



Murraylands and Riverland
Local Government Association

Murraylands and Riverland Local Government Association

Date Friday 24 April 2026

Venue Southern Mallee District Council Offices
Railway Terrace North, Lameroo, SA 5302

Prior to the meeting commencing the MRLGA Board met with new MP's from 10am to 11am including:

- Jason Virgo, Member for MacKillop (One Nation)
- Robert Roylance, Member for Hammond (One Nation)

DRAFT Minutes General Board Meeting

9:45am	Arrival, Registration + Tea and coffee
11:00am	Meeting Opened
2:00pm	Meeting Closed

*Being a unified local government sector
working in the best interest of the region and our communities.*



MINUTES FROM THE GENERAL MEETING OF THE MURRAYLANDS & RIVERLAND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION
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ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT 1	Minutes from Previous Board Meeting
ATTACHMENT 2	Quarterly Financial Statements

1 WELCOME

Acknowledgment of Country

Presidents Welcome

Chairperson, Mayor Ella Winnall opened the meeting.

No apologies were registered at the time of the agenda being prepared.

Noting:

- Mayor Caroline Phillips was in attendance via online
- Mayor Simone Bailey has returned from leave and resumed duties as Mayor for Mid Murray Council, as well as her role as Vice President for MRLGA and the regions SAROC representative
- Mayor Jonathan Pietzsch has returned from leave and resumed duties as Acting Mayor of Coorong District Council.
- Samantha Killington, Director People and Culture and Michael McCarthy, Manager of Governance represented LGA online.

2 DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Pursuant to Clause 3.3.1 of the Charter and Section 75 of the Local Government Act 1999 (SA), board members are required to declare any potential conflict of interest(s).

Mayor Winnall and Mayor Bailey declared that they sit on the Country Arts SA Board.

Mayor Bailey declared that she has employment at Senator Karen Grogan's Office.

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

A copy of the General Board Meeting Minutes was provided at **Attachment 1** (including attendance register).

Berri Barmera Council identified a typo on page 16 (item 12.1) using the word 'surmised' and should have been 'summarised'. The minutes have been updated accordingly in the version attached.

Motion

"Minutes from the MRLGA General Board Meeting held at the Murraylands Skills Centre in Murray Bridge on 5 February 2026 be taken as read and confirmed."

Moved, **Mayor Thorley (RCMB)** Seconded, **Mayor Hunter (RPC)**

Carried

4 ACTIONS REGISTER

- There were 26 board actions from 23/24 and 1 item remains pending.

	20 October 2023 - General Meeting	
	Action:	
1	Charter Review <i>It would be best to align the MRLGA voting processes with the sector. MRLGA Ceo to research other lga's voting procedures. Agreed that the item is brought back to the Board Meeting in February 2024.</i> That the MRLGA Board support the proposed changes to the Charter and ask the MRLGA CEO to have them reviewed legally and any feedback brought back to the board before proceeding.	This was temporarily on hold until the LGA constitutional review was completed. Councils voted at the LGA AGM November Minutes. AGM-2024-Minutes-22-November-2024.pdf MRLGA has recommenced the review and will table a draft set of changes at the July meeting.

- 1 item remains pending from 24/25 board actions including:

	7 August 2024 – Annual General Meeting	
	Action(s)	
3	Regional Drought Resilience Plan	– The Consortium (Landscape

	The MRLGA re-engage PIRSA and Ministers (Scriven's) Office regarding MRLGA's role in relation to MR Plan, Drought Resilience and Drought Response.	Board and RDAMR) has been working to address this with PIRSA as a MR consortium. A request was submitted in January, and while the initial March meeting was cancelled by PIRSA, it has now been rescheduled for 7 May 2026.
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- There are 22 board actions emerging from 25/26 meetings. 7 items are active and pending.

	31 July 2025	
	Action(s)	
6	Item of Business to LGA AGM re: Collection of Landscape Levy The MRLGA Board support the MRLGA Ceo to liaise with Mayor Thorley on a potential motion to the LGA AGM (from Rural City of Murray Bridge) about advocacy towards the withdrawal of Council collecting State levy charges, and the concept of an alternative rate notice format for the sector that separates charges.	- Completed
7	SAROC Groupings MRLGA Ceo to confirm the groupings representation clauses (including change in regional lga president, vice president and proxy (either specific or flexible nomination)).	- Completed. Regional LGA's cannot conduct voting (it must be done by LGA and SAROC Reps cannot have proxy's).
8	Procedure for items of business to National Ministerial Meetings LGA to advise of the process to achieve item(s) of business for Ministers Meetings (such as the ones highlighted below). • Local Government Ministers' Forum • Infrastructure and Transport Ministers' Meeting - National Emergency Management Ministers' Meeting	- Completed. LGA responded on 21/10 and the information was disseminated.
9	Letter to LGA in support of Mayor Simmons being a nominated representative on the SA Drought Advisory Group The MRLGA Board agree to co-sign a letter from MRLGA to LGA in support of Mayor Simmons as nominee for the role LGA representative on the SA Drought Advisory Working Group.	- Completed
10	Invite new Landscape Board Ceo MRLGA Ceo to invite the new Landscape Board Ceo (when known) to an MRLGA meeting, and inform them of a desire to discuss the region having the States highest landscape levy.	- Completed. New Ceo will visit Councils separately.
11	RDRP That the MRLGA Board: Support the MRLGA Ceo to pursue an agreement with consortium partners that establish a 12 month shared role for drought resilience coordination using the \$140k Implementation Funding.	- Completed
12	RDRP That the MRLGA Board support the MRLGA Ceo to negotiate for equal division of delivery funding to each three consortium partners, and for it to progress drought resilience initiatives and report back to the Board on its progress".	- A meeting with PIRSA is scheduled for 7 May 2026
13	RDRP The Board support the MRLGA Ceo as the signing officer on funding proposals associated with RDRP funding."	- Completed
14	Personnel Changes The Board approve for its banking systems and forms to remove Mayor Phillips and add Mayor Bailey to the Banks SA and BBO system in line with President and Vice President appointments following the AGM.	- Underway, but is currently stalled with BankSA.
15	Flood Funding MRLGA Ceo to liaise with Mid Murray Council about the financials of flood funding and if it can write to the carp to access the remaining funds.	- MRLGA Ceo met with MMC Ceo 13 Jan. MMC will review more of the financials and be in touch if further advocacy is needed. - Completed

