

Date: 31 March 2026

To: Shire President
Deputy Shire President
Councillors
Community Members



Minutes – Rylington Park Committee Meeting

Minutes of Rylington Park Committee Meeting of the Shire of Boyup Brook held on 26 March 2026 at 4:30pm.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Long", is written in a cursive style.

Leonard Long
Chief Executive Officer

Shire of Boyup Brook Corporate Values



Proactive

Embrace creativity, adaptability and continuous improvement seeking new ideas and solutions to address challenges and seize opportunities to ensure sustainability.



Leadership & Teamwork

Lead through collaboration, promote diversity, have pride in our work and partner with the community to achieve shared visions and aspirations.



Accountability & Integrity

Demonstrate respect, transparency, honesty and inclusivity in all interactions with the community.



Commitment

Build and share knowledge, act professionally and develop relationships that make a positive contribution to our community.



Engaging Community

Show respect, understanding and compassion for others and work collaboratively with community for better outcomes.





Charter of Rylington Park Institute for Agricultural Training and Research



This Charter confirms that the Rylington Park farming property, home of Rylington Park Institute for Agricultural Training and Research, will be held in trust by the Boyup Brook Shire to benefit the Boyup Brook community and for the use of agricultural training and research.

Rylington Park was gifted to the Shire of Boyup Brook by Mr Eric Farleigh in 1985 to be used for agricultural training and research as this will benefit the town and district as a whole. A quote from Mr Farleigh's last will and testament dated 8th June 1988 states:

"Without creating any specific trust it is my wish that my farming property be retained by the Shire of Boyup Brook for the benefit of persons within the Shire and for research purposes and that my farming records and other records are kept with my farming property."

Eric Farleigh 8th June 1988

The transfer of the farm was officially announced on 2nd November 1985 in order to coincide with a visit to Boyup Brook by the Governor of Western Australia.

After gifting the farm to the Shire, Mr Farleigh continued to live on Rylington Park until his death on 11th November 1988.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives for Rylington Park Institute for Agricultural Training and Research are to:

- Demonstrate good governance and leadership by behaving with integrity and being open and accountable.
- Be recognised as a leader in technology use, training, and sustainable practices.
- Develop, trial and demonstrate the latest agricultural practices and technologies.
- Develop and demonstrate sustainable farming practices to sustainably manage the farm for future generations.
- Deliver industry relevant training.
- Deliver enhanced skills development for the farming community.

ACTIVITIES

To achieve these objectives, the Rylington Park Institute for Agricultural Training and Research will undertake specific activities in the following areas:

- Develop and maintain active partnerships with educational, training and research institutions to conduct training and research in all aspects of agriculture and facilitate these learnings to be shared with the Boyup Brook community.
- Collaborate with local farmers, businesses and organisations to participate in trials and demonstrations.
- Host industry workshops and training days.
- Host rehabilitation and regeneration trials for disused gravel pits and other degraded land.
- Encourage the use of the Rylington Park facilities for broad community participation and involvement.
- Invest in maintenance and ongoing improvements to the farm and facilities to ensure continued use and relevance for future generations.
- Engage the community in annual field days.
- Provide support to the youth of Boyup Brook with agricultural scholarships.
- Contribute to community based projects and activities.
- Provide regular updates on Rylington Park activities to the Boyup Brook community.

Adopted by the Boyup Brook Shire Council on the 25th November 2021


Richard Walker
Shire President


Dale Putland
Chief Executive Officer



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Agenda

1. Declaration of opening

The Presiding Member declared the meeting open at 4:30pm.

Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians

We acknowledge and pay our respects to the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we meet and work.

Committee Meetings are public meetings.

Committee Members and staff risk being held personally liable if their comments are defamatory or breach any duty of confidentiality.

Statements made during Committee Meetings are solely those of the person making them. Nothing expressed at a Committee Meeting can be attributed to the Shire, unless it is adopted by a resolution of Council.

The Confirmed Minutes of a Committee Meeting are the official record of that Committee Meeting. Verbatim Minutes are not required.

Please make sure your mobiles are turned off or on silent for the duration of the Meeting.

This meeting will be audio-recorded and may be made publicly available on the Shire website.

2. Record of attendance

2.1 Attendance

Councillors

Shire President
Deputy Shire President
Councillors

Cr Helen O'Connell
Cr Darren King
Cr David Inglis
Cr Philip Moore
Cr Michael Wright

Community Members

Mr Richard Walker
Mr Andy McElroy

Council Officers

Chief Executive Officer	Leonard Long
Executive Manager Operational Services	Carolyn Mallett
Manager Financial Services	Malcolm Armstrong
Executive Officer	Magdalena Le Grange

Observers / Public Members

Nil

2.2 Apologies

Edith Cowan University	Prof Kerry Brown
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2.3 Approved leave of absence

Nil

2.4 Request for leave of absence

Nil

3. Deputations, petitions and presentations

3.1 Deputations

Nil

3.2 Petitions

Nil

3.3 Presentations

Roberto Busi and Daniel Real from the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) presented via MS Teams on what species to be sown, reps, plot sizes etc. The overall focus is climate resilient / profitable (annual and perennial) pasture species grown as mixtures and soil health.

Professor Phillip Nichols from the University of Western Australia (UWA) presented via MS Teams on sub clover breeding at Rylington Park.

The proposals will be considered in Item 6.1.1 Proposed Trial by the Department Primary Industries and Regional Development on Climate-Smart Agriculture and sub clover breeding by the UWA.

