



Chittering Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes 29 October 2024

Commencement: 6:59PM

Closure: 8:33PM

MEMBERSHIP

Members	Deputies
Shire of Chittering Councillor Cr Carmel Ross	Shire of Chittering Councillor Cr David Dewar
Chief Executive Officer Melinda Prinsloo	Nil
Chief Bush Fire Control Officer Graham Furlong	Nil
Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer Northern Region Kim Haeusler	Nil
Bindoon Brigade representative Neil Harvey	Bindoon Brigade representative Dennis Badcock
Lower Chittering Brigade representative Donald Jamieson	Lower Chittering Brigade representative Graham Furlong
Muchea Brigade representative Shelly Pannell	Muchea Brigade representative James Marotta
Upper Chittering Brigade representative Aaron Cover	Upper Chittering Brigade representative Will Lee
Wannamal Brigade representative Clayton Smith	Wannamal Brigade representative Daniel Smith
Chittering Incident Support Brigade representative Paul Groves	Chittering Incident Support Brigade representative Ian Wright

Objectives

To make recommendations and advise Council on all matters relating to the Bush Fires Act 1954, Section 67(1).

To liaise with other emergency organisations and relevant bodies with regard to Fire and Emergency Management within the Shire of Chittering. The Committee will advise the local government all matters relating to:

- (a) Preventing, controlling and extinguishing of bush fires
- (b) The planning of the layout of fire-breaks in the district
- (c) Prosecutions for breaches of the Bush Fire Act 1954
- (d) The formation of bush fire brigades and the grouping thereof under group brigade officers
- (e) The ensuring of co-operation and co-ordination of bush fire brigades in their efforts and activities
- (f) Any other matter relating to bush fire control whether of the same kind, as, or a different kind from, those specified.

Tenure of Membership

Shall be in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1995, Section 5.11*.

Attendance by Government Agencies

The following are invited (non-voting) to attend meetings of the CBFAC:

- (a) DFES District Officer – North East Metropolitan
- (b) Department of Biodiversity, Conservation & Attractions / Parks and Wildlife Service

Delegated Authority

Nil

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Preface

When the Chief Executive Officer approves these Minutes for distribution they are in essence *“Unconfirmed”* until the following Ordinary Meeting of Council, where the minutes will be confirmed subject to any amendments.

The *“Confirmed”* Minutes are then signed off by the Presiding Member.

Attachments that formed part of the agenda, in addition to those tabled at the Ordinary Meeting of Council are put together as an addendum to these Minutes.

Unconfirmed Minutes

These minutes were approved for distribution on
4 November 2024.



Confirmed Minutes

These minutes were confirmed at a meeting held on 11 March 2025.

Signed

Note: The Presiding Member at the meeting at which the minutes were confirmed is the person who signs above.

1. DECLARATION OF OPENING OF MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS OF VISITORS

The Chairperson declared the meeting open at 6:59PM.

Good evening ladies and gentlemen, we wish to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land within the Shire of Chittering, the Yued and Whadjuk peoples. We would like to pay respect to the Elders of the Nyoongar nation, past and present, who have walked and cared for the land, we acknowledge and respect their continuing culture, and the contributions made to this region.

2. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE / APOLOGIES / APPROVED LEAVE OF ABSENCE

2.1 Attendance

The following members have confirmed their attendance (Quorum – 6 Members):

Members:	Cr Carmel Ross	Council Delegate (Chairperson)
	Graham Furlong	Chief Bushfire Control Officer
	Scott Clayton	Deputy Chief Executive Officer
	Neil Harvey	Bindoon Volunteer Bushfire Brigade
	Shelly Pannell	Muchea Volunteer Bushfire Brigade
	Paul Groves	Chittering Incident Support Brigade
	Kim Haeusler	Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
	Aaron Cover	Upper Chittering Volunteer Bushfire Brigade
	Daniel Smith	Wannamal Volunteer Bushfire Brigade
	Don Jamieson	Lower Chittering Volunteer Bushfire Brigade
Observers:	Murray McBride	Department of Fire and Emergency Services
	Jodie Connell	Development Services Support Officer (Minute Secretary)
	Ben Riddle	Lower Chittering Volunteer Bushfire Brigade
	Gerry Starr	Bushfire Volunteers Association
	Will Lee	Upper Chittering Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade

2.2 Apologies

Melinda Prinsloo	Chief Executive Officer
Ian Wright	Chittering Incident Support Brigade
Tammy Foster	Muchea Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade

3. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Nil

4. CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

4.1 Chittering Bushfire Advisory Committee meeting: 11 June 2024

4.1 OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

Moved Kim Haeusler / Seconded Aaron Cover

That the minutes of the Chittering Bushfire Advisory Committee meeting held on Tuesday, 11 June 2024 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. REPORTS

5.1 Chief Bushfire Control Officer

Graham Furlong presented to the Committee, providing an overview of operations, updates and other information pertinent to the Committee.

Paul Groves enquired about the spraying of Shire verges. Graham provided information about the Shire's spraying program relating to Shire verges and strategic firebreaks. Paul Groves requested a list of properties that have approved variations for their firebreaks, Graham stated that not many are approved to have variations. Graham offered that if anyone identified properties that are non-compliant to send them through to the Shire and we will inspect them.

Aaron Cover addressed the Committee, stating that the work being done on the stations has been great but the contractors conducting the works have not been signing in at the station when they are entering. Aaron described a particular scenario where this had occurred.