16	MMC requested MRLGA Ceo to invite Hon Kirsty McBain to tour the Murraylands and Riverland.	- Not yet commenced.
17	RPC requested: The need to list an agenda item for the Adelaide Freight Bypass (and risks/ potential impacts from the delivery stages of this project)	- Item raised with Ceo Network on 6 Nov '25 during its meeting with Senior Executives of DIT. While early concept design work is progressing, the State seeks 80/20 funding arrangements with Feds before further design work. - Completed

	30 October 2025	
	Action(s)	
18	SAROC Reps Attendance The MRLGA Board temporarily suspend having delegates attend SAROC meetings until LGA can demonstrate confidence in governance, democratic process, value and outcomes back to the regional grouping, and ask SAROC Chair to speak with regional grouping about solutions for improvement.	- Completed.
19	One Basin CRC Ceo to inquire about CRC's acting arrangements.	- Avril Hogan Chief Operating Officer One Basin CRC Email avril.hogan@onebasin.com.au Ph 0400 628 257 Web www.onebasin.com.au - Completed
20	Ceo to see if more updates/information on CRC can be shared with the Board.	- MRLGA Ceo met with One Basin CRC Co on 3 Feb. Details tbc.
21	Sustainable Communities Program The MRLGA Board support the MRLGA Ceo to prepare a submission to the SCP in accordance with the scope parameters outlined in agenda Item 8.4.	- MRLGA has identified an alternative partnership pathway outside of the grant program and it therefore did not make a submission.
22	Administration fees for regional delivery on behalf of PIRSA That the MRLGA Ceo liaise with PIRSA Ceo about agenda Items 8.5 with a view to structuring an arrangement that supports regional local government associations to participate in drought prepared opportunities, but not at the expense of the councils operational and regional priorities that support the sustainability of local government.	- In line with item 3 and 12 – this action is underway.

	5 February 2026	-
	Action(s)	-
23	Feedback to LGA The MRLGA Ceo to provide feedback to the LGA about the process for advocacy in the lead up to future (State and Federal) Elections	- Completed
24	Reinstatement of SAROC Reps The MRLGA Board support SAROC representatives to attend meetings at times when items are pertinent to regional priorities. It supports the MRLGA Ceo, President and SAROC Representatives to continue dialogue with the LGA Ceo and President to advocate for improved engagement and advocacy frameworks with all Councils.	- Completed MRLGA (President, Ceo and Saroc Rep) met with LGA (President, Ceo and SAROC Chair) on 25 March accordingly.
25	Call for there to be a SA Commissioner for Agriculture The MRLGA Board, support (in-principle) the LCLGA proposal to investigate a Commissioner for Agriculture in South Australia, amidst growing challenges facing the regional and rural areas and the need for an expert, independent role to act in the best interest of South Australian Agriculture. Further support would be subject to the scope, powers and functions of the role.	- Completed
26	States withdrawal to prepare a Digital Connectivity Plan The MRLGA support the MRLGA Ceo to refer the regional digital connectivity matter to relevant state and federal members	- Temporarily on hold while the SA State Election was underway. - Item will be delivered in May.
27	Audit Committee Exemption The MRLGA Board support the continuation of the exemption for MRLGA from having a risk and audit committee, given the subsidiary is externally and independently audited each year to	- Requests were sent to Councils in February. To date we have received 7 endorsements and are waiting on the 8 th

	the same standard as Councils.	
28	Storage of Records The MRLGA Board support the Ceo to release an EOI to (constituent) Councils who can perform records management services to scan all documents and register them in Sharepoint, as well as organise all documents pre-1980 in categories for MRLGA Ceo and President to determine their value for long term archival and report back to the Board (before any permanent documents are destroyed). If a Council is unable to deliver the service, the MRLGA will seek an external provider.	– Not yet started. To commence in May.

Questions

- Item 10 - Members were asked if they have met with the Ceo Landscape Board. Most indicated they have not had a meeting yet.
Action : MRLGA President asked if Ceo can extend an invite to the Landscape Board Ceo.
- Item 21 – Ceo was asked to comment on the outcome of this action, which was provided. MRLGA President referenced the letter sent to PIRSA about SCP (R2) to both advocate and inform them that several projects remain possible and aligned to SCP objectives but for a variety of reasons did not meet the criteria or deadline. It was also mentioned that MRLGA may be a carrier for future applications in light of it not submitting in this round. No further action needed.

Motion

“That the MRLGA Board note the actions completed and those underway from the previous meetings.

*Moved, **Mayor Hunter(RPC)** Seconded, **Mayor Bailey (MMC)** **Carried***

5 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATIONS

5.1 ALGA

- Current Policy Work
- How 'we' represent local government
- Advocacy, Events & News
 - o ALGA President Updates
 - o National General Assembly (Canberra) 23 to 25 June 2026

Motion

"The MRLGA Ceo prepare a letter for signing by the President to LGA asking if it would invite the Chair of the Committee, Mrs Fiona Phillips to an online webinar after the committee has finalised the inquiry to discuss the findings and be open to queries."

Moved, Acting Mayor Peitzsch (CDC) Seconded Mayor Thorley (RCMB)

Carried

- o National Roads Congress (Cairns) Late August tbc 2026
- o Online Webinars
- o Submissions
- o Fuel supply pressures highlight critical role of local government – ALGA
- o ALGA calls for urgent action on National Packaging Reform – ALGA
- o ALGA welcomes the national solar panel recycling pilot – ALGA
- o Reinstatement of the national inquiry into local government sustainability – ALGA

Motion

The MRLGA Ceo write to the respective Federal Ministers to seek meetings on Housing and Planning and a separate meeting for Roads and LG Sustainability and that the MRLGA Ceo consider attending ALGA in Canberra to support advocacy."

Moved Mayor Thorley (RCMB) Seconded Mayor Valentine (SMDC)
Carried

- o Council voices heard in Government's \$5 million response to Rex shutdown – ALGA
- o ALGA welcomes the passage of EPBC Act reforms – ALGA
- o ALGA welcomes the National Climate Change Partnership – ALGA
- o Webinar : National Rural Health Alliance
- o 2024 National State of the Assets Report – ALGA

Motion

"The MRLGA Ceo will write to ALGA to seek advice if/when a 2025 National State of the Assets Report will be released to support ongoing advocacy."

Moved, Mayor Thorley (RCMB) Seconded, Mayor Norton (DCLW) Carried

5.2 LGA of SA

○ Topical Update

- Samantha Killington attended the general meeting online and provided updates on :
 - ESCOSA – It acknowledged the letter received by MRLGA on 20 March 2026 and indicated the groupings will likely stay the same and the fees will stay the same, however a report is coming Monday (27 April) that will provide more details and a consultation opportunity for Councils. There is also a plan to house a person at the LGA who will be available to support Councils in asset management and financial planning.