4. Declarations of interest**4.1 Financial and / or proximity interest**

Nil

4.2 Disclosures of impartiality interest that may cause conflict

Nil

5. Previous Committee Meeting Minutes / Out of Session Confirmation**5.1 Committee Meeting Minutes – 5 February 2026****Moved: Cr. King****Seconded: Cr. Inglis****Committee Decision RP 26/03/016****That the minutes of the Rylington Park Committee Meeting held on 5 February 2026 be confirmed as being a true and accurate record.****CARRIED 7/0****For: Cr. O’Connell, Cr. King, Cr. Moore, Cr. Inglis, Cr. Wright,
Mr. Walker, Mr. McElroy****Against: Nil****6. Reports of Officers****6.1 Chief Executive Officer****6.1.1 Proposed Trial by the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development on Climate-Smart Agriculture**

File Ref:	Committees/Rylington Park
Previous Items:	Nil
Applicant:	Nil
Author and Title:	Leonard Long, Chief Executive Officer
Declaration of Interest:	Nil
Voting Requirements:	Simple Majority
Attachment Number:	Nil

Moved: Cr. Inglis**Seconded: Cr. Wright****Committee Decision RP 26/03/017****That the Committee suspend Standing Orders as per clause 15.6 of the Standing Orders Local Law No. 1 to allow free and open discussion on the matter.****CARRIED 7/0**

**For: Cr. O’Connell, Cr. King, Cr. Moore, Cr. Inglis, Cr. Wright,
Mr. Walker, Mr. McElroy
Against: Nil**

Moved: Mr. Walker Seconded: Cr. Wright

Committee Decision RP 26/03/018

That the Committee resume Standing Orders as per clause 15.6 of the Standing Orders Local Law No. 1.

**CARRIED 7/0
For: Cr. O’Connell, Cr. King, Cr. Moore, Cr. Inglis, Cr. Wright,
Mr. Walker, Mr. McElroy
Against: Nil**

Moved: Cr. Inglis Seconded: Mr. Walker

Committee Decision RP 26/03/019

That the Committee Recommend to Council:

- 1. Receives the request from the University of Western Australia, with technical support from the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, to establish a Climate-Smart Agriculture field trial at Rylington Park for the 2026 and 2027 seasons, with an option to extend into 2028.**
- 2. Supports in principle the establishment of the proposed field trial at Rylington Park, subject to:**
 - a) confirmation that the proposed trial area does not conflict with any existing or proposed lease, licence, operational use or Council-approved future use of the land;**
 - b) the execution of a formal written agreement to the satisfaction of the Chief Executive Officer setting out the respective responsibilities of the parties, including access, insurance, public liability, work health and safety, site management, rehabilitation, and indemnity provisions;**
 - c) all costs associated with establishment, operation, maintenance, signage, removal and rehabilitation of the trial area being met by the proponent unless otherwise approved by Council; and**
 - d) any required statutory approvals, internal approvals, biosecurity controls and operational clearances being obtained prior to commencement.**

3. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate the terms and conditions of access and prepare the necessary documentation for Council consideration or execution, as appropriate.

CARRIED 7/0

**For: Cr. O’Connell, Cr. King, Cr. Moore, Cr. Inglis, Cr. Wright,
Mr. Walker, Mr. McElroy
Against: Nil**

Summary

A request has been received in relation to the possible establishment of a field trial at Rylington Park as part of the federally funded Climate-Smart Agriculture Program – Partnerships and Innovation. The proposed trial would be led by the University of Western Australia, with technical support and assistance from the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development.

The trial is intended to examine pasture diversification and management practices to improve climate resistance and resilience. It is proposed that the trial operate during the 2026 and 2027 seasons, with a potential extension into 2028.

This report seeks the Committee’s consideration of the request and recommends that the Committee provide in-principle support, subject to appropriate governance, legal, operational and risk management requirements being satisfied.

Background

The Shire has been approached regarding the potential use of Rylington Park for a small scale agricultural field trial as part of a federally funded project. The project forms part of the Climate-Smart Agriculture Program – Partnerships and Innovation and is focused on identifying pasture systems and management approaches that may improve resilience to changing climatic conditions.

The proponents have advised that similar trials were established at Busselton and Warner Glen in 2025 with positive extension outcomes, and that comparable trials have been operating at Katanning and Manjimup since 2024. It is anticipated that the proposed Rylington Park trial would generate interest among local farmers and producers in the district and may provide broader regional learning opportunities.

The proposed trial would consist of a small plot experiment of up to four treatments with four replicates, with individual plot sizes of approximately 15 square metres and a total area of around 300 square metres. The trial would compare different pasture mixes, including annual species, increasing proportions of perennial species, and one treatment representing current local farmer practice.

Report Detail

The request presents a potential opportunity for Rylington Park to be used in a way that supports agricultural innovation, local industry engagement and broader land management learning outcomes. Given the scale of the proposed trial, being approximately 300 square metres in total, the physical land area required is relatively modest. Subject to suitable site selection, the proposal would appear capable of being accommodated without significant land take.

The involvement of the University of Western Australia and the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development gives the project a degree of technical credibility and suggests that the trial may have practical value for local producers. The focus on pasture diversification and climate resilience is also relevant to agricultural production in the Boyup Brook district, where seasonal variability and long-term climate pressures continue to influence farm management practices.


