



## Ordinary Meeting

MM01

**BUSINESS PAPER**

**Tuesday, 23 September 2025 at 7:00 pm**



Griffith City Council Chambers  
Phone: 1300 176 077

Web: [www.griffith.nsw.gov.au](http://www.griffith.nsw.gov.au) Email: [admin@griffith.nsw.gov.au](mailto:admin@griffith.nsw.gov.au)



## AGENDA

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### ORDINARY MEETING OF GRIFFITH CITY COUNCIL TO BE HELD IN GRIFFITH CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON TUESDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER 2025 AT 7:00 PM

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#### MEETING NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that an Ordinary Meeting of Council will be held in the Griffith City Council Chambers on **Tuesday, 23 September 2025**.

In accordance with Griffith City Council's Code of Meeting Practice and as permitted under the Local Government Act 1993, this meeting is being live streamed and recorded by Council staff for minute taking and webcasting purposes.

No other webcasting or recording by a video camera, still camera or any other electronic device capable of webcasting or recording is permitted without the prior approval of Council.

Those that are participating in this meeting are advised that your image and what you say will be broadcast live to the public and will also be recorded. You should avoid making statements that might defame or offend and note that Council will not be responsible for your actions and comments.

Members of the public may address Council in relation to the items listed in this Agenda by contacting Council on 1300 176 077 by 12.00 pm on the day of the meeting.

#### Mayoral Minutes

MM01            p3            Governance of Health Services in the Western Riverina

**Scott Grant**

**GENERAL MANAGER**

**CLAUSE** **MM01****TITLE** **Governance of Health Services in the Western Riverina****FROM** **Doug Curran, Mayor****TRIM REF** **25/111029****SUMMARY**

Two Notices of Motion (one from Cr Shari Blumer and one from Cr Anne Napoli) were submitted immediately prior to this Meeting of 23 September 2025, each addressing the important matter of health service governance in our region. It must be noted each Notice of Motion was received after the closure date for inclusion in the Agenda for this Meeting, and would be scheduled to be presented at the Meeting of 14 October 2025.

As the matter is of deep community concern, especially relevant given the Community Rally that was held last Saturday 20 September, I have progressed a Mayoral Minute to be addressed this evening that takes into consideration the content of both Motions, reflecting the depth of concern in our community about how health decisions are made and how resources are allocated under the current Murrumbidgee Local Health District model. For context to the Mayoral Minute, the submitted Notices of Motion have been included for reference, however cannot be addressed as Notices of Motion at this Meeting.

**The first Notice of Motion received** proposes that Council take an evidence-based approach by gathering more detailed information through a survey of the local community and clinical workforce, together with data about Griffith residents' use of Wagga Wagga Base Hospital. This approach would enable Council to form a considered advocacy position, informed by broad community input.

**NOTICE OF MOTION (as received by Cr Shari Blumer ATTACHMENT (A))**

*(a) Council obtain more information about the:*

- i) Community's preferences regarding the governance model for the Griffith Base Hospital, including through a survey (see below); and*
- ii) Number of residents from the Griffith City Council Local Government Area (postcodes 2680, 2681) attending in-patient and out-patient services at the Wagga Wagga Base Hospital, listed by number of occasions of service and type of service.*

*(b) Within two (2) months, Council report back regarding the information obtained pursuant to (a).*

*(c) Following receipt of the information pursuant to (a) and (b), Council vote to endorse an advocacy position regarding governance arrangements for Griffith Base Hospital.*

**The second Notice of Motion received** proposes that Council adopt a firm position in favour of establishing a Western Riverina Local Health District, independent of the Murrumbidgee Local Health District. This proposal reflects the strongly held view of some in the community that the current governance arrangements do not adequately serve Griffith and the wider Western Riverina.

