

MEDIA STATEMENT

Report of the Inquiry into the operations of the Shire of Wiluna.

On behalf of the Shire of Wiluna, we would like to thank the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DoLGSCI), for their time and effort which was spent on the Inquiry of the Shire's past operational practices. The Shire supported the Inquiry as it is committed to better understanding any shortfalls it had in important areas such as governance and legislative compliance. The knowledge gained from the Inquiry will enable the Shire to improve many areas of its operations and regain the respect of the community and the local government industry.

Both Councillors and staff of the Shire were very disappointed to read the finding of the Inquiry and are all committed to making the necessary changes to ensure its governance and legislative compliance does not repeat the failings of the past. In fact, the Shire has already made a number of changes to its governance and legislated compliance over the past two years.

What is not contained in the report, but in the Shire's view had a significant impact on the issues raised in the report, was the problem of attracting and retaining senior staff. Attracting the right senior staff to a remote rural inland local government such as Wiluna can be extremely challenging. However, it is important that the Shire can recruit and retain suitably experienced and capable people in its senior staff roles.

Many of the compliance issues raised in the Inquiry Report can be related back to the Shire not having stable senior staff whose role it was to advise and direct the Council and other staff about their roles and responsibilities.

One of the requirements of a DoLGSCI Inquiry is to stop the investigated local government from undertaking its own investigation on matters that are to be investigated. Therefore, the Shire is not able to comment on each individual issue raised in the report.

There has been a complete turnover of senior staff from the period of time upon which the Inquiry had focused much of its investigations, and the current executive team has worked very hard to rectify all the Shire's governance and compliance issues including those identified by the Inquiry.

In relation to recent press on the Report, and allegations made against two Councillors, they are totally unsubstantiated and unfounded. One of the councillors was not even an elected member at the time.

For further comment on this matter, all enquiries must be directed to the Shire President, Jim Quadrio.

Cr. Jim Quadrio
Shire President

Colin Bastow
Chief Executive Officer

29 October 2018