Notwithstanding the potential merits of the proposal, the Committee should ensure that any access to or use of Rylington Park is properly authorised and documented. In particular, the Committee should be satisfied that the proposed trial does not conflict with any current or intended future use of the property, including any leasing, community use, operational requirements or strategic direction previously determined by Council. If the land is to be made available, this should occur under a formal written agreement setting out matters such as:


- the exact location and size of the trial area;
- the term of occupation and any extension arrangements;
- responsibility for establishment, maintenance, weed and pest control, fencing and signage;
- biosecurity requirements;
- insurance and indemnity obligations;
- access arrangements for staff, contractors and visitors;
- rehabilitation and reinstatement of the site upon completion; and
- treatment of any infrastructure, materials or improvements associated with the trial.

As Rylington Park is a Shire controlled property, the appropriate process would be for Committee (with delegated authority) to first determine whether it is supportive in principle of the use of the land for this purpose. If so, the matter can then be progressed administratively through site assessment, internal operational review and the preparation of a suitable access or licence agreement, depending on the final legal form considered appropriate.

Given that the trial is proposed to run over more than one season, and potentially for up to three years, it is appropriate that the Committee provide a clear direction on the use of the land rather than the matter being dealt with informally. This will ensure proper governance, transparency and protection of the Shire's interests.

Shire of Boyup Brook Strategic Community Plan 2021 - 2031

	Key Imperatives	Natural Environment
	Outcome	Manage natural resources sustainability.
	Objective	Improve water security and drought proofing measures.

	Key Imperatives	Economic Development
	Outcome	Be a business friendly Shire and create conditions for economic growth.
	Objective	Partner with key stakeholders and support development of industry/business incubation, innovation and entrepreneurship using a planned approach.

Other Strategic Links

Any approval should be considered in the context of Council's future intentions for Rylington Park and any broader strategic decisions regarding the use, leasing, management or development of the property.

Statutory Environment

As the proposal involves the use of Shire-managed land, Committee must ensure that any access or occupation is properly authorised and documented in accordance with the Shire's governance framework and any applicable legislative requirements.

Depending on the final form of occupation and the duration and exclusivity of use, the arrangement may require documentation by way of licence, access agreement or other formal instrument. Any agreement should be reviewed to ensure that it adequately protects the Shire's legal and financial

interests and addresses public liability, indemnity, insurance, work health and safety and site rehabilitation obligations.

If the proposal proceeds, the proponent must also ensure compliance with any relevant statutory, environmental, biosecurity and operational requirements applicable to the trial activities.

Sustainability and Risk Considerations

Economic – (Impact on the Economy of the Shire and Region)

The proposed trial has the potential to provide indirect economic benefit to the Shire and broader region by contributing to improved pasture management knowledge and climate resilience for local farming enterprises. It may also generate local interest and engagement from producers seeking practical information on pasture diversification and seasonal resilience.

Social – (Quality of life to community and / or affected landowners)

The trial may have a positive social benefit through knowledge sharing, agricultural extension and community confidence in Rylington Park being used for constructive and regionally relevant purposes. Provided the trial is appropriately managed and does not interfere with surrounding land uses, adverse social impacts are expected to be minimal.

Policy Implications

Nil

Risk Management Implications

Shire of Boyup Brook's commitment to the identification and management of risks that may impact on the achievement of its business objectives.

Risk Level	Comment
Moderate	The key risks relate to unauthorised use of Shire land, unclear allocation of responsibilities, public liability exposure, site disturbance, weed or biosecurity issues, and potential conflict with future intended use of Rylington Park. These risks can be significantly reduced by ensuring that the Committee only grants in-principle approval at this stage, with any final access subject to a formal written agreement, appropriate insurance, clear site boundaries, operational controls and rehabilitation requirements.

Consultation

Initial consultation has occurred through correspondence from the proponent seeking advice regarding the appropriate process and approval pathway for the proposed trial.

Should the Committee support the proposal in principle, further consultation would be undertaken internally to confirm site suitability, operational implications and any interaction with existing or proposed uses of Rylington Park.

Resource Implications

Financial

At this stage, no direct cost to the Shire is proposed. Any approval should be conditional upon all costs associated with the field trial, including establishment, maintenance, management, signage and site rehabilitation, being met by the proponent unless otherwise approved by Council.

Workforce

Administrative officer time will be required to assess the proposal, identify a suitable site if supported, and prepare the necessary agreement documentation.

This is not expected to be significant provided the project remains modest in scale.

End

Against: Nil

Edith Cowan University have been successful in being awarded the grant funded by the federal government under the Phase Out of Live Sheep Exports by Sea - transition assistance: Enhancing Market Demand Grants Program grant opportunity.

The project titled Sheep Industry Pivot - Diversifying Market Pathways to Enhance Demand for Australian Sheep Products was awarded funding for two years commencing in 2026.

Report Detail

The Federal Government has handed grants to Edith Cowan University and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry to develop new markets for WA sheep in response to the live export ban. About \$3.7 million was given to 12 organisations through the Government's \$139m live export trade.

Edith Cowan University (ECU) in collaboration with Rylington Park, will lead a two-year initiative to strengthen market demand and diversification for Australian sheep products in response to the live export phase out. While the industry has undergone extensive consultation, there remains a need to identify commercially viable diversification pathways.

The project will focus on developing new value added and by product opportunities for domestic and international speciality markets. Key activities include a global competitor analysis benchmarking innovative products and an Industry led Pivot Incubator Pilot with up to 10 producers and processors to trial diversification models. Combining applied market research, design led collaboration, and real-world pilot implementation, the project will deliver actionable commercial insights, new product opportunities, and stronger industry capability to build a more resilient and adaptable Australian sheep industry.