## **NOTICE OF MOTION (as received by Cr Anne Napoli – ATTACHMENT (B))**

*That Griffith City Council:*

- 1. Formally support the establishment of a Western Riverina Local Health District (WRLHD), independent from the current Murrumbidgee Local Health District (MLHD), to better reflect the unique needs, geography, and population of the Western Riverina Region.*
- 2. Acknowledges that the current structure of the MLHD has led to centralised decision-making that does not adequately serve the communities of the Western Riverina, particularly in relation to access to services, hospital funding, workforce retention, clinical governance.*
- 3. Notes that a dedicated WRLHD would empower local governance, improve regional healthcare outcomes, and ensure decisions about health services are made closer to the communities they effect.*
- 4. Write to the NSW Minister for Health, the Premier of NSW, the MLHD Chief Executive, local Members of Parliament, the Deputy Secretary for Regional Health and the NSW Shadow Minister for Health, requesting their support for an independent review into the feasibility and benefits of establishing the Western Riverina Local Health District.*
- 5. Seeks collaboration with neighbouring Councils in the Western Riverina Region to build a joint advocacy campaign supporting the breakaway, including the formation of a working group to gather community and stakeholder input.*
- 6. Commits to engaging with the local community, health professionals, and First Nation Leaders to ensure that any proposed health district realignment reflects the needs and aspirations of all people in the region.*

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**Council:**

- a) Acknowledge the significant concerns within the community regarding the adequacy of health service governance under the current Murrumbidgee Local Health District arrangements.**
- b) Note the advocacy in the community for the establishment of a Western Riverina Local Health District, and recognise the merit of those views.**
- c) Undertake community and stakeholder engagement, including a survey of residents and consultation with local health professionals and First Nations leaders, to obtain evidence of community preferences regarding governance of Griffith Base Hospital and health services in the Western Riverina, to close Friday 31 October 2025.**
- d) Write to the NSW Minister for Health, the Premier of NSW, local Members of Parliament, Chief Executive of MLHD, NSW Shadow Minister for Health, and other Councils in the current Murrumbidgee Local Health District to:**
  - Request a meeting with NSW Minister for Health, The Hon. Ryan Park, MP as soon as practicable**
  - Advise them of Council's concerns and the actions it is taking to gather evidence; and**

- Request that the State Government commit to an independent review into the governance of health services in the Western Riverina.
- e) Receive a report within two months outlining the results of the community engagement and consultation, and consider at that time whether to adopt a formal advocacy position in favour of the establishment of a Western Riverina Local Health District.

## **REPORT**

It is clear that there is deep community concern about the governance of health services in Griffith and the wider region, particularly following the opening of the new Griffith Base Hospital. The question before us is not whether there are problems to solve – these are widely acknowledged – but how Council can best advocate for solutions that strengthen local health outcomes and community confidence.

While Council has no direct jurisdiction over health policy or hospital management, we do have a responsibility to ensure our community's voice is heard. Both Notices of Motion demonstrate a commitment to that responsibility. However, they take different approaches – one favouring immediate advocacy for structural change, and the other favouring further evidence gathering before adopting a formal advocacy position.

## **OPTIONS**

### **OPTION 1**

As per the Recommendation.

### **OPTION2**

Any other resolution of Council.

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

Not Applicable

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISK**

**Minor Low Risk: Low financial loss <\$10,000**

## **COMPLIANCE / LEGAL / STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS AND RISK**

**Minor Low Risk: Policy or regulatory breach has no impact.**

## **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISK**

**Minor Low Risk: Minimal environmental impact handled internally.**

## **REPUTATION / COMMUNITY IMPLICATIONS AND RISK**

**Minor Low Risk: Limited adverse public/staff reaction and/or negative publicity.**

## **SERVICE DELIVERY IMPLICATIONS AND RISK**

**Minor Low Risk: Nil impact to service delivery.**

## **WHS / HR IMPLICATIONS AND RISK**

**Minor Low Risk: No injuries/Nil impact to service delivery.**

### **LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN**

This item links to Council's Strategic Plan item 4.5 Improve access to local health and support services.

### **CONSULTATION**

Senior Management Team

### **ATTACHMENTS**

(a) Notice of Motion - Councillor Shari Blumer	<a href="#"></a>	7
(b) Notice of Motion - Councillor Anne Napoli	<a href="#"></a>	11

 <b>Notice of Motion</b>
<b>Notice of Motion</b>
<b>Councillor's Name *</b> Cr Shari Blumer
<b>Date *</b> 21-Sep-25
<b>Time *</b> 11:30:07 AM
Scott Grant General Manager Griffith City Council GRIFFITH NSW 2680
<b>Dear Mr Grant, I</b> Council advocacy position regarding governance arrangement for Griffith Base hereby give notice of Hospital the following Notice of Motion for the Council Meeting to be held as indicated below: *
<b>Additional Information</b>
<b>Attachments</b> NOTICE OF MOTION - 21st September 2025.docx 24.42KB
<b>Council Meeting Date: *</b> 14-Oct-25
<b>Signature *</b>

