



# MINUTES

Community Development Committee

held at

176 Mort Street

on

Tuesday 31 March 2026

at 4:00 PM



# ORDER OF BUSINESS

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## 1. Acknowledgment of Country

Brett Groves acknowledges Wiradjuri traditional owners

## 2. Present

Mayor Cass Coleman, Dennis Limbert, Tim Roberts, Glenda Anthes, Brett Groves, Joy Smith, Sarah Coleman Leanne Walding, Nathan Mas Stevens, Heather Chaffey - Manager Community and Culture, Ali Kim - Community Development Officer, Shaun Elwood - Director People and Place.

## 3. Apologies

Bernadette Ryan, Rachael Young, Francis Chung and Val Poskitt

**Moved:** Glenda Anthes

**Seconded:** Dennis Limbert

**CARRIED**

## 4. Confirmation of Minutes

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The minutes of the 20 January 2026 Community Development Committee were endorsed by three people present and were reported to Council on 23 February 2026.

### Recommendation

THAT the Community Development Committee note the attached minutes.

**Moved:** Tim Roberts

**Seconded:** Dennis Limbert

**CARRIED**

## 5. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

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None

## 6. Declaration of Interest

None

## 7. Staff Reports

### 7.1. Community Services Interagency Update March 2026

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### Summary

Ali Kim spoke to item 7.1 presenting a report outlining the topics discussed in the previous quarter's interagency meetings.

Emerging issues include the lack of Temporary Accommodation in Lithgow.

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Tim Roberts spoke about cuts to funding within the NDIS and the increasing complexity of getting approvals.

**Recommendation**

THAT the Community Services Interagency Update March 2026 is noted by the Community Development Committee.

**Moved:** Leanne Walding

**Seconded:** Joy Smith

**CARRIED**

**7.2. Community Development Program Update**

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**Summary**

Ali Kim spoke to item 7.2 presenting a report with an overview of activity delivered within the Community Development portfolio of the Community and Cultural Services Department between January and March 2026.

The committee discussed the activities and highlighted the desire for a Health Expo to take place again in 2027.

**Recommendation**

THAT the Community Development Committee note the brief overview of activity provided.

AND that Council consider investing in another Lithgow Health Expo 2027 with the option of applying for sponsorship, funding or charging for the stall.

**Moved:** Glenda Anthes

**Seconded:** Nathan Mas Stephens

**CARRIED**

**7.3. Lithgow Community Connective e-newsletter**

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**Summary**

Ali Kim spoke to item 7.3 outlining the Community Connective e-newsletter and results to date. Subscriptions have tripled in the first 6 months. Committee discussed whether the project was value for money and determined we need more time to grow the uptake and engagement.

**Attachments**

1. Lithgow Stats February 2026 (002) [7.3.1 - 2 pages]

## Recommendation

THAT the Community Development Committee note the report and and agree to continue with the e-newsletter.

**Moved:** Brett Groves

**Seconded:** Joy Smith

**CARRIED**

**ACTION:** That the Community Development Officer request that Community Connective send an email reminder close to the cut off reminding subscribers to contribute content.

## 7.4. Lithgow Citizenship Awards 2027

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### Summary

Heather Chaffey spoke to item 7.4. Heather outlined the historical program of these awards and put forward a proposal for the promotion and assessment of the awards as well as revised categories and criteria based for Australia Day 2027.

Sarah Arnold spoke to the complexity of the nomination forms and raised concerns about the discomfort of some members of the committee and wider community around 'Australia Day'.

The committee discussed the awards and determined they would wish to continue to include an event of the year category. They discussed and agreed they would adopt the Emerging Leader Award as the new title for the award formerly known as Young Citizen of the Year.

The committee discussed and agreed the assessment and timeline proposals.

### Recommendation

THAT the Community Development Committee support the Lithgow Citizenship Award categories proposed for 2027. The categories are;

- Citizen of the year.
- Emerging leader of the year.
- Community group of the year and
- Event of the year.

