



MINUTES

7th Ordinary Council Meeting 12th Council of Litchfield **Monday 16th March 2026**

Meeting to be held commencing 6:00 PM
in Council Chambers at 7 Bees Creek Road, Freds Pass
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdM3M5gfh6-wQ0Kil89_2eg/live

Community Forum
Will be held from 5:30pm-6:00pm

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Hoyne'.

Stephen Hoyne
Chief Executive Officer



COUNCIL MINUTES

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Present	Rachael Wright	Mayor (Chair)
	Emma Sharp	Councillor South Ward
	Kris Civitarese	Councillor South Ward
	Kevin Harlan	Councillor Central Ward
	Pauline Cass	Councillor Central Ward
	Daisy Crawford	Councillor North Ward
	Plaxy Purich	Councillor North Ward

Apology

Staff	Stephen Hoyne	Chief Executive Officer
	Geoff Thomas	Director Infrastructure and Operations
	Ankit Pansal	Acting Director Corporate Services
	Rebecca Taylor	Acting Director Governance and Community
	Deb Boyko	Executive Assistant to Mayor and CEO
	Tash Clancy	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 CUSTODIANS OF THE LAND

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 MEETING

The Mayor opened the meeting at **6:00pm**.

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

3.1 Electronic Attendance

Deputy Mayor Emma Sharp
Councillor Cass joined @ 6:05pm

3.2 Apologies

Nil

3.3 Leave of Absence previously granted

Nil

3.4 Leave of Absence Request

Nil

4 DISCLOSURES 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

Nil

4.2 Staff

Nil

5 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Questions raised Ordinary Council Meeting February 16th 2026, by Mr Dave Evans are listed below and have been responded to via email 02/03/2026.

Freds Pass Sport and Recreation Management Board (FPSRMB)

1. What is the current status of the lease with the Freds Pass Sport and Recreation Management Board (FPSRMB)?

Council has been working closely with the Fred's Pass Board to progress this matter and is pleased to advise that lease negotiations are now in the final stages.

2. Who is on the Freds Pass Sport and Recreation Management Board? Members and office bearers. Nothing on Litchfield Council or Freds Pass Reserve web sites.

Board and masterplan information has previously been listed on the FPR website and was removed in approximately December 2025 as the information was no longer current. New and/or updated information will be added to the website as sections are updated. Please do not hesitate to contact Freds Pass on info@fredspassreserve.com.au or on 08 8983 1522 for further information.

3. Who is on the FPSRMB project steering committee? Nothing on Litchfield Council or Freds Pass Reserve web sites.

The members of Project Steering Committee overseeing the \$10M Federal Priority Community Infrastructure Program grant for works at Fred's Pass Sport and Recreation Reserve are as follows:

Elected Member Representatives:

- *Deputy Mayor Emma Sharp – voting member*
- *Councillor Kevin Harlan – voting member*
- *Councillor Pauline Cass – voting member*

Council Staff Representatives:

- *Director of Infrastructure and Operations – Geoff Thomas*
- *Admin support staff - varies*

Freds Pass Sport and Recreation Management Board Inc representative:

- *Anthony Dent*

4. What were the FPSRMB project milestones mentioned under the January 2026 Minutes Item 15 Other Business? Nothing on Litchfield Council or Freds Pass Reserve web sites.

These were in reference to some procurement milestones the details of which are commercial in confidence.

5. Item 12.1 of the Mayors Monthly Report mentions the Freds Pass Reserve Meet & Greet – Elected Members and Board on 10 February 2026.

This has been clarified that it was referring to the Litchfield Council Elected Members and not FPSRMB Elected Members.

6. Task 29 – Reserves. Was the budget figure of \$9,635,745.07 all covered by the \$10M Federal government grant?

Yes

7. Freds Pass Master Plan. Expected issue date? User group and stakeholder consultation? Current Freds Pass Master Plan? Nothing on Freds Pass Reserve web site.