A statement was made that they understood Escosa were open to charging LGA and it could then determine the fee structure, but LGA stated that method had not been tabled with them at this time but that method may be difficult, citing metropolitan councils would subsidised regional. However MRLGA stated that the flat rate is already a subsidised approach if measured by population (ie regions subsidises metropolitan rate payers)

Mayor Bailey requested a copy of the letter sent to LGA re: Escosa (as she was on leave at the time the letter was issued).
 - Fuel Supply – Councils are encouraged to fill out the survey sent to Ceo's so they can accumulate all the required data and insights to support their advocacy. LGA has been participating on the fuel supply roundtables and will continue to monitor, advocate and report of the issues to Councils.
 - A query was tabled if the LGA was aware SAPOL has been reaching out to regional Councils asking about their fuel storage capacity? LGA advised it was not, but to include it in the survey response.
 - R&D Strategic Review – confirmed that this is underway and will come back to MRLGA with timeframes on the process.
 - Level 3 Fuel Supply – LGA to ascertain if Council services are / will be included as essential services and come back to MRLGA.

○ LGA Strategic Plan

○ LGA Road Advocacy

MMC asked for more information on road advocacy.

Sarah Wozniak joined the meeting online and reaffirmed the meetings with State and Federal Ministers and Advisors had been successful due to the verbal support received in support of the proposal and rational presented, but advised the outcomes remain unknown until the federal budget is released (circa 12 May).

Motion

"The MRLGA Ceo prepare a letter for signing by the President to Ministers King and McBain (cc LGA and SA Grants Commission) outlining strong support of the LGA's supplementary road funding advocacy and that the need is critical."

*Moved, **Mayor Valentine (SMDC)** Seconded **Mayor Hunter (RPC)** **Carried***

- LGA Board Meetings
- Local Government Ministers Forum
- LGA Events

5.3 SAROC

Meetings, Agenda and Minutes

Governance update

Mayor Simone Bailey has returned from leave. As one of the region's SAROC representatives, the position was vacant during that time. She has now resumed responsibilities as SAROC Representative.

SAROC Representatives Update

- SAROC representative Mayor Caroline Phillips :
 - provided a report from the March 2026 SAROC Meeting referencing a need to

continue drought updates, action items, sand drift and reported another webinar will be coming.

- provided an update on MRLGA's meeting with LGA President, Ceo and SAROC Chair (from 25 March) following the October motion.

○ DROUGHT INFORMATION

State Government Support Package

SA Drought Loan Scheme is open

Advocacy

Council rate deferral scheme

Led by LGA

SA Drought Advisory Group Meeting

Led by PIRSA

Extreme sand drift

Led by Councils and MRLGA

Grant Information

RBS March Update

Board Direction: Yes

In light of the Drought Loan Scheme being introduced, does the Board seek drought as an ongoing agenda item or have it removed going forward?

○ FUEL SUPPLY

What the Australian Government is doing

What the Government of South Australia is doing

Fuel Surcharge Requests

Increase costs to deliver essential services (ie Waste Services) + NSW Advocacy

Australian Government Treasurer Forecast

Australia 'won't be spared' from economic shock of Middle East war, says Treasurer | Accounting Times

Timing

Board Direction: Yes

Would the Board be interested in an online presentation on Energy from Waste technologies, including an overview of the various energy products that can be derived from selected waste streams and its potential role towards Green Urea, Synthetic Fuels, AdBlue and others?

MRLGA Ceo believes a presentation would provide valuable shared insight into emerging opportunities and how its regional waste management network could assess and strengthen supply chain resilience, particularly as these initiatives are, and will be, a focus for State and Federal Governments.

Preparedness

Board Direction: No

Would the Board like MRLGA to facilitate any cross-council preparedness discussions with the CEO Network to consider what service adjustments each council may implement should Level 3 restrictions emerge or be introduced?

○ LGA BOARD NOMINATIONS INTERFACING WITH ELECTIONS

The term for current LGA Board and SAROC Members will end November 2026.

Local Government Elections will be held in November 2026 and the appointment of new LGA Board and SAROC representatives will be advised by the LGA.

The group discussed the challenges that the process has not been resolved over the 3 years.

Board Direction: NA given the constitutional process

Would the Board like to consider any planning towards having the region represented on the LGA Board and/or Saroc for 2026-2030?

- Sam Killington left the meeting at 12:04 pm

6 REGION WIDE AGENCY UPDATES

Reports from region-wide organisations, partners and stakeholders are below:

6.1 Zone Emergency Management Committee (ZEMC)

The last ZEMC meeting was held online on 11 February 2026. Some of the meeting highlights are listed below.

- **New SAFECOM Ceo** Ms Hannah Wandel OAM, commenced
- **Disaster Ready Fund** (R3 / \$200M) 7 SA Projects supported (DRF Projects)
- **Regional Capability Community Fund**
- **30Days30WaysAUS campaign**
- **A (non funded) Recovery Role**

Discussed the importance of recovery and that ZEMC / Chair, Heather Barclay (RCMB) is best positioned to continue advocating about recovery arrangements and responsibilities are retained but not cost shifted to Councils.

Board Direction: No

Would the Board like to understand more about how additional recovery responsibilities are being proposed by DPC at ZEMC for the region?

6.2 Murray Darling Association

Next Conference

82nd National Conference - "Working Together for our Basin Future"

82nd National Conference — Murray Darling Association

Greater Shepparton City Council, VIC

24 – 27 August 2026

Strategic Plan

Region 5

Region 6

MDB Plan Submissions

6.3 SA Drought Hub

The February 2026 newsletter can be found below:

SA Drought Hub Update – February 2026

The hub began engagement webinars late last year (50mins):

Friday 27 March 2026

- Regional Engagement Update: A webinar for SA Drought Hub Members and Network Partners - SA Drought Hub
November 2025
- Regional Engagement webinar for SA Drought Hub partners (Nov 2025) - SA Drought Hub

6.4 One Basin CRC (Loxton)

The Regional Hub Loxton Ceo role remains vacant and is being performed by Chief Operating Officer, Avril Hogan.

Its current projects are listed below and can be found at Projects - One Basin CRC :

6.5 PIRSA

Note: PIRSA has advised that the Murraylands & Riverland Regional Principal Regional Advisor, Barb Cowey is currently engaged in a range of other priority projects across the agency. Accordingly, for matters relating to the Riverland and Murraylands, the following PIRSA contacts are advised to be used in the interim:

- Jennifer Schilling, Acting General Manager, Regions – for ongoing matters previously supported or overseen by the Principal Regional Advisor.
- Rachael Kelly, Manager, Drought and Resilience – for matters relating to the Sustainable Communities Program.
- Geoff Cowey, Senior Industry Advisor – for grape and wine-related matters.