**Moved:** Dennis Limbert

**Seconded:** Joy Smith

**CARRIED**

## 7.5. Financial Assistance Plan Update and changes

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Heather Chaffey spoke to item 7.5 outlining the Financial Assistance Plan and proposed changes to the categories, amounts and assessment process.

Heather highlighted that this proposal is in development, and the purpose of the report was to consult the Committee before progressing with the appropriate approvals required via Council. Council officers sought feedback on the proposal based on Committee Members prior knowledge and experience of the Financial Assistance Program.

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The proposal was discussed at length including the grant streams which had been put forward, the management of grants and fee waivers, and how the proposal would provide a more effective and efficient process with improvements to transparency and fairness.

A community member who has been a member of the Committee for some time raised concerns about access and inclusion and asked what Council can do to ensure that grant and waiver recipients ensure their events and funded activities are available to all without discrimination. This was carefully considered, discussed and will inform the addition of access and inclusion requirements within the program.

Committee members also questioned the purpose of the Arts out West funding, with some suggestion that not funding this through FAP would increase available grant funding to the broader community. The Committee requested that Arts Out West present at the next Community Development Committee meeting.

### **Recommendation**

THAT the Community Development Committee note and discuss the proposal providing feedback to inform the management of the Financial Assistance Program in FY27.

**Moved:** Glenda Anthes

**Seconded:** Nathan Mas Stephens

**CARRIED**

## **8. General Business**

### **Items for discussion in General Business:**

#### *Halloween Advisory Group (HAG)*

Heather Chaffey raised an opportunity for Committee Members to support the Halloween Advisory Group (HAG). Council is seeking representatives from the Community Development Committee, Lithgow Business Chamber or local businesses, Lithgow Creatives Forum, and other key organisations.

The HAG will work with Councils Events Coordinator to assess Expressions of Interest from creative professionals to contribute to the event in 2027 as performers, facilitators and the like. The group will then make recommendations to Council officers and/or the Events Working Group for decisions.

The HAG will also provide advice to Council on other key matters regarding the Halloween event. Sarah Arnold, Joy Smith and Glenda Anthes expressed interest in joining the HAG

**ACTION:** Heather will forward the names of volunteers to the Events Coordinator.

#### *Christmas Concert Enquiry*

A Committee Member asked about the Christmas Concert and noted how much he appreciated this event. Shaun Elwood confirmed that the Christmas Concert will not go ahead in 2027. Although it is a great event, the cost of the event which attracts lower attendance was difficult to justify ongoing.

The Committee discussed a community led event in Cook Street Plaza to support local business in the lead up to Christmas.

Shaun Elwood noted some of the work Council officers have been doing to secure funding for event infrastructure on Main Street to enable future community and destination events.

*Volunteer Expo*

Leanne Walding spoke about the Volunteer Expo which has been described as a huge success. 24 volunteer led services participated.

Discussion about whether Council could do something for Volunteer Week in collaboration.

*Council Policies Enquiry*

A Committee Member asked about the currency of the policies available on Councils website. Discussion about Policies on the website. The new volunteer policy is up. This enquiry was specific to policies and procedures for Councils tip shop and community debate about what the 'rules' are.

Shaun Elwood noted that the new council website launched in June. This site will include improvements, making it easier for staff to keep policies and other information current.

ACTION: Mayor Coleman noted she will raise the issue with Waste facility manager.

*Great Western Highway Closure*

A committee member raised the closure of the Great Western Highway and rumours that some Health Services which offer outreach services to Lithgow are now offering only telehealth services. If true, this may have significant impacts on the services community members can access, especially those who face the barriers of digital inequity.

ACTION: The Manager of Community and Culture and the Community Development Officer will raise this enquiry with both the Local Health District and the Primary Health Network.

**9. Meeting Close 6:18pm.**