



HUMAN RIGHTS | EQUALITY

INDEPENDENCE

COMMUNITY | EQUITY

WORK CONFIDENCE

RESPECT

OPEN MINUTES for the Meeting of Council
26 February 2026

1 Meeting Establishment

YOW NGILIMURR BUKU'LUNGTHUN DHIYAK MEETINGU GA MALA DJARRYUN ROM

Deputy President has opened the meeting with Prayer at 09:29 AM

Members in Attendance:

President Lapulung Dhamarrandji (Attended online from 10:06 AM to 12:10 PM.)

Deputy President Stephen Dhamarrandji (Chair)

Cr. Bandi Bandi Wunungumurra

Cr. Bobby Wunungumurra

Cr. Cyril Bukulatjpi

Cr. Evelynna Dhamarrandji

Cr. Ganygulpa Dhurrkay (Attended online)

Cr. Jason Mirritjawuy

Cr. Marrpalawuy Marika

Cr. Murphy Yunupingu (Attended from 11:00 AM to 11:20 AM)

East Arnhem Regional Council Staff:

Dale Keehne (Chief Executive Officer)

Signe Balodis (Director – Council Services)

Sonia Campbell (GM – Technical and Infrastructure Services)

Ralph Reddy (Finance Manager) – Attended Online

Innoc Ndhlovu (HR/IR Manager) – Attended Online

Vivek Gummalla (Strategic Coordinator – Council Services)

Paul Hyde Kaduru (Governance and Compliance Manager)

MEETING ESTABLISHMENT

1.1 Attendance

SUMMARY:

This report is to table, for the Councils record, any absences or apologies. Council need to make a decision on whether absences are granted permission. Any request for a leave of absence received can be considered.

That the Council:

- (a) Notes the absence of Cr. David Warraya, Cr. Priscilla Yunupingu and Cr. Murphy Yunupingu.**
- (b) Notes the apology received from Cr. David Warraya, Cr. Priscilla Yunupingu and Cr. Murphy Yunupingu.**
- (c) Notes Cr. Priscilla Yunupingu is absent with permission of the Council.**
- (d) Determines Cr. David Warraya and Cr. Murphy Yunupingu are absent without permission of the Council under section 47(1) (o) of the Act.**

MEETING ESTABLISHMENT

1.2 Declarations of Interest

SUMMARY:

Elected members are required to disclose an interest in a matter under consideration by Council.

MOC 2025/214 RESOLVED (Cr. Jason Mirritjawuy/Cr. Marrpalawuy Marika)

That Council notes the Conflict of Interest and Related Parties Register as amended.

MEETING ESTABLISHMENT

1.3 Previous Council Minutes

MOC 2025/215 RESOLVED (Cr. Evelynna Dhamarrandji/Cr. Ganygulpa Dhurrkay)

That Council endorses the minutes of the previous Meeting of Council held on 17 December 2025.

2 Looking Forward - Discussions and Decisions

GO NGILIMURR MALA DJARRYUN GA YURAM GA YAKAYUN GA BALWAK NGUPAN DHUWAL DHARUK

LOOKING FORWARD - DISCUSSIONS AND DECISIONS

2.1 Grant Repayment - Department of People, Sport & Culture

SUMMARY:

This report is presented to Council to outline the grant underspends for the Department of People, Sport & Culture for the period ending 30 June 2024 and to seek approval for the return of the unspent funds.

MOC 2025/216 **RESOLVED (Cr. Bandi Bandi Wunungmurra/Cr. Jason Mirritjawuy)**

That Council approves the Grant underspend for the Remote Sport Program to be returned to the Department of People, Sport & Culture amounting to \$8,552.00.

LOOKING FORWARD - DISCUSSIONS AND DECISIONS

2.2 Local Authority Membership

SUMMARY:

Council has received a nomination for Thomas Gaykamang for Milingimbi Local Authority. This report presents the nomination for Council's consideration and approval, in accordance with the Local Government Act 2019 (NT) and the Council's Local Authority membership procedures.

