages.
- Special Council Meeting held Tuesday 3 June 2025, 2 pages.

ORD2025 11-381 CARRIED (6-0)

6.2 Council Action Sheet / Business Arising from Previous Meetings

Moved: Cr Civitarese

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Sidey

THAT Council receive and note Item 6.02 within the Council agenda, Council Action Sheet / Business Arising from Previous Meetings.

ORD2025 11-382 CARRIED (6-0)

7. PETITIONS

Nil

8. DEPUTATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Nil

9. ACCEPTING OR DECLINING LATE ITEMS

Nil

10. NOTICES OF MOTION

Motion – Public Question Time Policy

Moved: Cr Civitarese

Seconded: Cr Harlan

That council:

1. Acknowledge the importance of being open and transparent with Members of the Public.
2. Recognise the importance of public questions as a mechanism to ensuring greater community engagement with Members of the Public.
3. Rescind GOV17 Public Question Item policy.
4. Adopt the following policy, as at Attachment A, as GOV17 Public Question Item and authorise the Chief Executive Officer to make formatting changes in line with other council policies.
5. Request to the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate to review and update any related policies and procedures.

Reason:

There has been increasing focus on meeting procedures at recent council meetings and the current GOV17 Public Question Item policy is not in line with long standing Litchfield Council traditions or community expectations. The attached draft policy has been developed after looking at a number of different council's public question policies around the country.

Kris Civitarese
Councillor Central Ward
Litchfield Council

Attachment A:

1. Purpose

This policy provides procedures for allowing members of the public to ask questions about Litchfield Council activities. Litchfield Council prides itself on being open and transparent and welcomes the opportunity to address questions from the public.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Ordinary meetings of Council.

3. Definitions

Ordinary Meeting	An ordinary, rather than special, meeting of the Council
Public Question Time	A section of the ordinary council meeting dedicated to the asking and answering of questions from the public.
Chairperson	The Mayor or other presiding member of the council

4. Procedure

- 4.1 The Chairperson of an ordinary council meeting must ensure that, if required, at least 15 minutes of that meeting is made available for questions by members of the public.
- 4.2 The Chairperson of an ordinary council meeting may;
- i. address questions on notice submitted by members of the public; and
 - ii. invite any members of the public present at the meeting to ask questions relating to the activities of the Council.
- 4.3 A question by any member of the public under this regulation and an answer to that question are not to be debated at the ordinary council meeting.
- 4.4 The Chairperson of an ordinary council meeting may;
- i. refuse to accept a question from a member of the public; or
 - ii. require a question from a member of the public asked without notice to be put on notice and in writing to be answered at a later ordinary council meeting.
- 4.5 If the Chairperson of an ordinary council meeting refuses to accept a question from a member of the public, the Chairperson is to give a reason for doing so. The reason for refusal will be included in the minutes of the meeting.

Asking a Question Without Notice:

- 4.6 Any member of the public may ask a question. Questions may be submitted in two ways;
- i. Questions can be submitted in writing and be 'put on notice' before the council meeting, or;
 - ii. A question may be raised from the public gallery 'without notice' during public question time.

Submitting a Question on Notice:

- 4.7 Members of the public are encouraged to submit questions in writing and be put on notice to address the Council in the public question time. Council recommends this option, as it will enable Council to provide a researched, complete written response.
- 4.8 To submit a question in writing, members of the public can lodge questions with Council by email, letter or through a form on the Council Website
- 4.9 Forms will need to be lodged at the Council Office no later than 12:00 noon on the prior business day before the scheduled meeting.
- 4.10 Each person with a question with notice that has been accepted or declined will be advised by no later than four hours prior to the scheduled meeting.
- 4.11 When contacted, a person who has submitted a question with notice will need to confirm their presence at the meeting for their question to be read.
- 4.12 The locality and name of the person asking a question on notice and the question will be included in the meeting minutes. If a member of the public asked a question without notice from the public gallery at the meeting, this question will be recorded in the minutes with a summary of any answer given in response