Freds Pass Sport and Recreation Management Board Inc. have applied for Grant funding which is yet to be approved for the development of a masterplan.

8. Minutes of FPSRMB meetings? Nothing on Freds Pass Reserve web site.

As per website comment above, please do not hesitate to contact Freds Pass for information.

9. Cheque 1712.60-01 to Freds Pass Sport & Recreation Reserve for 3rd quarter of \$257,055.15 implies an annual funding of \$1,028,220. Is this correct and is the amount audited?

Yes, and yes as per the Associations Act, the Boards financials are audited.

Mr Evans acknowledged the receipt of answers to my FPSRMB questions At Ordinary Council meeting on 16 February 2026 by Stephen Hoyne on 2 March 2026.

Additional questions raised by Mr Evans to council:

A: Ordinary Council Meeting Agenda on 16 March 2026

1. Pages 25 & 26 – Cost to maintain the eight owned Council Recreation Reserves
Does this include Freds Pass and when is it expected to be completed since it seems to have started on 20/06/2023?
2. Pages 26 – Freds Pass Reserve Expansion
When is it expected to be completed since it seems to have started on 15/08/2023?
3. Page 49 – Note 2: Statement of Trade Debtors
When does the Council expect to receive the \$2M related to Commonwealth grants?
4. Page 110 – Liquor Licence Applications
The SDFC had application PQ2026/9001 for amendment to the existing liquor licence was supported by Council. In regard to the consumption of alcohol on the Reserve, is it possible to get a copy of the licence, so User Groups know what is covered by the existing licence and trading hours, and can plan their future functions accordingly?

B: Freds Pass Sport and Recreation Management Board (FPSRMB)

10. What is the expected completion date for finalising the lease with the Freds Pass Sport and Recreation Management Board (FPSRMB)?
11. Will the leases for User Groups at Freds Pass continue to be twelve (12) months as there had been mention by FPSRMB of reducing them to six (6) months? The SDFC is in the process of developing a twelve-month facilities program which will include the oval.
12. I have been informed by FPSRMB that the current FPSRMB Inc. Board Members are:
 - Anthony Dent, Chairperson
 - Rob Wait, Vice Chairperson
 - Charlotte McGregor, Treasurer
 - Silke Maynard, Secretary
 - Cameron Burrows, Public Officer
 - Karyn Russell, Committee Member
 - Karen Kuzsicska, Committee Member

Clause 4.3 of the draft Freds Pass Reserve Constitution I have states
The Board will be constituted by seven (7) Board Members as follows:
(i) Four (4) User Group Board Members (as defined in clause 4.5).
(ii) Three (3) Independent Board Members (as defined in clause 5); and
(iii) One (1) Non-Voting Observer that will be the Litchfield Council Chief Executive Officer or an operational representative thereof.

I asked FPSRMB which board members are occupying each of these positions or are there current vacancies and was only informed there are no vacant positions on the Board at present and not given the breakdown of the board member positions. Does Litchfield Council have this information regarding board member positions?

13. The FPSRMB Constitution was adopted at a Special General Meeting held on 23 November 2024. Only a draft Terms of Reference has been shared with the Member Organisations. Does Litchfield Council have a copy of the FPSRMB Constitution?
14. The Freds Pass Sport and Recreation Management Board issued a draft Terms of Reference (TOR) for Member Organisations on 13 February 2026, without a copy of the adopted FPSRMB Constitution, with feedback required by close of business Monday 16 March. The SDFC has provided feedback. Has Litchfield Council been issued a draft Terms of Reference (TOR) for review or requested to provide feedback?
15. The Freds Pass Sport and Recreation Management Board draft Terms of Reference (TOR) mentions no infrastructure works may commence unless approved in writing by the Board. Can Litchfield Council confirm that these approvals only relate to compliance, safety and alignment in regard to the Reserve Master Plan, which at this stage does not exist, or must these infrastructure works approvals be submitted directly to the Litchfield Council?
16. The SDFC committee was informed by Anthony Dent that the Litchfield Council had passed an earlier motion that a cricket pitch will be installed once there are lights on Nor built Stadium. Is this correct?
17. The SDFC has built a number of assets over the period of their lease at Freds Pass. Does the ownership of these assets become the Litchfield Council's on completion, and who is responsible for the ongoing maintenance?