MOC 2025/217 **RESOLVED (Cr. Cyril Bukulatjpi/Cr. Stephen Malwarriwuy Dhamarrandji)**

That Council approves the appointment of Thomas Gaykamangu as a member of the Milingimbi Local Authority.

LOOKING FORWARD - DISCUSSIONS AND DECISIONS

2.3 2026 Meeting Calendar – Council, Committees and Local Authority Meetings

MOC 2025/218 **RESOLVED (Cr. Bobby Wunungmurra/Cr. Cyril Bukulatjpi)**

That Council approves the proposed schedule of Ordinary Council Meetings, Local Authority Meetings, Audit Committee Meetings and Finance Committee Meetings for the 2026.

LOOKING FORWARD - DISCUSSIONS AND DECISIONS

2.4 Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

SUMMARY:

Council is required to review its policies on a regular basis including the creation of new policies. A new Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy has been developed for Council approval.

MOC 2025/220 RESOLVED (Cr. Jason Mirritjawuy/Cr. Stephen Malwarriwuy Dhamarrandji)

That Council approve the new Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy.

LOOKING FORWARD - DISCUSSIONS AND DECISIONS

2.5 ALGA - National General Assembly 2026

SUMMARY:

This report provides information to support Council's consideration of whether to send a delegation to the 2026 Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) National General Assembly (NGA). It outlines relevant background, issues, and options for discussion.

MOC 2025/221 RESOLVED (Cr. Bobby Wunungmurra/Cr. Bandi Bandi Wunungmurra)

That Council does not endorse an East Arnhem Regional Council delegation to attend the ALGA National General Assembly this year due to lack of constructive progress from previous Assemblies and financial implications.

LOOKING FORWARD - DISCUSSIONS AND DECISIONS

2.6 Consultations to support five year strategic plan

SUMMARY

In July 2025, external consultant Ben Waugh was engaged by East Arnhem Regional Council (EARC) to carry out community consultation sessions across the six East Arnhem communities. This included Community Consultations, feedback from EARC Senior Leadership Team and Local Authority Consultations.

The purpose of these consultations was to hear directly from each community about their priorities, challenges and ideas that would help inform Councils Five Year Strategic Plan. The feedback gathered during these sessions has been compiled into the attached report.

This report has been presented to the Senior Leadership Team for review and input, and is now being provided to Council for consideration and endorsement. The information collected will help guide the direction of the Five-Year Strategic Plan and ensure it reflects the needs and aspirations of our communities.

Council is now asked to endorse the Community Consultation Report so the strategic planning process can move to the next stage

'Senior Leadership Team' refers to the Chief Executive Officer, Directors and General Managers of East Arnhem Regional Council.

That Council:

- (a) Endorses the community consultation report for the five year strategic plan.**
- (b) Endorses the appointment by each Local Authority for the respective communities and related homeland areas, to include at least one young woman and one young man (16 to 25 years of age) – to formalise the greater direct engagement of young people, and their voices on important issues, challenges and opportunities.**
- (c) Review the Council's policy on Local Authority Membership to reduce the age of people eligible to become a member of a Local Authority from 18 to 16 Years old.**
- (d) Endorses the promotion, coordination and placement of young people in work experience placements with Council across its wide range of range of services, or referral to other local organisations of interest to the young person – to provide a practical link and pathway for young people into work after leaving school, and a positive, healthy future.**
- (e) Endorses the progress of the 5 Year Strategic Plan presented to Council during a workshop session on 25 February 2026. Council approves the continuation of the development of the Strategic Plan.**

3 Noting Progress and Achievement

YOW GALKI MEETING DJA DHAWARYUNA YURRU NGILIMURR RONGIYI GA NHAMA NGUNIYI

NANYTJAK NGU DHARUK MALAN GA YURUM GA BUKU WEKAM DHIYAKU MEETING GU

NOTING PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT

3.1 Minutes of Committees

MOC 2025/223 **RESOLVED** (Cr. Jason Mirritjawuy/Cr. Evelyn Dhamarrandji)

That Council endorses the minutes of the following meetings:

(a) Finance Committee Meeting held on 21 January 2026.

(b) Audit Committee Meeting held on 18 February 2026.