Questions May Be Refused in Certain Circumstances

- 4.13 The Chairperson may refuse to allow a public question to be listed or refuse to respond to a question put at a meeting without notice that:
- i. is unlawful in any way;
 - ii. contains defamatory remarks, offensive or improper language;
 - iii. questions the competency of Council staff or Councillors;
 - iv. relates to the personal affairs or actions of Council staff or Councillors;
 - v. relates to confidential matters, legal advice or actual or possible legal proceedings;
 - vi. relates to any matter that pertains to a matter prescribed as confidential,

- vii. the question is in the nature of an administrative query and considers it appropriate to respond administratively through the Chief Executive Officer .
- viii. is, in the reasonable opinion of the Chairperson, proffered to advance a particular point of view rather than to make a genuine enquiry;
- ix. is not related to Council activities or vague in nature or irrelevant to Council;
- x. is a question that has been substantively asked at the current or previous Council Meeting.

At the meeting

- 4.14 At the Council Meeting, public question time will occur towards the start of the meeting, after the Disclosures of Interest.
- 4.15 If accepted by the Mayor, the question will be responded to, or, it may be taken on notice as a question on notice for the next Council meeting, or the Chief Executive Officer can provide a written response.
- 4.16 The Mayor may direct a Councillor or the Chief Executive Officer to provide a response.
- 4.17 In the event that the same or similar question is raised by more than one person, an answer may be given as a combined response.
- 4.18 Questions asked with notice will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting with the full written response.
- 4.19 Questions without notice will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting with a summary of any response given.
- 4.20 Once the allocated time period of fifteen minutes has ended, the Chairperson can declare public question time ended. At this time, any person who has not had the opportunity to put forward a question will be invited to submit their question in writing for the next meeting.
- 4.21 Questions without notice may be asked by members of the public with a three minute time allocation to asking questions per member of the community.
- 4.22 Members of the Public who have submitted a Question with notice will be provided the opportunity to ask a supplementary question of the Council with a three minute time allocation.

Amendment:

Moved: Deputy Mayor Sidey
Seconded: Cr Sharp

THAT the matter of public questions be brought to a briefing to fully consider the matter

CARRIED (4-2)

A Division was called

Those voting in the affirmation:

Deputy Mayor Sidey, Cr Sharp, Cr Harlan, Cr Salter

Those voting in the negative Mayor Barden and Cr Civitarese

ORD2025 11-383 CARRIED (4-2)

11. MAYORS REPORT

Moved: Mayor Barden
Seconded: Cr Harlan

THAT Council receive and note Item 11.01 Mayor's monthly report for the period of 20 May 2025 to 16 June 2025.

ORD2025 11-384 CARRIED (6-0)

12. REPORT FROM COUNCIL APPOINTED REPRESENTATIVES

Nil

13. OFFICERS' REPORTS

13.01 Corporate and Community

13.01.01 Litchfield Council Finance Report – May 2025

Moved: Cr Sharp
Seconded: Cr Harlan

THAT Council note the Litchfield Council Finance Report 31 May 2025.

ORD2025 11-385 CARRIED (6-0)

13.01.02 People, Performance and Governance Report – April 2025

Moved: Cr Civitarese
Seconded: Cr Harlan

THAT Council note the People, Performance and Governance Report for May 2025.

ORD2025 11-386 CARRIED (6-0)

13.01.03 Risk Management Audit Committee Open Minutes – 29 May 2025

Moved: Deputy Mayor Sidey
Seconded: Cr Harlan

THAT Council receive and note the Risk Management Audit Committee unconfirmed open minutes from 29 May 2025 meeting, as at Attachment A.

ORD2025 11-387 CARRIED (6-0)

13.01.04 By-Laws and Municipal Plan Consultation Report

Moved: Cr Civitarese
Seconded: Mayor Barden

THAT Council:

1. receive and note the By-Laws and Municipal Plan Consultation Report, at Attachment A, and thank all community members for their input;
2. lay the draft Litchfield Council By-Laws on the table for the next Council to determine; and
3. consider if any amendments are required to the Municipal Plan 2025-2026 based on the feedback provided during consultation, noting that the adopting of Municipal Plan 2025- 2026 forms part of this agenda at 13.02.04

ORD2025 11-388 CARRIED (4-2)

13.01.05 Draft COM01 Youth Policy

Moved: Cr Harlan
Seconded: Cr Salter

THAT Council:

1. Lifts the draft COM01 Youth Policy from the table; and
2. adopt the draft COM01 Youth Policy, as at Attachment A, and authorise the Chief Executive Officer to make minor amendments.