<b>Extract from Griffith City Council's Code of Meeting Practice:</b>
Giving notice of business to be considered at Council Meetings
3.10 A councillor may give notice of any business they wish to be considered by the council at its next ordinary meeting by way of a notice of motion. To be included on the agenda of the meeting, the notice of motion must be in writing and must be submitted by 12 pm, five business days before the meeting is to be held.
3.11 A councillor may, in writing to the general manager, request the withdrawal of a notice of motion submitted by them prior to its inclusion in the agenda and business paper for the meeting at which it is to be considered.
3.12 If the General Manager considers that a notice of motion submitted by a Councillor for consideration at an ordinary meeting of the Council has legal, strategic, financial or policy implications which should be taken into consideration by the meeting, the general manager may prepare a report in relation to the notice of motion for inclusion with the business papers for the meeting at which the notice of motion is to be considered by the Council.
3.13 A notice of motion for the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the council's current adopted operational plan must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the notice of motion. If the notice of motion does not identify a funding source, the general manager must either:
(a) prepare a report on the availability of funds for implementing the motion if adopted for inclusion in the business papers for the meeting at which the notice of motion is to be considered by the council, or

(b) by written notice sent to all councillors with the business papers for the meeting for which the notice of motion has been submitted, defer consideration of the matter by the council to such a date specified in the notice, pending the preparation of such a report.

Questions with notice

3.14 A councillor may, by way of a notice submitted under clause 3.10, ask a question for response by the general manager about the performance or operations of the council.

3.15 A councillor is not permitted to ask a question with notice under clause 3.14 that comprises a complaint against the general manager or a member of staff of the council, or a question that implies wrongdoing by the general manager or a member of staff of the council.

3.16 The general manager or their nominee may respond to a question with notice submitted under clause 3.14 by way of a report included in the business papers for the relevant meeting of the council or orally at the meeting.

**In relation to Section** Nil

**3.13 - Please identify  
the source of funding  
for expenditure if  
applicable:\***

**Privacy Protection Notice**

- This information is being collected to process your notice in accordance with Council's Code of Meeting Practice policy.
- This information is voluntarily required to process your request and will not be used for any other purpose without seeking your consent, or as required by law.
- Your information may comprise part of a public register related to this purpose.
- This form will be retained in Council's Records Management System and disposed of in accordance with the Local Government Disposal Authority.
- You can access and correct your personal information at any time by contacting Council.
- For further details on how the Griffith City Council manages personal information, please refer to our Privacy Management Plan.

## NOTICE OF MOTION

### SUMMARY

The new \$250 million Griffith Base Hospital was opened on 26 June 2025 and is managed by the Murrumbidgee Local Health District (**MLHD**). MLHD manages a Health District 125,243 km<sup>2</sup> in size, with approximately 249,164 residents and 33 public hospitals (the most number of hospitals for any Health District in New South Wales).

On 20 September 2025, at a community rally in Memorial Park, concerns were raised that the Hospital was not being adequately resourced or staffed. This was stated to be due to current governance arrangements, under which the Hospital is managed by MLHD, which is predominantly based in Wagga Wagga and is perceived to favour allocation of resources and staff to the Wagga Wagga Base Hospital, over Griffith Base Hospital.

A petition has been organized by Ms Helen Dalton, Member for Murray, regarding a proposal to split the current Health District managed by MLHD, to create a smaller Health District, to enable more locally-based resourcing and staffing decisions.

Concerns have also been raised by some members of the community regarding potential inefficiencies and unintended consequences if a new Health District were to be created.

Council does not have jurisdiction over health policy. However, given the prominence of this issue, it is likely that the community will expect Council to engage in informed advocacy on behalf of the community. In principle, Council should be willing to advocate for a governance model which will best support community health and wellbeing.

A survey would be a valuable addition to the petition being organized by Ms Dalton, given that the surveys could obtain more detailed information which can also be de-identified, which may encourage more frank responses, particularly from clinical staff.