C: Other

Item 14.2.1 of the previous minutes mentioned the Litchfield Council Municipal Plan. It does not appear on the Litchfield Council web site. Is it available?

Question received via email (12/03/2026) from Ms Jaymie John:

- Can the council please advise who is responsible for maintenance for drains alongside council roadways?

All questions taken on notice.

6 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

6.1 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLUTION OCM/26/020

Moved: Cr Kevin Harlan

Seconded: Cr Kris Civitarese

That the full minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held Monday 16th February 2026, 17 pages be confirmed.

CARRIED 7/0

Youtube recording time: 18:20

Summary

Minutes from ordinary council meeting 8th December 2025 - a query was raised regarding inaccuracies in the December meeting minutes, noting that corrections have since been discussed with the CEO and EA and a draft reviewed. Clarification was sought on the process to formally update the minutes, including whether they need to be brought back to council for re-endorsement.

Action

Confirm process to update and re-adopt the corrected minutes (if required by Council).

7 BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

7.1 Business Arising

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an update on actions arising from previous Council meetings and outlines progress made on outstanding items.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council receive and note the business arising as at attachment.

Geoff Thomas, Director Infrastructure & Operations gave a summary of current items listed on Business Arising.

Youtube recording time: 21:10

8 PETITIONS

Nil

9 DEPUTATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Nil

10 ACCEPTING OR DECLINING LATE ITEMS

Nil

11 NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Nil

12 MAYORS REPORT

12.1 Mayors Monthly Report

RESOLUTION OCM/26/021

Moved: Deputy Mayor Emma Sharp

Seconded: Cr Daisy Crawford

Items to be removed from mayor's report are Litchfield DCA Meeting, Meeting with St John and Elected Member Mandatory Professional Development Course.

CARRIED 7/0

Youtube recording time: 27:41

13 REPORTS FROM COUNCIL APPOINTED REPRESENTATIVES

Nil

14 OFFICER REPORTS

14.1 Corporate and Community

14.1.1 Litchfield Council Finance Report – February 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the Litchfield Council Finance Report for 28 FEBRUARY 2026. Budget Review 1 2025/26 figures are shown.

Operational Income reflects the entire year of rates levied. As expenses are incurred over the year, the current surplus position will gradually decrease.

The Balance Sheet has been updated in accordance with 2024/25 audited financial statements and Financial Reserves has been updated with original budget figures 2026.

The annual rates and waste charges were levied in July 2025. As instalment dates pass, the outstanding rates ratio will continue to decline.

RESOLUTION OCM/26/022

Moved: Cr Kevin Harlan

Seconded: Cr Daisy Crawford

1. That Council note the Litchfield Council Finance Report 28 FEBRUARY 2026.

CARRIED 7/0

Youtube recording time: 42:10

14.1.2 People, Performance and Governance Report - February 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides Council with key staffing information, workplace health and safety information and proposed major policy updates and reviews.

This report provides a monthly update to ensure that both staffing and budget measures are in accordance with the Council approved staffing plan and budget. The metrics provided in this report track activity and report full-time equivalent (FTE) numbers, retention and Work Health and Safety performance.

RESOLUTION OCM/26/023

Moved: Cr Plaxy Purich

Seconded: Cr Kris Civitarese

1. That Council note the People, Performance and Governance Report for February 2026.

CARRIED 7/0

Youtube recording time: 52:50

14.1.3 Community Services and Development Monthly Report – February

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides Council with a monthly review of the Community Services and Development areas including key achievements, highlights, and progress.