ORD2025 11-389 CARRIED (6-0)

13.01.06 Draft FIN15 Purchasing Cards – Elected Members and Chief Executive Officer

Moved: Cr Harlan
Seconded: Deputy Mayor Sidey

THAT Council adopt the draft FIN15 Purchasing Cards – Elected Members and Chief Executive Officer, as at Attachment A, and authorise the Chief Executive Officer to make minor amendments.

ORD2025 11-390 CARRIED (6-0)

13.02 Executive and Community Services

13.02.01 Community Services and Development Monthly Report – May 2025

Moved: Cr Civitarese
Seconded: Cr Sharp

THAT Council note the Community Services and Development Monthly Report for May 2025.

ORD2025 11-391 CARRIED (6-0)

13.02.02 Declaration of Rates and Charges 2025/2026

Moved: Deputy Mayor Sidey
Seconded: Cr Salter

THAT Council by special resolution:

in accordance with Section 238 of the *Local Government Act 2019*, a special rate of \$5,947.50 per property, as detailed in Attachment B, is declared for the financial year ending 30 June 2026. This rate will be payable over a two-year period, as indicated in the Declaration of Rates and Charges 2025/2026, which is attached to this report at Attachment B.

THAT Council:

1. receive and note the Chief Executive Officer's certification of the Assessment Record in line with Section 29 *Local Government (General) Regulations 2021* as at Attachment A to this report; and
2. pursuant to Section 237 of the *Local Government Act 2019*, declare rates and charges for the financial year ending 30 June 2026 as noted in the Declaration of Rates and Charges 2025/2026 as at Attachment B to this report.
3. pursuant to Section 241 of the *Local Government Act 2019*, publish the Declaration of Rates and Charges for 2025-2026 on Council's website and in the newspaper circulating generally in the area.
- 4.

ORD2025 11-392 CARRIED (5-1)

13.02.03 Proposed Fees and Charges 2025/2026

Moved: Cr Salter
Seconded: Cr Harlan

THAT Council:

1. adopt the Litchfield Council Fees and Charges for 2025/2026 as at Attachment A to this report;
2. adopt the Thorak Regional Cemetery Fees and Charges for 2025/2026 as at Attachment B to this report; and
3. approve the CEO to make minor editorial changes.

ORD2025 11-393 CARRIED (5-1)

13.02.04 Draft Municipal Plan 2025-2026 and Draft Financial Management Strategy and Long Term Financial Plan and 2025-2026 to 2034-2035

Moved: Cr Harlan
Seconded: Cr Civitarese

THAT Council:

1. note submissions received for the Draft Municipal Plan 2025-2026 and Draft Financial Management Strategy and Long Term Financial Plan 2025-2026 to 2034-2035 at report 13.02.03 of this agenda;
2. approve amendments to the Draft Municipal Plan 2025-2026 and Draft Financial Management Strategy and Long Term Financial Plan 2025-2026 to 2034-2035 as listed in Attachment A to this report;
3. authorise the Chief Executive Officer to make necessary editorial changes to the Municipal Plan 2025-2026 and Financial Management Strategy and Long Term Financial Plan 2025-2026 to 2034-2035 if required;
4. adopt the 2025-2026 budget as per Section 203 of the *Local Government Act 2019*; and
5. adopt the Municipal Plan 2025-2026, as at Attachment C, as per Section 35(1) of the *Local Government Act 2019* and Financial Management Strategy and Long Term Financial Plan 2025-2026 to 2034-2035, as at Attachment D; and
6. set aside any surplus/deficit from the 2024-2025 financial year into the Waste Management Reserve, Thorak Regional Cemetery Reserve, and Asset Reserve, respectively.

ORD2025 11-394 CARRIED (5-1)

13.03 Infrastructure and Operations

13.03.01 Summary Planning and Development Report – May 2025

Moved: Cr Harlan

Seconded: Cr Salter

THAT Council:

1. receive the Summary Planning and Development Report May 2025; and
2. note for information the responses provided to relevant agencies within Attachment A to R of this report.