The grant agreement is currently being negotiated with the department, with a view for execution late February 2026. The grant will run over approximately two years, starting from around March/April 2026, depending on finalisation of project contract.

The project plan involves the project team running an incubator (workshops and trial sites) at Rylington Park with sheep farmers, processors and distributors in late 2027.

Summary Project Stages:

Stage 1 (year 1):

- Global competitive review of international markets to identify potential novel products that suit the Australian Sheep Industry.

Stage 2 (year 1):

- From the review, identify 3-5 novel products in consultation with industry/farmers.


Stage 3 (year 2):

- Develop business cases for the products.

Stage 4 (year 2):

- Run a pivot incubator with up to 10 farmers, processors and distributors keen to embed any of the products into their existing offerings.

Shire of Boyup Brook Strategic Community Plan 2021 - 2031

	Key Imperatives	Natural Environment
	Objective	Manage natural resources sustainably.
	Outcome	Work with key stakeholders to manage land, fire disease, pest animals and weeds.

Other Strategic Links

Nil

Statutory Environment

Nil

Sustainability and Risk Considerations**Economic** – (Impact on the Economy of the Shire and Region)

Nil

Social – (Quality of life to community and / or affected landowners)

Nil

Policy Implications

Nil

Risk Management Implications

Shire of Boyup Brook's commitment to the identification and management of risks that may impact on the achievement of its business objectives.

Risk Level	Comment
Moderate	It is important to nominate a representative to ensure the interests of Rylington Park are considered.

Consultation

Nil

Resource Implications

Financial

Nil

Workforce

Nil

End

6.1.3 Rylington Park – Storm in a Teacup 2026	
File Ref:	Committees/Rylington Park
Previous Items:	<i>Committee Decision RP 25/11/037</i>
Applicant:	Nil
Author and Title:	Nicki Jones, Manager Community Services
Declaration of Interest:	Nil
Voting Requirements:	Simple Majority
Attachment Number:	6.1.3A Email from CMCBB

Moved: Mr. Walker	Seconded: Cr. Inglis
Committee Decision RP 26/03/021	
That the Committee:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Accepts the Country Music Club of Boyup Brook Inc. proposal to facilitate the annual Storm in a Teacup event. 	
CARRIED 7/0	
For: Cr. O’Connell, Cr. King, Cr. Moore, Cr. Inglis, Cr. Wright, Mr. Walker, Mr. McElroy	
Against: Nil	

Summary

At the Committee Meeting held on 20 November 2025, the CEO was requested to advertise the Storm in a Teacup event for community groups to potentially facilitate. This was advertised in the December 2025 edition of the Boyup Brook Gazette and resulted in two organisations making initial enquiries with one submitting a formal Expression of Interest.

“Moved: Cr. Inglis

Seconded: Cr. Wright

Committee Decision RP 25/11/037

That the Committee:

- 1. Request the CEO to advertise the Storm in a Teacup event for potential groups to take over the running of the event in 2026.*

CARRIED 7/0

For: Cr. O’Connell, Cr. King, Cr. Moore, Cr. Inglis, Cr. Wright, Mr Walker, Mr McElroy
Against: Nil”

Background

The Rylington Park Institute for Agricultural Training and Research (Rylington Park) is located 27km from Boyup Brook town site on the Boyup Brook – Cranbrook Road in Mayanup.

The 650-hectare property was gifted to the Shire of Boyup Brook in 1985 by the late Mr Eric Farleigh for research and training in agriculture, and for the betterment of Boyup Brook.

The property is managed by the Shire of Boyup, who employ staff to operate the farm, host shearing schools and coordinate fertiliser and seed trials on the property.

Rylington Park host field days each year, which include ‘Storm in a Teacup’ Women’s Day in March and the annual Field Day in September.

The Charter of The Rylington Park Institute for Agricultural Training and Research was adopted by Council in November 2021 to confirm the Rylington Park farming property, home of The Rylington Park Institute for Agricultural Training and Research, will be held in trust by the Boyup Brook Shire to benefit the Boyup Brook community and for the use of agricultural training and research.

Report Detail

At the Committee Meeting held on 20 November 2025, the CEO was requested to advertise the Storm in a Teacup event to identify community groups interested in facilitating the event. The opportunity was advertised in the December 2025 edition of the Boyup Brook Gazette, which resulted in two organisations making initial enquiries. These were the Country Music Club of Boyup Brook Inc (CMCBB) and the Boyup Brook Community Resource Centre (BBCRC).

Both organisations were provided with the same information and invited to seek clarification or request further details. The BBCRC indicated they may be interested in coordinating the event with additional groups physically running the event. The BBCRC has not made any further enquiries. The CMCBB however, has submitted a written response expressing interest in facilitating the event.

In their submission, the CMCBB have requested:

- Access for Erlanda Deas to existing information and knowledge relating to the delivery of the event
- An in-kind contribution for the hire of Shire facilities

- An in-kind contribution of tables and chairs.

The CMCBB has a long history of facilitating events, most notably the annual Country Music Muster (formerly the Country Music Festival), with 2027 marking its 40th year. The Club has delivered this major event for the past 40 years, with the only cancellation occurring in 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The CMCBB is well placed to facilitate the Storm in a Teacup event due to its extensive experience in event management. In addition, Erlanda Deas who was formerly employed by the Shire of Boyup Brook and responsible for coordinating Storm in a Teacup for the previous 13 years, is a member of the CMCBB Executive Committee and would coordinate the event.