6.6 SAPOL

Encouraged to follow its Facebook page for live updates and initiatives:

<https://www.facebook.com/SouthAustraliaPolice/>

6.7 Country SAPHN

A link to the April 2026 Newsletter is below:

[April 2026 Volume 12 Issue 3 - Country SA PHN](#)

6.8 SA Cross Border Commissioner

Victorian & South Australian Cross Border Commissioners decided to postpone the upcoming Local Government Vic | SA Forum scheduled for the Thursday 7 & Friday 8 May 2026 in Naracoorte and instead has been altered to:

- A short online session on Friday 8 May 2026 and
- A revised date of Thursday 13 and Friday 14 August 2026 as the new dates for the forum in Naracoorte

6.9 Country Arts

News :

- [Riverland artists invited to exhibit at Chaffey Theatre - Country Arts](#)
- [Country Arts SA brings home fundraising gold - Country Arts](#)
- [Apply now for Intersection 2026 - Country Arts](#)
- [Submissions open for 2027 Breaking Ground Award - Country Arts](#)

Motion

“That the MRLGA Board note and accept the regional stakeholders written reports and/or minutes shared.”

Moved, **Mayor Bailey (MMC)** Seconded **Mayor Norton (DCLW)**

Carried

7 STATE NEWS & STRATEGY'S

An overview of State Government strategy's, plans or news are provided below for information:

7.1 State Government Elections

The SA State Government elections went to the polls on 21 March 2026. The current Ministers are as stated: [The team | Premier of South Australia](#)

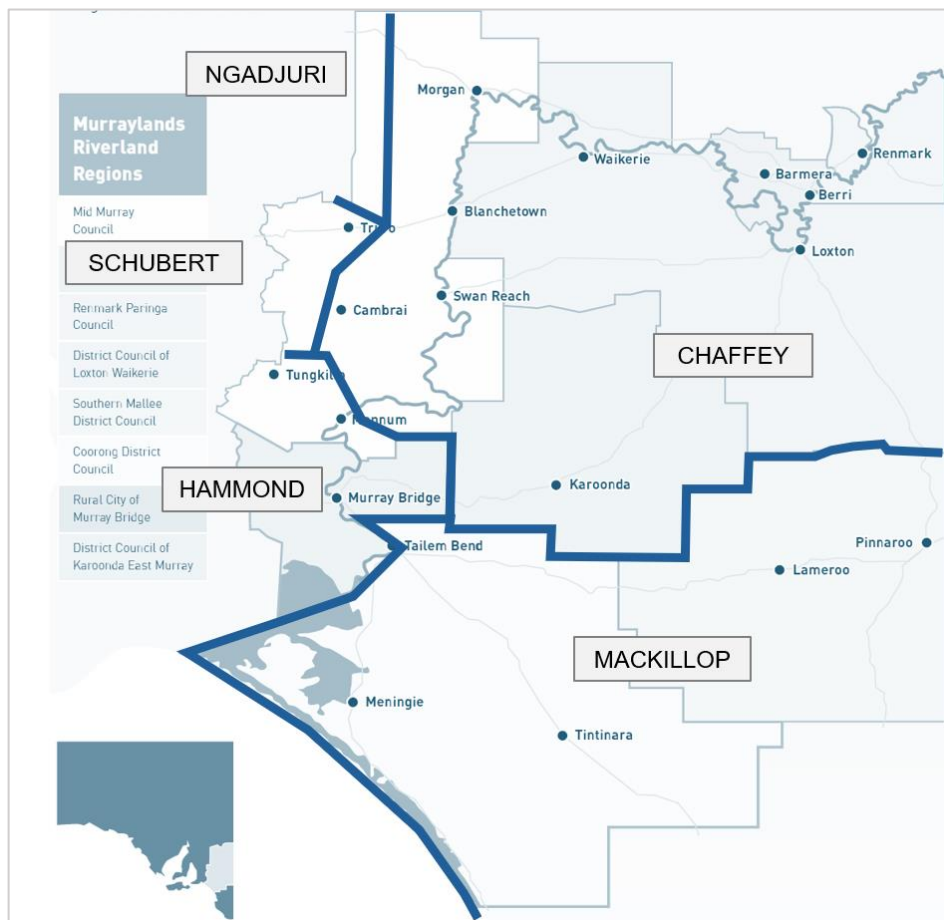
New Local Government Minister

Following the 2026 SA State Elections a new Minister for Local Government has been appointed, Rhiannon Pearce MP [Rhiannon Pearce MP | Premier of South Australia](#)
She is the :

- Minister for Emergency Services
- Minister for Local Government
- Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing
- Member for King

State Members

- | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| - Member for Chaffey | Tim Whetsone (LIB) | Tim Whetstone |
| - Member for Hammond | Robert Roylance (ONP) | Link |
| - Member for Mackillop | Jason Virgo (ONP) | Link |
| - Member for Ngadjuri | David Paton (ONP) | Link |
| - Member for Schubert | Ashton Hurn (LIB) | Ashton Hurn MP |



* Shared boundaries are approximate only.

7.2 The Government confirmed the parliamentary sitting calendar 2026 [Getting on with business | Premier of South Australia](#)

- 7.3 **Community Cabinet – Murray Bridge - Thursday 5 February**
 7.4 **State & Local Government - Economic Partnership Accord**
 7.5 **Gather Round – Spin Offs**
Health Check Promotion
Footy fans urged to get free health checks at AFL Gather Round | Premier of South Australia
Government hosting more than 120 interstate investors looking for business opportunities in SA
Investors gather for business opportunities | Premier of South Australia
 7.6 **State Waste Strategy**
 7.7 **State Public Health Plan**
 7.8 **State 30 Year Public Transport Strategy**
 7.9 **Regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan**
 7.10 **Council Rates, Electricity Generator Bill**
 It was commented that Frank Pangallo may not be pursuing the bill at the moment, but One Nation State Members may.

8 FEDERAL NEWS & STRATEGY'S

Department of Infrastructure, Transport Regional Development, Communication , Sport and the Arts

- **More than 280 road safety upgrades coming:**
- **Strengthening online safety for Australians**
- **New National Fuel Security advertising campaign**
- **Fuel excise and Heavy vehicle Road User Charge relief for Australian drivers**
- **New factsheet on EME exposure limits now available**
- **2026 National Local Government Awards open for entries**
- **Australia's 2035 emission reduction target (62-70%)**
- **For a link to other consultation items, please visit:**
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts

9 MRLGA : Quarterly reflections and/or current and emerging items

The following items have been extracted from the Annual Business Plan for highlights, awareness, endorsement or discussion as part of progressing its identified initiatives.