RESOLUTION OCM/26/024

Moved: Cr Daisy Crawford

Seconded: Cr Kris Civitarese

1. That Council note the Community Services and Development Monthly Report for February 2026.

CARRIED 7/0

Youtube recording time: 57:22

Summary

Questions were raised regarding whether attendees of the pop-up sessions are surveyed for feedback, availability of front counter visitation statistics, visibility of the Mayor's media engagements, clarification of user statistics.

Action

Investigate whether attendees are being surveyed on satisfaction with the popup information sessions and Confirm whether "active users" includes "new users" or if they are separate figures.

14.1.4 Recreation Reserve Management Committee Minutes

RESOLUTION OCM/26/025

Moved: Cr Kris Civitarese

Seconded: Cr Plaxy Purich

THAT Council:

1. receive and note the unconfirmed Howard Park Recreation Reserve Management Committee Minutes of 14 January 2026 at Attachment 1.
2. receive and note the unconfirmed Knuckey Lagoon Recreation Reserve Management Committee Minutes of 12 February 2026 at Attachment 2.

CARRIED 7/0

Youtube recording time: 1:01:57

Summary

Discussion included a request from Cr Crawford for all elected members to receive invitations to Howard River Park and Knuckey Lagoon committee meetings, concerns about accessibility at Howard Park due to vehicles blocking disabled access ramps (with suggestions for signage or markings), limited promotion of committee meetings to the public and consideration of alternative approaches such as community forums to increase engagement, along with clarification on responsibility and funding for minor accessibility improvements.

Action

Elected members to receive invitations/notifications for Howard Park and Knuckey Lagoon committee meetings and investigate and implement signage/line marking.

14.2 Executive and Community Development

14.2.1 NT Councils Discretionary Trust Advisory Committee - Vacancy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report seeks Council support to put forward a nomination to represent LGANT on the NT Councils Discretionary Trust Advisory Committee.

RESOLUTION OCM/26/026

Moved: Cr Plaxy Purich

Seconded: Cr Daisy Crawford

That Council note this report and support the nomination of Rebecca Taylor, Acting Director Governance and Community, to the NT Councils Discretionary Trust Advisory Committee.

CARRIED 7/0

Youtube recording time: 1:08:47

14.2.2 Review of Council Representatives Appointed to Committees

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents to Council the current Council representatives appointed to committees for review.

RESOLUTION OCM/26/027

Moved: Cr Kris Civitarese

Seconded: Cr Kevin Harlan

THAT Council consider the appointed Council representatives and decide to make changes or resolve to maintain existing memberships.

Cr Crawford relinquishes her position on the following committees and Council appointed Cr Purich to these committees: RMAC and Knuckey Lagoon Committee

Cr Purich will join the other elected members on: Litchfield Australia Day Awards Selection Panel, Community Grants Committee and Advocacy & New Initiatives Committee.

CARRIED 7/0

Youtube recording time: 1:10:36

14.3 Infrastructure and Operations

14.3.1 Minutes of the Advocacy and New initiates Committee Meeting

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents to Council the minutes of the 9 February 2026 meeting of the Advocacy and New initiates Committee meeting minutes.

RESOLUTION OCM/26/028

Moved: Deputy Mayor Emma Sharp

Seconded: Cr Kevin Harlan

1. That Council receive and note the unconfirmed Advocacy and New initiates Committee meeting minutes of 9 February 2026, at Attachment 1

CARRIED 7/0

Youtube recording time: 1:24:42

Summary

Discussion focused on how a newly proposed initiative (water tanks) and broader advocacy items are captured in the minutes and action list.

14.3.2 Planning Summary Report - February 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide to Council a summary of applications received, and comments provided, for the period of 1-28 February 2026. The following is a summary of all applications during the noted period.