Shire of Boyup Brook Strategic Community Plan 2021 - 2031

	Key Imperatives	Social and Community
	Outcome	Support a healthy, active, vibrant community.
	Objective	Promote community participation, interactions and connections.
	Key Imperatives	Social and Community
	Outcome	Encourage the preservation of our culture, heritage and history.
	Objective	Partner with stakeholders to promote Boyup Brook, preserving our history for future generations and sharing the rich heritage of the Shire.
	Key Imperatives	Social and Community
	Outcome	Encourage the preservation of our culture, heritage and history.
	Objective	Support and promote community events and activities.

	Key Imperatives	Economic Development
	Outcome	Be a business friendly Shire and create conditions for economic growth.
	Objective	Partner with key stakeholders and support development of industry/ business incubation, innovation and entrepreneurship using a planned approach.
	Key Imperatives	Economic Development
	Outcome	Be a business friendly Shire and create conditions for economic growth.
	Objective	Support current and new technologies.

Other Strategic Links

Nil

Statutory Environment

Nil

Sustainability and Risk Considerations**Economic** – (Impact on the Economy of the Shire and Region)

The Storm in a Teacup event provides economic benefits to the Boyup Brook community by attracting visitors to the Shire. Events of this nature also support local suppliers and service providers involved in delivering the event. In addition, they help promote Boyup Brook as a destination, which can encourage repeat visitation and contribute to the local tourism economy.

Social – (Quality of life to community and / or affected landowners)

The Storm in a Teacup event provides valuable social benefits by creating a welcoming space specifically for women to connect, share experiences and build friendships. The event attracts attendees from neighbouring towns as well as from Perth, providing opportunities for regional and metropolitan women to come together in a relaxed and supportive environment. It also strengthens community connections, encourages social participation, and contributes to a sense of belonging and wellbeing for those who attend.

Policy Implications

Nil

Risk Management Implications

Shire of Boyup Brook's commitment to the identification and management of risks that may impact on the achievement of its business objectives.

Risk Level	Comment
Low	The risk is deemed low due to the CMCBB having a long history of facilitating events and the proposed coordinator having 13 years previous experience in running this event.

Consultation

- Country Music Club of Boyup Brook Inc
- Boyup Brook Community Resource Centre

Resource Implications

Financial

In-kind support only.

Workforce

Nil

End

6.1.4 Rylington Park – Decommissioning of Shire Operated Farming Activities	
File Ref:	Committees/Rylington Park
Previous Items:	<i>Council Decision CM 26/02/030</i>
Applicant:	Nil
Author and Title:	Leonard Long, Chief Executive Officer
Declaration of Interest:	Nil
Voting Requirements:	Simple Majority
Attachment Number:	Nil

Moved: Cr. Inglis

Seconded: Cr. Wright

Committee Decision RP 26/03/022

That the Committee suspend Standing Orders as per clause 15.6 of the Standing Orders Local Law No. 1 to allow free and open discussion on the matter.

CARRIED 7/0

**For: Cr. O’Connell, Cr. King, Cr. Moore, Cr. Inglis, Cr. Wright,
Mr. Walker, Mr. McElroy
Against: Nil**

Moved: Cr. Wright

Seconded: Cr. Moore

Committee Decision RP 26/03/023

That the Committee resume Standing Orders as per clause 15.6 of the Standing Orders Local Law No. 1.

CARRIED 7/0

**For: Cr. O’Connell, Cr. King, Cr. Moore, Cr. Inglis, Cr. Wright,
Mr. Walker, Mr. McElroy
Against: Nil**

Moved: Mr. McElroy

Seconded: Cr. Inglis

Officer Recommendation RP 26/03/...

That the Committee recommends:

- 1. Does not proceed with any cropping program at Rylington Park for the 2026 season.**
- 2. Approves the immediate sale of all livestock at Rylington Park.**

3. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to take all administrative action necessary to implement the orderly decommissioning of the Shire-operated farming activities at Rylington Park, including arranging the sale of livestock and surplus assets.

4. Approves that any unexpended operating funds and net sale proceeds arising from the cessation of the Shire operated farming activities at Rylington Park be transferred to the Rylington Park Reinstatement Farm Reserve.

.....
For:
Against:

Moved: Mr. McElroy

Seconded: Cr. Inglis

Committee Decision RP 26/03/024

That the Committee recommends:

- 1. Defer until the next Rylington Park Committee meeting and the Farm visit scheduled for 31 March 2026.**

CARRIED 7/0

**For: Cr. O'Connell, Cr. King, Cr. Moore, Cr. Inglis, Cr. Wright,
 Mr. Walker, Mr. McElroy**

Against: Nil

Summary

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval to cease the Shire operated farming activities at Rylington Park, not proceed with cropping for the 2026 season, and commence the immediate sale of livestock and surplus farming assets.

This recommendation is driven by governance, operational, financial and animal welfare considerations. The resignation of the Farm Working Manager materially affects the Shire's capacity to safely and appropriately continue direct livestock management. In the absence of a suitably experienced replacement, the Shire would be required to urgently source labour or contract services to undertake daily stock husbandry, infrastructure inspection, paddock supervision and farm operations.

No fertiliser has been ordered for the upcoming season and current market conditions indicate that inputs may be difficult to secure within the required timeframe or only available at materially increased cost. Proceeding with a cropping program in those circumstances would expose the Shire to avoidable financial and operational risk.

The recommendation to immediately sell livestock is not based solely on current sheep prices. Rather, it reflects the view that the Shire should not continue to hold livestock in the hope of achieving a higher future price where doing so would require ongoing labour, supervision and husbandry commitments and would expose the local government to further market, seasonal and welfare risk. The recommended approach provides a more prudent, certain and defensible outcome and supports an orderly transition of Rylington Park toward a future lease-based model.