9.1 Regional Public Health & Wellbeing

Regional Public Health & Wellbeing Plan – (Stage 1) Review commencing soon

Advocacy for funding

Motion

"The MRLGA Ceo prepare a letter for signing by the President to the LGA outlining the valid reasons why regional councils should be provided with an appropriate level of funding and support to deliver regional public health plan reviews and updates."

Moved, **Mayor Bailey (MMC)** Seconded **Mayor Thorley (RCMB)** **Carried**

9.2 Regional Waste Management & Resource Recovery

Strategy - A Move Towards Strategic Partnerships & Shared Planning

Note:

Mayor Thorley left the room at 12:50pm to avoid any potential conflict of interest between this agenda item and their association with Adelaide Hills Regional Waste Management Authority (AHRWMA).

Proposal

MRLGA Ceo has met with Green Industries Ceo to discuss circular economy opportunities in the region. Currently the Murraylands and Riverland region contributes approximately \$750,000 - \$800,000 through the State Waste Levy. As a method to reduce the number of duplicatory plans, its proposed that MRLGA liaises with GISA to work towards one update of the Circular Economy Strategy - that encompasses the targets regional local government need to meet in the State Strategy.

Motion

"The MRLGA Ceo undertake liaison with GISA and appropriate stakeholders to ascertain interest from partners for a joint approach to a single strategy, pursuant to the conditions outlined in Item 9.2 of the Agenda and report back to the board before next steps."

*Moved, **Mayor Valentine (SMDC)** Seconded **Mayor Hunter (RPC)** **Carried***

Note:

Mayor Thorley returned to the room at 1:02pm.

Shared Services Pilot (via 2 Waste Levy's)

Background

The Regional Waste & Resource Recovery Strategy and Implementation Plan was/is visionary in its approach but lacked funding and resourcing to deliver initiatives. As a bridge to this gap, the MRLGA consulted with Councils on a proposal to undertake a shared service model, hosted through the subsidiary's platform. Feedback was positive and it translated into two waste levy's (for 5 Councils linked to a joint Waste Services Contract – BBC, DCLW, RPC, RCMB and CDC) :

- 1) Contract Administration Support and
- 2) Waste Education Support.

The pilot for these shared services resulted in valuable insights and lessons for Councils and MRLGA but is unsustainable for MRLGA, particularly given alternative models exist that may have greater chance of output, outcomes whilst allowing MRLGA to retain efficiency and equity for members whilst also leaning to its strengths.

This was a low-cost low-risk exercise for Councils as :

- 1) Contract Administration Support was \$12k p.a and
- 2) Waste Education Support was a credit back from the service contract at \$20k p.a.

Update and notice to transition support to new model(s)

For the Boards awareness, some of the alternative models that will be preliminarily discussed with Councils include a) External Service Provider b) a 'Host' Council and c) Professional Development Program. Whilst there is the option to retain a shared service for 5 Councils under one governance membership model, there is also a modified model that is smaller in management (ie 3 Riverland Councils and 2 or 3 Murraylands Councils) that will be open for consideration and input.

Kerbside Review – Draft Report Complete

9.3 Regional Transport & Assets

Special Local Roads Program –Closed

Regional Transport Strategy - Update

9.4 Future Drought Fund - Regional Drought Resilience Program (MR Plan)

Background

The Future Drought Fund has entered a new 4 year chapter of funding. The table below provides an overview of the FDF programs in regards to the RDR Program.

2024 - 2028		2028-2032												FDF Investment Programs	Delivery Agent
24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32								
\$28,000,000	1	2	Pending \$104,000,000									Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hubs.	SA Drought Hub		
\$83,200,000	1	2	3	4	5							Farm Business Resilience program (incl Drought Resilience Scholarships).			
\$67,000,000		1	2	3	4							Regional Drought Resilience Planning program (4 Years)	Regional Consortia		
\$60,300,000	1	2	3	4	5	6						Long-Term Trials program			
\$40,000,000	1	2	3	4	5	6						Resilient Landscapes program			
\$37,000,000		1	2	3								(New) Scaling Success program			
\$36,000,000	1	2	3	4								FDF Communities program			
\$20,000,000		1	2	3								Innovation Challenges Pilot			
\$17,200,000	1	2	3	4								Climate Services for Agriculture Program (and 'My Climate View').			
\$15,000,000	1	2	3	4								Place-based and First Nations-led activities (incl \$ for FN Advisory Group)			
\$11,400,000	1	2	3	4								Support monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL)			

A draft funding agreement has been provided by PIRSA but a final version is pending (therefore no projects have commenced).

Motion

"The MRLGA Board issue delegation to the Ceo to sign and execute the grant funding agreement with PIRSA (to receive approximately \$100,000 income) to deliver projects in the region under the Regional Drought Resilience Program."

Moved, Mayor Hunter (RPC) Seconded, Acting Mayor Pietzsch (CDC) Carried

9.5 Future Drought Fund - fRRR – Community Impact Program (\$900k in 26/27 + 27/28)

fRRR will fund a Regional Coordinator (to the value of \$150k over two years) to support the projects that are ultimately funded by the \$900k.

The organisation to 'host' the regional coordinator role is yet to be determined and will receive income for the position. Organisations can express interest now if they seek to be host.

Board Direction: Yes

Would the Board like to receive a list of the opportunities and risks if MRLGA was to put forward itself as Regional Coordinator for the fRRR Community Impact Program?

9.6 Murray Darling Basin - Water Recovery – Round 1 SCP

Sustainable Communities Grant Program – Round 1 Closed

MRLGA Submission – Did not proceed

Whilst MRLGA investigated opportunities to submit an application for this funding, it identified alternative pathways to progress outcomes (ie Item 9.2) and therefore did not make a submission to this grant program (that required 30% co-contribution).

Round 2 – Idea gathering now

PIRSA advised that whilst the Federal guidelines limit this in Round 2 they would like all proposals tabled for their awareness.

MRLGA on-shared this with Council Ceo Network and any project ideas it receives will be passed back to PIRSA.