NOTING PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT

3.2 Minutes of Local Authorities

MOC 2025/224 **RESOLVED** (Cr. Evelyn Dhamarrandji/Cr. Marrpalawuy Marika)

That Council endorses the minutes of the following meetings:

(a) Ramingining Local Authority Meeting held on 22 January 2026.

(b) Milingimbi Local Authority Meeting held on 23 January 2026.

(c) Yirrkala Local Authority Meeting 28 January 2026.

(d) Gunyangara Local Authority Meeting 29 January 2026.

(e) Galiwinku Local Authority Meeting 30 January 2026.

(f) Gapuwiyak Local Authority Meeting 19 February 2026.

NOTING PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT

3.3 Local Authority Action Registers

SUMMARY:

This report provides a summary list of actions arising from Local Authority meetings in each of the East Arnhem Regional Council communities.

MOC 2025/225 **RESOLVED** (Cr. Cyril Bukulatjpi/Cr. Bandi Bandi Wunungmurra)

That Council:

- (a) **Endorses the actions included in the Local Authority Actions List as recommended by each Local Authority, or as amended.**
- (b) **Approves the removal of completed actions and as recommended by each Local Authority.**

NOTING PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT

3.4 President Report

SUMMARY:

This report details updates from the President.

MOC 2025/226 **RESOLVED** (Cr. Cyril Bukulatjpi/Cr. Bandi Bandi Wunungmurra)

That Council notes the President report.

NOTING PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT

3.5 CEO Report

SUMMARY:

This is a report of the key broad issues since the last report to the Local Authority, in addition to those covered in other parts of the agenda.

MOC 2025/227 **RESOLVED** (Cr. Cyril Bukulatjpi/Cr. Bandi Bandi Wunungmurra)

That Council notes the CEO Report and endorses the updated Key Advocacy issues as detailed below.

Key Advocacy Issues:

1. **Youth Justice and new ways of addressing a high and growing level of youth crime focused on community based facilities, where young offenders are required to stay but be provided support from Council and other relevant service providers – for alcohol and other substance mis-use, trauma and family neglect, and engage the offenders in genuine and effective learning on country of traditional culture, identity and respect, community service, sport and recreation, vocational training, and a clear pathway to jobs – and if anyone fails to do this, they will be sent away to the standard prison system.**
2. **Shift from dependency on government payments and programs like the previous Community Development Program (CDP), and the new Remote Australia Employment Service (RAES), to include the genuine mutual obligation of community members to participate in work or training to continue**

to receive payments, to support genuine personal and family responsibility and accountability.

3. **Real Local Decision Making** - a shift from ignoring and excluding our Indigenous controlled Local Authorities and Council to facilitate open, legitimate, and transparent engagement with all communities and homelands to hear the voices of all people, and support genuine engagement, collaboration, and partnership with the other two levels of government, to gain meaningful and practical outcomes.
4. The ongoing and unaddressed problem of the illegal sale of kava, alcohol and other drugs, illegal card games and the damaging effect they have on communities and homelands.
5. The need for genuine co-design of new housing developments, that Council assess and approve, to comply with National Standards.
6. The provision of government housing and other infrastructure necessary for the effective delivery of essential services including Police, Education, Health, Local Government and Community Services.
7. The use of a reasonable percentage of the \$4 billion of committed funds to Indigenous housing in the Northern Territory to be provided for units, duplexes, and houses for local Indigenous workers and vulnerable aged and disabled people, as well as residents of small to large homelands.
8. The de-registration of providers or related companies of disability services that are involved in exploitation and abuse of clients, and other illegal activities.
9. Effective funding of essential and other support services to residents of small to large homelands, across East Arnhem Land.
10. The need for effective consultation, engagement, planning and the commitment of required funding from Rio Tinto, the Northern Territory Government, Federal Government, and other relevant stakeholders, to secure the future of Gove as a regional centre.

NOTING PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT

3.6 Council Services Report

SUMMARY:

This report is to provide information on the progress, successes, challenges, and future opportunities of the Council Services Directorate.

MOC 2025/228 RESOLVED (Cr. Evelyn Dhamarrandji/Cr. Marrpalawuy Marika)

That Council notes Council Services report.