Background

Council at its Ordinary Meeting held on 26 February 2026 resolved as follows:

“Moved: Cr. Inglis

Seconded: Cr. Wright

Council Decision CM 26/02/030

That Council:

1. *Proceed with the implementation of following operational model:*
 - a) *Paddocks 20, 21 and 22 (Approx 53ha) being made available to lease at a peppercorn rate to a community group for cropping purposes via expression of interest / tender process.*
 - i. *Approx 10ha of the area in 1(a) above be made available for trials. If any land is not used for trials such land can be used for cropping by the community group.*
 - b) *The dwelling house, accommodation units, ablutions, commercial kitchen and training room be retained for use by the Shire.*
 - i. *The area is to be fenced off to clearly be demarcated.*
 - c) *Advertise the remainder of the farm for lease (at market rates) on the open market with the following additional conditions contained in the lease:*
 - i. *Term of the lease would be an initial three (3) years with the option of another three (3) years.*
 - ii. *The lease is to commence as from 1 March 2027 allowing the lessee access to ‘knock down’ in September 2026 and is to be advertised as soon as possible following Councils decision on the matter.*

8. *Request the Farm Working Manager to investigate which water tank services the dwelling house, accommodation, ablutions and commercial kitchen by no later than end April 2026.*
9. *Request the Chief Executive Officer to obtain a property condition report prior to the property lease commencing.*
10. *Proceeds of the sale of the machinery, produce and livestock be quarantined in a reserve account solely for the use to reinstate Rylington Park should the Council of the day wish to no longer lease the farm and to run the farm.*
11. *The Rylington Park scholarship be continued with funds be taken from the farm lease income.*
12. *Request the Chief Executive Officer to rename the Rylington Park Community Projects Reserve to the Farleigh / Rylington Park Community Projects Reserve where the annual lease income (less all costs associated with the retention of infrastructure by the Shire as per 1(b) above) shall be retained in the reserve account. Any interest received on the reserve account is to be kept in the reserve account. (interest to be diverted back to the reserve)*
13. *A percentage of lease income, to maintain the value of the Rylington Park Reinstatement Farm Reserve (to be approved through the budget process) shall be determined by the Committee after the 'on farm' sale for recommendation to Council.*
14. *The percentage determined in (13) above will be reviewed on an annual basis by Council through the budget process.*
15. *Approve all costs associated with the retention of infrastructure by the Shire as per 1(b) above to be deducted from the annual lease income and included in the relevant Rylington Park maintenance / capital account through the annual budget process.*

CARRIED BY ABSOLUTE MAJORITY 5/0

*For: Cr O'Connell, Cr Moore, Cr Inglis, Cr King, Cr Wright
Against: Nil"*

Rylington Park has been operated by the Shire for farming purposes, including livestock management and seasonal cropping activities. This operational model has required ongoing staff oversight, seasonal planning, procurement of inputs, management of livestock and maintenance of farming assets and infrastructure.

The recent resignation of the Farm Working Manager has created an immediate operational issue in relation to the continuity of the Shire's farming activities. The Farm Working Manager has been the primary officer responsible for the day-to-day operation of the farm, including oversight of livestock welfare, watering, feeding, general husbandry, paddock management and operational planning.

The timing of this resignation is particularly significant given the proximity to the seeding season and the need to make timely decisions regarding fertiliser supply, cropping inputs and livestock management.

Report Detail

The Shire is now in a position where its ability to continue directly operating the Rylington Park farming activities has been substantially compromised. The most immediate issue is the ongoing care and welfare of the livestock. Once the Farm Working Manager ceases employment, the Shire will no longer have a dedicated and suitably experienced officer with day-to-day responsibility for feeding, watering, monitoring animal health, responding to emergencies, maintaining infrastructure and ensuring appropriate husbandry standards.

If the Shire were to retain the livestock, it would likely need to urgently engage a suitably qualified person to undertake those duties. That would create an additional unplanned operational burden. More importantly, from a governance and animal welfare perspective, the Shire should not place itself in a position where livestock are retained without adequate, consistent and experienced care. In the present circumstances, the immediate sale of livestock is considered the most responsible and prudent course of action.

The case for immediate sale is strengthened by the fact that waiting for potentially higher prices is not cost free. Retaining livestock would require the Shire to continue bearing the costs and risks associated with labour, feeding, watering, animal health treatments, stock movements, supervision and the maintenance of fencing, yards and watering infrastructure. Even if future gross sale proceeds were marginally higher, the net financial position may deteriorate once carrying costs and operational risks are taken into account.

Delaying sale would also amount to a speculative commercial decision. While there is always a possibility that livestock prices may improve further, sheep markets are inherently volatile and affected by seasonal conditions, processor demand, export settings and feed availability. In circumstances where Council has resolved to cease direct farming operations, it is not considered appropriate for the local government to remain exposed to future market risk in the hope of achieving an incremental gain.



A related consideration is whether the ewes should be sold immediately or retained to lamb and later sold together with any lambs. While retaining ewes through lambing may, in theory, produce a higher gross return, that outcome is uncertain and depends on favourable lambing percentages, seasonal conditions, stock health, labour availability and future market prices. Retaining ewes to lamb would materially increase the complexity of management at precisely the time the Shire is seeking to wind down direct farming operations. Lambing is a higher risk husbandry period requiring closer supervision and timely intervention, with exposure to ewe and lamb mortality, mismothering, predation and increased pressure on feed and paddock resources.