9.7 Items Underway

For the Boards awareness, the following items are underway:

- 2026/27 Draft Annual Business Plan is under development and MRLGA Ceo will undertake consultation shortly.
- Ceo Performance Panel met in April and will be continuing the process in April / May followed by a report to the July meeting.
- The MRLGA Charter review is 90% complete and a draft will be circulated outside of a board meeting for review before being tabled at the July meeting.
- MRLGA Policies are 90% updated and will be circulated outside of a board meeting for review before being tabled at the July meeting.
- The subsidiary's application to the Minister for an exemption from establishing an Audit Committee has progressed, with support received from six of the eight Councils. The remaining two endorsements are expected by the end of April, after which the application will be finalised and submitted to the Minister in May.
- MRLGA Ceo has not planned to attend ALGA in June 2026.

10 FINANCIAL

10.1 Quarterly Financial Statements

Quarterly Financial Statements were tabled late electronically on the day as [Attachment 2](#) and are issued as part of the meeting minutes.

Motion

"That the MRLGA Board accept the financial statements submitted for the quarter ending 31 March 2026.

Moved,

Seconded

Queries:

1. Acting Mayor Pietzsch (CDC) queried the reference that BBC has paid its full year's subscription but that it also has an outstanding balance. MRLGA Ceo advised this amount was appearing because the invoice had been raised and recorded as an accrual but would review the item and report back to the group with clarity as it was not coming through in that format for all Councils.
2. Acting Mayor Pietzsch (CDC) queried the cash balance of \$34,000 as of 31 March. MRLGA Ceo advised this reflected the balance at that date only and not the current position, noting its cashflow forecast included Q3 and Q4 subscription income. Ceo stated the balance was appropriate given its low operating expenses and income for that month.

11 ROUND TABLE

11.1 Berri Barmera Council

Mayor Ella Winnall shared:

- The Riverland ThinkTank was a good meeting and they are hopeful that the issues were understood in order to see improved responses.
- BBC is developing wording for its rates notice to expressly reference the Landscape Levy as a State Government tax that they are required to collect on their behalf and may possibly refer inquiries to their State Member or Landscape Board for questions about the tax. SMDC asked if they would circulate their final wording with the group.

Past items included:

- RLGF: Letter from Minister for Infrastructure and Transport regarding the maintenance of a navigable channel on the River Murray.
- Update post visit with RDA Murraylands & Riverland Board on 23 October 2025.
- RLGF has issued a letter to Minister(s) if the River Murray is 'navigable' and are waiting a reply. The reply will be shared with the group.
- The background to this issue relates to obstructions in the river and responsibility.
- Office of Small and Family Business
- Asked the MRLGA Ceo inquire with Office of Small and Family Business if it would consider altering its (closed) delivery partner program to other
- Bank stabilisation learnings for Ski Club
- Asked if others have had success with bank stabilisation to pass back on to its ski

club (in terms of products, design, specification or contacts). MRLGA offered to email the Infrastructure committee on their behalf and advise.

11.2 Coorong District Council

Acting Mayor Jonathan Pietzsch raised three unscheduled items for the Board's consideration. Stating on behalf of Coorong District Council they seek MRLGA's support and resource to advocate on the following items of concern:

- The impact to Council roads from heavier (and larger) freight vehicles is becoming an issue (at scale) and seek support to cover the increase in costs
 - Tailem Bend Community Centre and its associated State contract to deliver community transport services in the region and its need for state funding (one example being to support council fleet that they have access too) and
 - Wild dog impacts and the high numbers coming across the border.
- Due to the Board having no information on the issue relating to wild dogs, Acting Mayor Pietzsch offered to withdraw this item and return to the group with information for the Board to consider and vote on.

CDC reported they have also:

- had their Health Committee meet as part of pursuing better regional health outcomes for its communities.
- Released its draft ABP and Budget

Motion

"That MRLGA write to relevant Ministers and the Premier about community transport and the impacts of heavy vehicles on Council impacted roads."

Moved, Acting Mayor Pietzsch (CDC) Seconded, Mayor Hunter (RPC) Carried

Past items included:

- Update on SA Water partnership at Wellington East
- Reviewing how to fund jetty upgrades
- Impacts from Drought
- Delivering "Unbreakable Farmer" sessions
- Liaising with the PHN on local issues
- CDC has reviewed its hardship policy
- Impacts of Little Corellas are ongoing and growing, including that on mental health.
- Further work and advocacy is being led by Council in light of the withdrawal of health services, and the following challenges and impacts that ensue. 40 submissions from community have been received to support Councils advocacy

11.3 District Council of Loxton Waikerie

Mayor Trevor Norton shared :

- The Riverland ThinkTank was a good session and a lot of representation and a good facilitator.
- That Council had a briefing from Alex Zimmerman as Drought Commissioner. Noted this role is ending this month.
- Rural Aid has reached out and Council may put them on contact with local providers to assess need in the area (as it relates to their support products).

Past items included:

- Councils levels of support and/or facilitation of Justice of the Peace services
- Spoke to the outcome of the South Australian Boating Facility Advisory Committee (SABFAC) panel recruitment
- LGA Visit
LGA Ceo, Clinton Jury and a bus of visitors came to DCLW to see a stormwater / cwms project of theirs.
- Changing Places Public Toilet
Promoted a recent project of Council to build a changing places toilet facility. Stated there are only 20 in SA but that they were able to receive 50% funding to build it.

11.4 District Council of Karoonda East Murray

Mayor Caroline Philips shared :

- Council has been continuing advocacy regarding Sand-Drift with its State MP and is hopeful there is some funding support on the horizon to keep roads open.
- Council is reviewing its road and assets with particular focus on sporting facilities.
- Council has completed the Murraylands Drought Survey and will be available in May
- She has advised chambers that she will not be standing for Mayor in the upcoming LG election and feels that proving this notice will support the election process come October/November.

Past items included:

- Recent events (like Mindarie races drew 3000 people and it is having a Kick off Your Boots visit, that are all helpful for community spirit during drought).
- DCKEM is initiating a local Murraylands Drought Survey (12 months on) and invited others to express interest if they wish to undertake it in unison
- Murraylands Drought Survey - It consulted with Preventive Health about the drought survey and it was a productive conversation around community comments in public surveys. They were supportive of the survey work Council(s) had done.
- 40 Year Anniversary for Farm Fair
Proud to have a farm fair that's been going on for so long, although they may consider scaling it back to 1 day.
- General Practitioner
A Doctor may be coming in April.

11.5 Mid Murray Council

Mayor Simone Bailey shared

- Council is pursuing a lot of advocacy at the moment including:
 - o Safety of towns located on the High Productivity Vehicle Network and adequate funding for maintenance, upgrades and safety improvements
 - o Advocating to the Federal Government for a fairer distribution of Federal Assistance Grants
 - o Advocating to the State Government for a review of rating arrangements for energy-producing infrastructure
 - o Advocating to the State Government for reform of Landscape Levies.
- Referenced the EPLGA Annual Conference that hosts all EM's, Gov Rep, Staff and could be a consideration for MRLGA after the elections as a method to connect everyone and begin the next 4 year term.