Type of Application	No. Applications
Planning Scheme Amendment	0
Development Applications	4
Clearances for Development Permit Conditions	7
Sale, Lease, or Occupation of Crown Land Applications	0
Development Permits Issued	6
Liquor Licence Applications	3
Water Licence Applications	0
Mining Applications	0
Stormwater (Building Certification)/ Driveway Plan Reviews	16
Works Permits	14

Letters of comment for the noted development applications are provided for information in the attachments to this report.

RESOLUTION OCM/26/029

Moved: Cr Daisy Crawford

Seconded: Cr Plaxy Purich

THAT Council:

1. Receive the Summary Planning and Development Report for 1 – 28 February 2026.
2. Note for information the responses provided to relevant agencies within Attachments A to D of this report.

CARRIED 7/0

Youtube recording time: 1:35:00

Summary

Clarification was provided that stormwater applications relate to Council's role in reviewing how stormwater is managed in building designs as part of development processes, with multiple assessments arising from single development applications covering multiple lots; it was also noted that broader impacts such as noise and pollution are addressed through the Development Consent Authority (DCA) process, not Council.

15 OTHER BUSINESS

Councillors acknowledged the widespread impact of recent flooding, thanking the community, businesses, and Council staff for their support and response efforts, while also raising concerns about the implications of future development—particularly in flood-prone areas like Elizabeth Valley and Lloyd Creek.

Cr Purich presented a comprehensive briefing on significant damage to Thorngate Road, Holtze resulting from prolonged heavy vehicle use, including the Abram tanks operating from Robertson Barracks for 15 years. The briefing detailed observed road impacts, supporting statistics, and the regulatory context and framework in which the NT Government authorises heavy vehicle use, while Litchfield Council retains maintenance and repair responsibility. Cr Purich recommended that Mayor Wright and CEO re-engage with the Government Departments, supported by this detailed evidence seeking funding for this repair. The briefing note is included below for reference:

Subject: Road Damage Caused by Heavy Military Vehicles – Request for Repair Responsibility

Introduction: I have lived along Wallaby Holtze Road since 1964. I have seen the changes the army has brought to our community. I have witnessed many times the movement of heavy armoured vehicles being moved on local council roads and seen the damage this has made to these roads over the years. I have aquaplaned along and then off Thorngate Road caused by two well-worn ruts filled with water. Thorngate and Campbell Roads weren't built to carry 110 tonne heavy armoured vehicles and were built to Australian design standards.

Discussion: Over the past 25 years, Thorngate Road has been used by the Australian Army to access Robertson Barracks, but it was the 15-year period when M1A1 Abrams tanks were based at the barracks that caused the most significant damage now revealing itself. These tanks, transported on multi-axle heavy equipment transporters, along with other armoured vehicles such as M113 APCs and Bushmaster PMVs, repeatedly traversed the road. While part of the Northern Territory's designated heavy vehicle network, Thorngate Road was never engineered for sustained loads over 110 tonnes, and even NT guidelines do not provide technical standards for vehicles of this mass. Each Abrams transporter trip can impose roughly 63 ESALs, equivalent to 157,500 car passes, dramatically exceeding the stress anticipated in the road's original design.

In practice, “band-aid” maintenance has been carried out, pothole filling, edge repairs, and rut topping, which do not restore structural integrity. As a result, the road continues to deteriorate rapidly and requires substantial rehabilitation, even though the Abrams tanks are no longer stationed at Robertson Barracks.

Under NT law, the Army likely operated under recognised Defence exemptions allowing them to exceed standard mass and dimension limits, meaning no NT single oversize or overmass permit was required. Consequently, while Litchfield Council is responsible for road maintenance, however, the NT Government authorised this use, permitted this exemption and therefore bears accountability for permitting vehicles that caused damage far beyond the road’s design limits.