In practical terms, the sell now option provides a lower risk but more certain financial outcome, while the retain to lamb option may offer a potentially higher gross return but with materially greater management complexity and downside risk. Once labour, supplementary feeding, animal health treatments, lambing losses and sale timing risk are taken into account, the net financial advantage of retaining the flock becomes uncertain. The immediate sale option therefore better aligns with prudent financial management, orderly risk reduction and the proposed cessation of direct farming activities.

The second major issue is the upcoming cropping season. No fertiliser has yet been ordered and current market conditions suggest supply may be constrained and prices elevated. There is therefore no confidence that the required product could be secured in sufficient time to meet the seeding program, and if product is available it is likely to be at increased cost. Cropping is inherently seasonal and time-sensitive. Delays in sourcing fertiliser or proceeding without the required inputs would likely compromise crop establishment, reduce production outcomes and expose the Shire to unnecessary financial risk.

The immediate sale of livestock and surplus farming assets will also assist in preparing the property for future leasing by removing ongoing operational encumbrances, simplifying transitional arrangements and allowing the Shire to present Rylington Park to the market in a clearer and more lease ready state. Overall, the proposed course of action represents an orderly and responsible decommissioning of the Shire operated farming activities at Rylington Park.

Shire of Boyup Brook Strategic Community Plan 2021 - 2031

	Key Imperatives	Governance and Organisation
	Objective	Improve financial sustainability.
	Outcome	Improve short and long term financial management planning.
	Key Imperatives	Governance and Organisation
	Objective	Demonstrate effective leadership, advocacy and governance.
	Outcome	Provide transparent decision making that meets our legal and regulatory obligations, reflects the level of associated risk, and is adequately explained to the community.

Other Strategic Links

Nil

Statutory Environment

The Shire is authorised to manage its property and operations in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1995*.

In making decisions regarding the cessation of farming operations, disposal of livestock and sale of surplus farming assets, Council is required to act in a manner that is lawful, reasonable and in the best interests of the local government and community.

The Shire must also ensure that, while livestock remain in its care, all reasonable steps are taken to meet relevant animal welfare obligations and general duty of care requirements. The recommendation in this report is intended to reduce the risk of the Shire retaining livestock without appropriate ongoing management capacity.

Any disposal of assets arising from this decision should be undertaken in accordance with the Shire's applicable policies, purchasing and disposal practices, and sound governance principles.

Sustainability and Risk Considerations

Economic – (Impact on the Economy of the Shire and Region)

In the short term, the cessation of direct farming activities may reduce a small component of local expenditure associated with that operation.

However, that impact is expected to be offset by the longer term benefit of transitioning Rylington Park to a more stable and sustainable model that is

less exposed to seasonal volatility, fluctuating commodity prices and operational risk.

A lease based model is expected to provide a steadier and more predictable income stream that can be directed toward community infrastructure, services and other strategic priorities of Council.

Social – (Quality of life to community and / or affected landowners)

The proposal is not expected to adversely affect the quality of life of the broader community or surrounding landowners in any significant way. The more substantial social benefit lies in transitioning the property to a model that is more sustainable, lower risk and capable of generating a steadier financial return to support community facilities, services and projects. The recommendation also reflects the importance of acting responsibly in relation to animal welfare and land management, thereby maintaining community confidence in the Shire's stewardship of Rylington Park.

Policy Implications

Nil

Risk Management Implications

Shire of Boyup Brook's commitment to the identification and management of risks that may impact on the achievement of its business objectives.

Risk Level	Comment
High	The principal risk in not proceeding with the recommended action is that the Shire would continue to hold livestock and attempt to continue farming operations without a dedicated and suitably experienced Farm Working Manager, thereby increasing exposure to animal welfare, staffing, financial, operational and reputational risk. There is also a significant risk that delaying the sale of livestock in anticipation of higher prices could result in a poorer net financial outcome once carrying costs, labour requirements and market volatility are taken into account. Retaining ewes through lambing would further elevate this risk by increasing husbandry complexity and requiring closer supervision during a critical period. Proceeding with the immediate sale of livestock and the discontinuation of cropping materially reduces these risks and supports an orderly transition of the property.

Consultation

Consultation has occurred internally in relation to the operational position of Rylington Park, the staffing implications arising from the Farm Working

Manager's resignation, and the practical issues associated with livestock management and cropping for the upcoming season. Consideration has also been given to the longer-term future use of the property and the benefit of transitioning to a lease-based model that can continue to support productive use of the land in a more sustainable manner.

Resource Implications

Financial

Not proceeding with cropping will avoid substantial expenditure on fertiliser, seed, fuel, contracting and other seasonal inputs which, in the present circumstances, may not deliver an acceptable return. The immediate sale of livestock and surplus farming assets may also generate proceeds that can be directed to the Rylington Park Reserve and used to support future Rylington Park purposes.

Workforce

The resignation of the Farm Working Manager creates an immediate workforce and operational gap. If direct farming activities were to continue, the Shire would likely need to urgently recruit or contract a suitably experienced replacement to maintain livestock care and seasonal farm operations. By ceasing direct farming activities now, the Shire avoids the need for such unplanned resourcing.