Past items included:

- Financial Sustainability Round Table
- River Murray International Dark Sky Reserve
- Rating pressure – a story was shared about rate rise pressures to community's and vulnerable (agricultural) areas.
- Foundation SA
- Standpipes Funding
It is anticipating success via a strengthening industry grant program for funding associated with 14 standpipes and getting them automated.
- Regional Partnership Funding
They hope some good news is coming soon.
- LGA OGM
Reiterated that MMC is advocating for adjustments to the FA Grants formula and will be looking forward to the discussion at the upcoming LGA OGM.

11.6 Renmark Paringa Council

Mayor Peter Hunter shared:

- The Riverland ThinkTank was a good session and hopes there will be outcomes from it.
- Council has had great progress with land release for rural living area.
- Renmark Club has new riverfront features and welcomes everyone down to enjoy the area.

- Council continues to keep private levies on the State Government's radar, including maintenance rules and responsibilities, as the condition of the levies located on private land is integral to the town's flood protection measures.
- Council has reviewed its rating model between rural and township
- Council has reviewed the resources it needs to deliver the services required and finds this is well beyond their ability having regard for financial sustainability limits and ESCOSA outcomes.

Past items included:

- RPC presented to the RDA Murraylands and Riverland Board on 23 October about its Jane Eliza development.
- It will sit on the Flood Warning Committee.
- It hosted the last SAROC meetings and LGA Board meetings in Renmark and included a local river cruise to show its recently completed wharf redevelopment and highlights other initiatives of RPC
- Cr Howie advised she is a representative on the SA Recreation and Boating Safety Committee. It has recently released its Strategy (2025-2030)
<https://www.marinesafety.sa.gov.au/south-australia-recreational-boating-safetystrategy>
- Mayor Hunter met with the SA Mental Health Commissioner in January 2025.
- Navigation of the River will table at the next Riverland Forum for discussion.
- Awareness about limitations of Mental Health Services in regional, rural and remote areas.
- Murray, Mallee and Riverland - Local Health Network
They are seeking an update from Wayne Champion / LHN on the status of the 30 recommendation made in the Mental Health Services review.
- Insurances
They remain disappointed in the insurance support and process post flood.

11.7 Rural City of Murray Bridge

Mayor Wayne Thorley shared:

- The Labor Package announced for Murray Bridge in February was well received and will bring good outcomes for the community
- Attended the LGA elected members workshop and was disappointed at the low numbers, advocating that we need to create good conditions to that invite people to want to put their hand up to be an elected member.
- Confirmed it has/will be making a submission to the remuneration tribunal
- It noted the recent article about State Government Board Member remuneration (adding up to circa > \$12m)
- Advised that the sector needs more training for elected members as the content provided at the beginning of his mayoral role did not suffice.

Past items included:

- Boating Safety. What groups currently exist and how can be more work be done to improve river safety (particularly in light of events from Australia Day long weekend).
- Seeking to do more that supports the River Murray to be a tourism icon, and subsequently see more tourism products come to market (such as the possibility of river cruising and connecting with Journey Beyond).
- Grants. Concerns expressed about the outlay Councils have to do as part of the process of applying for grants, and the time it is taking to receive outcomes and subsequent funding.
- Expressed interest in having more online sessions.
- Police Commissioner
A recent meeting with the Police Commissioner went very well. Some items discussed included a strategy for river safety and change for the better. This was timely given recent incidents on the river over the public holiday long weekend.
- Federal Grants
They are experiencing long time frames with federal grant programs at the moment.
- MDBA Conference
Promoted the next MDBA conference on 29 and 30 July will be held at Murray Bridge and invited everyone to get their tickets and come along.

11.8 Southern Mallee District Council

Mayor Ron Valentine shared

- Council has public consultation on a proposal to transition the Council from 2 > 1 Offices, however it was not well supported by community.
- SafeCom withdrew its offer to purchase the building pre-election
- Sent letters (post election) to Premier, LG Minister and Minister King about the outcome of the State Election. It has received a reply from all, except Minister King at this time.

Past items included:

- Reported the Councils main focus remains on financial sustainability and there will be more news emerging in 6 weeks to share with the subsidiary.
- Financial Sustainability – still the main focus for the Council
- Decommissioning Assets
- Dentist closed

12 CLOSE AND NEXT MEETING

2026 Meeting Schedule :

Meeting Type	Month	Venues (tba)
Board Meeting	July 2026 (AGM)	TBA
Board Meeting	October 2026	TBA The provisions for caretaker period will be reviewed before this meeting is scheduled.

Note: The July AGM will require voting for MRLGA President and Vice President.

Executive Summary

Murray and Mallee LGA

For the 9 months ended 31 March 2026

JULY 2025-MAR
2026

Cash

Cash received	179,627.22
Cash spent	322,435.43
Cash surplus (deficit)	(142,808.21)
Closing bank balance	34,627.85

Profitability

Income	133,219.50
Direct costs	-
Gross profit (loss)	133,219.50
Other income	-
Expenses	349,260.54
Profit (loss)	(216,041.04)

Balance Sheet

Debtors	13,916.10
Creditors	-
Net assets	932,508.74

Sales

Number of invoices issued	10.00
Average value of invoices	13,321.95

Performance

Gross profit margin (%)	100.00
Net profit margin (%)	(162.17)
Return on investment (p.a.) (%)	(30.89)

Position

Average debtor days	28.62
Average creditor days	-
Short term cash forecast	13,916.10
Current assets to liabilities	9.14
Term assets to liabilities	-

Cash Summary

Murray and Mallee LGA

For the 9 months ended 31 March 2026

JULY 2025-MAR
2026

Income

Berri Barmera Council	25,066.00
Coorong District Council	21,900.50
DC of Karoonda East Murray	5,981.00
DC of Loxton Waikerie	14,361.00
Mid Murray Council	13,929.50
Renmark Paringa Council	11,804.50
Rural City of Murray Bridge	22,622.00
SLRP Surcharge	20,835.00
Southern Mallee DC	6,977.00
Total Income	143,476.50