ORD2025 11-395 CARRIED (6-0)

14. OTHER BUSINESS

THAT Council notes the below Other Business Items.

Cr Sidey

Cr Sidey Noted the Article published in the NT News Monday 16 July 2025 regarding the Library costs. He noted that the costs published were factually incorrect. Cr Sidey noted that in previous years the library was subject to funding cuts from the Northern Territory Government caused by Litchfield failure to relocate the library and that the costs also included a once off relocation cost. Actual ongoing budget is each year is far less then what is published.

Cr Sidey noted that there are complaints about illegal camping at 320 Arnhem highway, however without the some of the by-laws council is powerless to remove them. The by-laws proposed would support council in managing these types of issues.

Cr Sidey noted that we need to look at installing a shed at the Berry Springs Waste Transfer station to protect our plant and equipment and to support staff

Question:

Are there any success in having meetings with other councils and relevant politician at this years ALGA conference?

Answer:

The Mayor noted that the CEO will not be attending this year however we are trying to coordinate the meetings. The Mayor is working with Mark Blackburn (Official Manager Coomalie Community Governance Council) to coordinate the three tiers of government to work on funding issues for roads.

Cr Sharp

Question:

Are there any updates with regards to the fireworks display for territory day.=?

Answer:

The Mayor noted that he was advised that there will be restrictions around personal use of fireworks but the public display is going ahead. He also noted a request from the committee for financial support of around \$3,000 to manage the event.

Cr Harlan

Cr Harlan noted that footpaths should be on the future agenda for the next council as a pressing issue. The CEO noted that DLI have a project list of footpath future projects around the municipality.

Cr Harlan noted a number of jobs that he would like a formal update to be provided to elected members;

- a. 740 Kentish road
- b. CRM 33885 – Litchfield road/Meade road
- c. Complaints of Marian road works completed unsatisfactory levels.

Answers

- a. The CEO advised that the property owners and DLI had agreed to the scope of works.
- b. Noted
- c. Noted

Cr Salter

Noted that there is an request to install additional lighting around the shops in Humpty Doo to improve the visibility.

15. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

Moved: Cr Sharp
Seconded: Deputy Mayor Sidey

THAT Council Pursuant to Section 99 (2) of the *Local Government Act* and Regulation 51(1) of the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2019* the meeting be closed to the public to consider the following Confidential Items:

**15.01.01 Confirmation of Confidential Minutes
Tuesday 20 May / Monday 26 May / Tuesday 3 June**

This item is considered 'confidential' pursuant to Section 293(1) of the *Local Government Act 2019* and Section 51(1) of the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2021*.

8(d) information subject to an obligation of confidentiality at law, or in equity.

**15.01.02 Risk Management and Audit Committee Unconfirmed Confidential
Minutes – 29 May 2025**

This item is considered 'confidential' pursuant to Section 293(1) of the *Local Government Act 2019* and Section 51(1) of the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2021*.

8(c)(i) information that would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to cause commercial prejudice to, or confer an unfair commercial advantage on, any person.

15.01.03 Eligibility of the Mayor to Hold Office

This item is considered 'confidential' pursuant to Section 293(1) of the *Local Government Act 2019* and Section 51(1) of the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2021*.

8(d) information subject to an obligation of confidentiality at law, or in equity.

ORD2025 11-396 CARRIED (6-0)

The meeting moved to Confidential Session at 7:53pm.

Moved: Mayor Barden
Seconded: Deputy Mayor Sidey

THAT pursuant to Section 93(2) of the *Local Government Act 2019* and Regulation 51 of the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2021* the meeting be re-opened to the public.

ORD2025 11-397 CARRIED (6-0)

The meeting moved to Open Session of the meeting at 8:08pm.

Items moved from Confidential:

Nil

16. CLOSE OF MEETING

The Chair closed the meeting at 8:09pm.

17. NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 15 July 2025

18. MINUTES TO BE CONFIRMED

Tuesday 15 July 2025


.....
Mayor
Doug Barden


.....
Chief Executive Officer
Stephen Hoyne