End

6.1.5 Update on proposed farmer well-being safety workshop	
File Ref:	Committees/Rylington Park
Previous Items:	<i>Committee Decision RP 25/11/045(1)</i>
Applicant:	Nil
Author and Title:	Leonard Long, Chief Executive Officer
Declaration of Interest:	Nil
Voting Requirements:	Simple Majority
Attachment Number:	Nil

Moved: Cr. King

Seconded: Cr. Wright

Committee Decision RP 26/03/025

That the Committee:

1. Receive the following update:

Associate Professor Marcus Cattani has proposed offering a workshop on Farm Safety in partnership with FarmSafe WA in early August 2026.

In view of increasing farm insurance premiums, Assoc Prof Cattani is working to reduce these premiums through a project that engages insurers and with FarmSafe WA to develop programs and protocols to support a recognised national farm safety framework.

The workshop is an opportunity to provide input to the project and learn about the latest in farm safety. There will be a small cost to the workshop.

CARRIED 7/0

**For: Cr. O’Connell, Cr. King, Cr. Moore, Cr. Inglis, Cr. Wright,
Mr. Walker, Mr. McElroy
Against: Nil**

Summary

The Committee is requested to receive the update from Professor Kerry Brown of Edith Cowan University.

Background

The Committee at its meeting held on 5 February 2026 decided as follows:

“Moved: Cr. Inglis

Seconded: Cr. King

Committee Decision RP 26/02/006

That the Committee:

- 1. Note the verbal update report (to be provided in writing by the Kerry Brown, Prof of Employment & Industry ECU) on the proposed workshop for farmer well-being safety to be run by the ECU [Committee Decision RP 25/11/045(1)]. No further update.*

CARRIED 5/0

*For: Cr O’Connell, Cr Inglis, Mr Walker, Mr McElroy, Cr King
Against: Nil”*

The Committee at its meeting held on 20 November 2025 decided as follows:

“Moved: Cr. King

Seconded: Cr. Wright

Committee Decision RP 25/11/045

That the Committee:

- 1. Supports the proposed workshop for farmer well-being safety to be run by the ECU.*

CARRIED 7/0


*For: Cr. O’Connell, Cr. King, Cr. Moore, Cr. Inglis, Cr. Wright,
Mr Walker, Mr McElroy
Against: Nil”*

Report Detail

The workshop is to be organised for some time in August 2026. The timing would give ECU enough time to organise the workshop.

Marcus Cattani from ECU is a member of the WorkSafe WA Agriculture Safety Advisory Committee and recently visited the European farmer health and safety project, which has informed this project.

Shire of Boyup Brook Strategic Community Plan 2021 - 2031

	Key Imperatives	Natural Environment
	Objective	Manage natural resources sustainably.
	Outcome	Work with key stakeholders to manage land, fire disease, pest animals and weeds.

Other Strategic Links

Nil

Statutory Environment

Nil

Sustainability and Risk Considerations**Economic** – (Impact on the Economy of the Shire and Region)

Nil

Social – (Quality of life to community and / or affected landowners)

Hosting a farmer wellbeing and safety workshop provides practical tools to help farmers manage physical risks, mental health pressures, and the increasing demands of modern agriculture. It creates a trusted space for open conversations about stress, fatigue, and isolation, which are common challenges in rural communities. These workshops also promote safer work practices, reducing the likelihood of on farm injuries and long-term health issues. By bringing farmers together, they strengthen peer networks and encourage early help-seeking and support. Ultimately, investing in wellbeing and safety supports more resilient farming businesses, families, and communities.

Policy Implications

Nil

Risk Management Implications

Shire of Boyup Brook's commitment to the identification and management of risks that may impact on the achievement of its business objectives.

Risk Level	Comment
Low	The risk level is considered low, as the report is limited to receiving an update on a proposed workshop rather than committing the Committee or Council to a significant operational, financial or statutory action. At this stage, the main risk is administrative in nature, being that poor communication or delayed coordination could affect the timely organisation of the workshop and reduce its potential benefit to local producers.

Consultation

Nil

Resource Implications

Financial

Nil

Workforce

Nil

End

7. Members questions on notice

Nil

8. Late items / urgent business matters

Nil

9. General Business

Nil

10. Confidential Items of Business

Nil

11. Next meeting and closure

Next meeting to be held on 23 April 2026 at 3:30pm in the Council Chambers.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 5:50pm.

Presiding Member

Date

Outstanding Committee Resolutions		
Res #	Resolution	Status
RP 24/03/024	<p>RYLINGTON PARK POTENTIAL SCHOOL PROGRAM - AUSTRALIAN CENTRE FOR STUDENT EQUITY AND SUCCESS (ACSES) FUNDING</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If successful, approves a contribution of \$20,000 towards the grant submission to Australian Centre for Student Equity and Success being prepared by Prof Brown. 2. The contribution approved in (1.) above is to be funded out of Councils Co-contribution reserve. <p><u>Prof Brown Update: 29 January 2025</u> While the grant outcome was advised as unsuccessful in the granting round in 2024, the team has been in discussion with ACSES to understand if a) if the project would be eligible to be considered for the new rolling grant system that replaced the annual call for projects b) whether the project could be considered with modification for funding. The responses have been positive so there has been further discussion about the changes required for the grant application and how these changes would support consideration for funding.</p>	On hold
RP 24/03/033	<p>PROPOSED HEMP TRIALS AT RYLINGTON PARK</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supports the trials for growing Hemp on 1ha of land at Rylington Park. 2. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to submit an application for the relevant Hemp Licence to the relevant department. <p><u>CEO Update 29 January 2025:</u> Application form has been completed, staff will be progressing with the application. Licence application paid for 28 February 2025.</p> <p>Relevant persons to provide:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Police Clearance 2. Character references 	On Hold