Less Expenses

Accounting Services (Payroll, BAS and General Accounting)	800.00
Allowance (President)	4,818.18
Audit and Accounting Fees	4,560.00
Bank Fees	70.00
Insurance	10,972.27
LGFA Investment Deposits	(18,000.00)
M365/SharePoint IT and Support	2,033.28
Meeting Expenses	5,583.68
MR (Drought Resilience) Plan	180.00
Office Expenses	2,855.14
PAYG Withholdings Payable	(65,432.00)
Regional Waste Management Initiatives	4,977.45
Sundry Expenses	100.00
Superannuation	51,323.30
Superannuation Payable	(21,794.01)
Wages and Salaries	260,987.24
Wages Payable - Payroll	(12,804.05)
Total Expenses	231,230.48

Surplus (Deficit) (87,753.98)

Plus Tax Movements

Tax Collected	14,377.68
Tax Paid	(69,431.91)
Net Tax Movements	(55,054.23)

Net Cash Movement (142,808.21)

Summary

Opening Balance	177,436.06
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	JULY 2025-MAR 2026
Plus Net Cash Movement	(142,808.21)
Cash Balance	34,627.85

Profit and Loss

Murray and Mallee LGA

For the 9 months ended 31 March 2026

	JULY 2025-MAR 2026	2026 25/26 ANNUAL BUDGET	VARIANCE %	
Trading Income				
Berri Barmera Council	25,302.00	25,302.00	-	—
Coorong District Council	11,407.50	21,385.00	-46.66%	↓
DC of Karoonda East Murray	5,981.00	11,962.00	-50.00%	↓
DC of Loxton Waikerie	14,361.00	28,722.00	-50.00%	↓
Interest Income	-	47,956.00	-100.00%	↓
Mid Murray Council	13,929.50	27,859.00	-50.00%	↓
Regional Capacity Building	-	40,000.00	-100.00%	↓
Renmark Paringa Council	11,804.50	23,609.00	-50.00%	↓
Rural City of Murray Bridge	22,622.00	45,244.00	-50.00%	↓
SLRP Surcharge	20,835.00	25,000.00	-16.66%	↓
Southern Mallee DC	6,977.00	13,954.00	-50.00%	↓
Waste Contract Management Levy	-	65,000.00	-100.00%	↓
Waste Education Levy	-	100,000.00	-100.00%	↓
Total Trading Income	133,219.50	475,993.00	-72.01%	
Gross Profit				
	133,219.50	475,993.00	-72.01%	
Operating Expenses				
Accounting Services (Payroll, BAS and General Accounting)	800.00	2,500.00	-68.00%	↓
Admin Support	-	25,000.00	-100.00%	↓
Allowance (President)	4,818.18	5,300.00	-9.09%	↓
Audit and Accounting Fees	4,560.00	7,500.00	-39.20%	↓
Bank Fees	70.00	120.00	-41.67%	↓
Fleet	-	35,000.00	-100.00%	↓
Insurance	10,972.27	12,000.00	-8.56%	↓
Legal expenses	-	5,000.00	-100.00%	↓
M365/SharePoint IT and Support	2,033.28	2,751.00	-26.09%	↓
Meeting Expenses	5,583.68	6,000.00	-6.94%	↓
MR (Drought Resilience) Plan	180.00	-	-	—
MRLGA Strategic Planning	-	5,000.00	-100.00%	↓
New Initiative for Shared Services	-	5,000.00	-100.00%	↓

	JULY 2025-MAR 2026	2026 25/26 ANNUAL BUDGET	VARIANCE %	
New Initiative for Sustainability	-	10,000.00	-100.00%	↓
Office Equipment	-	5,140.00	-100.00%	↓
Office Expenses	2,855.14	4,400.00	-35.11%	↓
Regional Capacity Building Construction Roads Training	-	8,000.00	-100.00%	↓
Regional Public Health Plan	-	30,000.00	-100.00%	↓
Regional Road Action Plans	-	5,000.00	-100.00%	↓
Regional Road Hierarchy Plan	-	5,000.00	-100.00%	↓
Regional Transport Plan	-	40,000.00	-100.00%	↓
Regional Waste Management Initiatives	4,977.45	10,000.00	-50.23%	↓
Roads Database	-	5,000.00	-100.00%	↓
Sundry Expenses	100.00	3,000.00	-96.67%	↓
Superannuation	51,323.30	-	-	—
Travel & Accommodation	-	6,500.00	-100.00%	↓
Vice President (Allowance)	-	1,280.00	-100.00%	↓
Wages and Salaries	260,987.24	455,834.00	-42.75%	↓
Website Maintenance	-	1,000.00	-100.00%	↓
Total Operating Expenses	349,260.54	701,325.00	-50.20%	
Net Profit	(216,041.04)	(225,332.00)	4.12%	

Note 1:

Question from Acting Mayor Pietzsch - Why is BBC showing as paid in full (pg 5) but is listed in Aged Receivables (pg 7) as owing Money ?
 Answer from MRLGA Ceo : BBC's invoice was issued on 27 March 2026, while the remaining Council invoices were issued on 1 April 2026. As the year-to-date Profit and Loss report reflects amounts invoiced as at 31 March, it includes BBC's invoice but excludes those issued on 1 April. Councils are invoiced on the same day each quarter, so this timing difference is a once-off anomaly.

Balance Sheet

Murray and Mallee LGA As at 31 March 2026

31 MAR 2026

Assets

Bank

Murray and Mallee LGA	34,627.85
Total Bank	34,627.85

Current Assets

Accounts Receivable	13,916.10
Accrued Interest Revenue	1,389.46
LGFA Investment Deposits	999,038.15
Petty Cash	100.00
Total Current Assets	1,014,443.71

Total Assets	1,049,071.56
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Liabilities

Current Liabilities

GST	(44,337.38)
PAYG Withholdings Payable	76,744.00
Provision for Employee Leave	37,753.00
Superannuation Payable	31,875.15
Wages Payable - Payroll	12,804.05
Total Current Liabilities	114,838.82

Non-current Liabilities

Provision for Long Service Leave	1,724.00
Total Non-current Liabilities	1,724.00

Total Liabilities	116,562.82
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Net Assets	932,508.74
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Equity

Current Year Earnings	(216,041.04)
Retained Earnings	1,148,549.78
Total Equity	932,508.74

Aged Receivables Summary

Murray and Mallee LGA

As at 31 March 2026

Ageing by due date

CONTACT	CURRENT	< 1 MONTH	1 MONTH	2 MONTHS	3 MONTHS	OLDER	TOTAL
Berri Barmera Council	13,916.10	-	-	-	-	-	13,916.10
Total	13,916.10	-	-	-	-	-	13,916.10
Percentage of total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Aged Payables Summary

Murray and Mallee LGA

As at 31 March 2026

Ageing by due date