5.2 DFES District Officer – North East Metropolitan

Murray McBride and spoke to following:

- Murray has been a part of a working group for the State Hazard Plan for fire – a few changes may affect the Shire, DFES & DBCA and the way fires are run – changes will be communicated when they are made.
- A Starlink kit is available for deployment in the regional office. All Incident Control Vehicles are being fitted with Starlink soon.
- Delivered a Crew Leader Course with Shelly in Lower Chittering for Chittering brigades in early October.
- Incident Control Training being held in the coming weeks at Lower Chittering.
- Update on recruitment for the Community Emergency Services Manager role – Murray is in the final stages of shortlisting, once complete, interviews will commence.

- 19 March 2024 was the date of the Redhill fire which had Aboriginal Cultural Heritage site impact. There has been lots of discussion regarding this issue. A process is being developed to make it easier should a fire occur in an area where sites exist.
- DBCA are currently limited with the areas that they can currently burn due to dry wetlands.
- Major changes in DFES leadership – Eight new superintendents have been appointed. There will be changes with District Officers and the areas they are allocated to.
- An Upper Chittering brigade member sent a letter to the Minister about radios being replaced. Murray detailed that this is not the process, and an ICT request must be put in place. Murray expressed his disappointment with the volunteer's behaviour. Murray requested that these types of issues be escalated to him directly and not go to the extremes of contacting the Minister.

5.3 Acting Chief Executive Officer

Scott Clayton addressed the meeting and expressed thanks to all the brigades and their members for the few call outs had recently and for the ones in future. Scott requested all members to stay safe this summer and if brigades need anything the Shire, Graham and Jodie are here to support them.

Shelly Pannell addressed the Committee and thanked Jodie for her help with correspondence, general communication and the Fire Control Officer packs that were prepared this year. Shelly stated that it was the first time these had been prepared for the Fire Control Officers and they felt valued as a result. The Committee moved to thank Jodie for her assistance and support.

6. GENERAL BUSINESS

Murray McBride provided more information on the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage areas when there is a fire running through an area. Neil Harvey asked about the process of identifying the areas prior to a call out. The Committee discussed the process and implications. Ben Riddle enquired if it is only machinery and tracking that is prohibited, Murray confirmed that it covered all activities and provided more information. Discussion was held by the Committee around personal responsibility around fighting fires in areas with sites.

Aaron Cover stated that he had received correspondence from a member of the public about obtaining water in the Shire. Aaron stated that this person had purchased a property where the water tank had been left completely empty on purchase. Councillor Carmel Ross stated that generally people buy water via private contractors. Scott Clayton added that the Shire may be able to help if its genuinely for bushfire protection and would be assessed on a case by case basis if such a request was made.

Daniel Smith stated that with the 3G shutdown that there is going to be issues with contacting Wannamal members as some areas in Wannamal are not covered by 4G service. Wannamal Light Tanker currently has a 3G only mobile phone that needs to be replaced.

Paul Groves stated that Chittering Incident Support Brigade recently had to pay to attend the Bindoon Show and has never had to in the past. Paul stated that he believed all brigades should be attending as a united front to represent the Chittering Fire Services. Jenny Johnson from the Bindoon Agricultural Society stated that previously Bindoon brigade attended to deal with the fireworks and did not have to pay but as that arrangement no longer existed, all attendees had to pay. Scott Clayton suggested around the Shire budgeting and paying for it in future or all brigades joining together to share the cost.

Paul Groves added that Chittering Incident Support attended an exercise at Mundaring. Paul the exercise highlighted some communications issues that can occur with complex incidents. The report from the exercise will be sent on for others to refer to if they wish. Paul stated that Mundaring have a preformed Incident Management Team that get together and train monthly. Paul stated that this could be something for Graham to consider. Additionally, Chittering Incident Support Brigade attended Gingin to support their Cadets Program and provided information about the visit.

Kim Haeusler asked about upgrading the midband radio in his private vehicle, Murray gave Kim information about radios and the recent upgrade project.

7. 2025 COMMITTEE MEETING DATES & NEXT MEETING

In accordance with clause 1.12.3.11 Meetings in the “Council Committees and Advisory Group” booklet the Chittering Bushfire Advisory Committee are to determine the meeting dates for 2025.

The dates are to be discussed by Committee Members and agreed upon. The dates that are suggested for 2025 are as follows:

- a. Tuesday 11 March
- b. Tuesday 10 June
- c. Tuesday 14 October

The following was originally recommended to the Committee:

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That:

1. The Chittering Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting dates for 2025 are as follows:
 - a. Tuesday 11 March
 - b. Tuesday 10 June
 - c. Tuesday 14 October
2. The Chittering Bush Fire Advisory Committee meetings will be held in the Council Chambers, 6177 Great Northern Highway, Bindoon commencing at 7pm.

Graham Furlong requested whether a change could be proposed and provided background information about the structure of meetings throughout the year and the impact it has from a governance perspective. Graham suggested to change the June meeting to a July meeting. The Committee discussed the change and came to an agreement on a new date.

7.1 COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Moved Daniel Smith / Seconded Neil Harvey

That:

1. **The Chittering Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting dates for 2025 are as follows:**
 - a. **Tuesday 11 March**
 - b. **Tuesday 8 July**
 - c. **Tuesday 14 October**
2. **The Chittering Bush Fire Advisory Committee meetings will be held in the Council Chambers, 6177 Great Northern Highway, Bindoon commencing at 7pm.**

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The Committee agreed that the recommendation will be reviewed to see if timing suits in future.

Councillor Carmel Ross endorsed Scott's comments and gave thanks to members and wished a safe fire season and holiday season ahead.

8. CLOSURE

The Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 8:33PM.