Given the scale of impact (with 41 tanks that moved estimating 8 – 12 times per year), it is clear that the Northern Territory Government should share responsibility for funding ongoing major repairs. Thorngate Road’s designation as a heavy vehicle route does not mitigate the fact that it was never constructed to carry extreme loads, and repeated Abrams movements over 15 years have left lasting structural damage. Effective funding and planning are required to restore the road to safe and serviceable conditions.

Pavement impact comparison (ESALs (Equivalent Standard Axil Loads) per vehicle pass) for one movement on the road.

Vehicle	Typical use at Robertson Barracks	ESAL per pass	Car-equivalent passes
Car	Staff/personal vehicle	0.0008	1
Bushmaster PMV	Light protected mobility vehicle	0.28	~700
M113 APC	Armoured personnel carrier	0.7	~1,750
Bus	Transporting personnel	1.7	~4,250
Semi-trailer truck	Supply, fuel, equipment	4.55	~11,375
M1A1 Abrams	Main battle tank on transporter	63	157,500

These results demonstrate that if a tank moves 10 times per year that would equal 1,575,000 car passes per tank per year. With 41 tanks that would equal approximately 63,000,000 car passes per year. Now multiply this by 15 years. A domestic road can sustain up to 1 – 2 million car passes and last for up to 10-15 years in the NT before significant repair are needed.

Recommendation: To approach the NT Government Department of Defence and Department of Roads, brief them on the damage caused by the use of the Abrham tanks for 15 years and seek their support in funding of \$..... to reseal/significant repair to Thorngate Road. Alternatively notify the NT Government they can’t use Thorngate Road for heavy vehicles any longer and to redirect all defence heavy vehicle traffic to Millians Road and remove Thorngate Road from the Heavy Vehicle network. Unfortunately, the NT Government has control of permitting heavy vehicles on roads in the NT despite Litchfield Council being the road manager and responsible for all repairs. Therefore, if they can’t assume responsibility for their authority then we need to act responsibly within our budget.

References:

- NT Oversized/Over massed Permit Requirement: [Apply for an oversize or overmass permit | NT.GOV.AU](#)
- [Northern Territory Government S17](#)
- NHVR Guidelines: [Guidelines and rules | NHVR](#)

Action

A councillor requested that administration prepare a report outlining potential grants and funding sources for flood recovery and infrastructure repairs.

Youtube recording time: 1:41:02

16 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

RESOLUTION OCM/26/030

Moved: Deputy Mayor Emma Sharp

Seconded: Cr Kevin Harlan

Pursuant to Section 93 of the Local Government Act and Regulation 51 of Local Government (General) Regulations the meeting be closed to the public to consider the following confidential item(s):

16.1 Confidential Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 16 February 2026

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 99(2) - ci of the Local Government Act, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with information that would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to cause commercial prejudice to, or confer an unfair commercial advantage on, any person.

16.2 Minutes of the Freds Pass Reserve \$10mil Grant Project Steering Committee

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 99(2) - ci of the Local Government Act, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with information that would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to cause commercial prejudice to, or confer an unfair commercial advantage on, any person.

16.3 Proposed Closing of a Section of Paper Road (Meade) and Opening of a New Road Reserve

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 99(2) - civ of the Local Government Act, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with information that would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to subject to sub regulation (3) - prejudice the interest of the council or some other person.

Moved to confidential session at **8:01pm**
CARRIED 7/0

RESOLUTION OCM/26/031

Moved: Cr Kris Civitarese

Seconded: Cr Kevin Harlan

Resume in Open Session at **8:58pm**.

CARRIED 7/0

17 REPORT OF CONFIDENTIAL RESOLUTIONS

18 CLOSE OF MEETING

The Meeting closed at **9:01pm**.

19 NEXT MEETING

Monday, 20 April 2026

20 MINUTES TO BE CONFIRMED

Monday, 20 April 2026



Deputy Mayor Emma Sharp



Chief Executive Officer Stephen Hoyne