NOTING PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT

3.7 Animal Management Program

SUMMARY:

Queensland Institute of Medical Research Berghofer (QIMRB), working with Miwatj Health, is planning a community research study focused on Strongyloidiasis across Milingimbi and Gapuwiyak. The study will examine how common the disease is in the communities and work with communities to design practical elimination actions.

Strongyloidiasis is caused by a parasitic worm that can affect both people and animals. The study will look at:

- The most suitable and culturally safe ways to test people and dogs.
- The level of disease across the East Arnhem Region.
- The role dogs may play in spreading infection.
- Development of a combined human, animal and environmental elimination program using treatment, wastewater monitoring, sanitation improvements and hygiene education.

The project is expected to commence from third fiscal quarter of 2026 to 2028.

MOC 2025/229 RESOLVED (Cr. Jason Mirritjawuy/Cr. Ganygulpa Dhurrkay)

That Council endorses the proposed collaboration with Queensland Institute of Medical Research Berghofer and Miwatj Health to support delivery of the Eliminating Strongyloides Study across East Arnhem communities Milingimbi and Gapuwiyak.

NOTING PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT

3.8 Community Services Report

SUMMARY:

This report provides information on the progress, successes, challenges, and future opportunities of the Council's Community Services Directorate.

MOC 2025/230 RESOLVED (Cr. Cyril Bukulatjpi/Cr. Bandi Bandi Wunungmurra)

That Council notes the Community Services Report.

NOTING PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT

3.9 Technical and Infrastructure Services Report

SUMMARY:

This report is submitted for the Council's consideration and provides program updates from the Technical and Infrastructure Directorate. The updates pertain to capital projects and initiatives aligned with the 2025-2026 Annual Plan.

MOC 2025/231 **RESOLVED** (Cr. Marrpalawuy Marika/Cr. Ganygulpa Dhurrkay)

That Council notes the Technical Services Report

NOTING PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT

3.10 Human Resources and Finance Report

SUMMARY:

This report is tabled to the Council to provide the Finance and Human Resources Report for the period ended 31 January 2026 for its approval.

MOC 2025/232 **RESOLVED** (Cr. Evelyn Dhamarrandji/Cr. Cyril Bukulatjpi)

That Council approves the Finance and Human Resources Report for the period ended 31 January 2026.

NOTING PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT

3.11 Correspondence Register

SUMMARY:

This report details the incoming and outgoing correspondence that Council has received and sent.

MOC 2025/233 **RESOLVED** (Cr. Cyril Bukulatjpi/Cr. Evelyn Dhamarrandji)

That Council notes the Correspondence Register.

4 Confidential Reports

RECOMMENDATION: Cr. Cyril Bukulatjpi/Cr. Jason Mirritjawuy

Members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting of the Closed Session and access to the correspondence and reports relating to the items considered during the course of the Closed Session be withheld. This action is taken in accordance with Section 99 of the Local Government Act, 2019 as the items lists come within the following provisions.

RESUMPTION OF MEETING 04:00 PM

MOC 2025/243 **RESOLVED** (Cr. Evelyn Dhamarrandji/Cr. Jason Mirritjawuy)

That the decisions of Closed Session be noted as follows:- As noted in the Confidential Minutes.

5 General Business and Date of Next Meeting

5.1 LGANT General Meeting on 15 April in Darwin

MOC 2025/234 **RESOLVED** (Cr. Marrpalawuy Marika/Cr. Evelyn Dhamarrandji)

RECOMMENDATION

That Council appoint the President and Deputy President as its delegates along with the CEO to attend the Local Government Association of the Northern Territory (LGANT) General Meeting to be held on 15 April 2026, and in the event that either the President or Deputy President is unable to attend, an alternate delegate as nominated by the President will represent Council, with attendance to be funded through the Professional Development Allowance.

5.2 Date of Next Meeting

23 April 2026.

6 Meeting Close

The meeting concluded at 04:02 PM.

This page and the preceding pages are the minutes of the Meeting of Council held on 26 February 2026, and are to be confirmed.