### RECOMMENDATION

- (a) Council obtain more information about the:
  - i) Community's preferences regarding the governance model for the Griffith Base Hospital, including through a survey (see **below**); and
  - ii) Number of residents from the Griffith City Council Local Government Area (postcodes 2680, 2681) attending in-patient and out-patient services at the Wagga Wagga Base Hospital, listed by number of occasions of service and type of service.
- (b) Within two (2) months, Council report back regarding the information obtained pursuant to (a).

(c) Following receipt of the information pursuant to (a) and (b), Council vote to endorse an advocacy position regarding governance arrangements for Griffith Base Hospital.

Survey

Suggested recommendations for the survey questions are set out below:

1. What postcode do you live in?
2. Do you work in healthcare, including mental health or allied health?
3. In the order of 1 to 3, with 1 being your first preference and 3 being your last preference, number the following propositions:
  - a. The current governance model for Griffith Base Hospital be retained, under which MLHD manages resourcing and staffing for the Hospital;
  - b. The current governance model for Griffith Base Hospital should be changed, by splitting MLHD into two Health Districts, under which a smaller and more locally-based Health District would manage resourcing and staffing for the Griffith Base Hospital; and
  - c. The current governance model for Griffith Base Hospital should be changed, by retaining MLHD, but also establishing a Hospital Board comprised of local clinical and allied health professionals and community members, to provide the Griffith Base Hospital with more financial delegation and autonomy to manage resourcing and staffing.

**OPTIONS**

**OPTION 1**

As per the Recommendation.

**OPTION 2**

Any other resolution of Council.

**REPUTATION / COMMUNITY IMPLICATIONS AND RISK**

Given the prominence of this issue, it is likely that the community will expect Griffith City Council to engage in informed advocacy on behalf of the community.

**Joanne Bollen**

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**Subject:** FW: Notice of Motion- Support for Establishing a Western Riverina Local Health District

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**From:** Cr Anne Napoli <[anapol@griffith.com.au](mailto:anapol@griffith.com.au)>

**Sent:** Monday, 22 September 2025 4:53 PM

**To:** Cr Doug Curran <[dcurran@griffith.com.au](mailto:dcurran@griffith.com.au)>; Scott Grant

**Cc:** GCC Councillors ; Senior Management Team

**Subject:** Notice of Motion- Support for Establishing a Western Riverina Local Health District

Mr. Mayor and Mr. Grant,

There is great community expectation that us Councillors and Griffith City Council advocate for better health care.

I would like with your permission for this Notice of Motion to be debated tomorrow night please.

MOTION.

That Griffith City Council:

1. Formally support the establishment of a Western Riverina Local Health District (WRLHD), independent from the current Murrumbidgee Local Health District (MLHD), to better reflect the unique needs, geography, and population of the Western Riverina Region.

2. Acknowledges that the current structure of the MLHD has led to centralised decision-making that does not adequately serve the communities of the Western Riverina, particularly in relation to access to services, hospital funding, workforce retention, clinical governance.

3. Notes that a dedicated WRLHD would empower local governance, improve regional healthcare outcomes, and ensure decisions about health services are made closer to the communities they effect.

4. Write to the NSW Minister for Health, the Premier of NSW, the MLHD Chief Executive, local Members of Parliament, the Deputy Secretary for Regional Health and the NSW Shadow Minister for Health, requesting their support for an independent review into the feasibility and benefits of establishing the Western Riverina Local Health District.

5. Seeks collaboration with neighbouring Councils in the Western Riverina Region to build a joint advocacy campaign supporting the breakaway, including the formation of a working group to gather community and stakeholder input.

6. Commits to engaging with the local community, health professionals, and First Nation Leaders to ensure that any proposed health district realignment reflects the needs and aspirations of all people in the region.

BACKGROUND:

The Murrumbidgee Local Health District (MLHD) currently spans a vast and diverse geographical area, incorporating both large regional centres and a small rural communities. While efforts have been made to provide consistent services, many more residents of the Western Riverina Region- such as those in Griffith, Leeton, Narrandera, and surrounding towns - experience persistent issues related to health service delivery, including:

- \*. Inadequate local control and representation in key decision making processes.
- \*. Poor service accessibility and lack of specialist services;
- \*. Workforce shortages in clinical and allied health fields;
- \*. Cultural and geographic disconnection from central MLHD administration hubs.

The formation of a Western Riverina Local Health District would align healthcare governance more closely with regional needs, allow for targeted investment in rural healthcare infrastructure, and facilitate stronger partnerships with local stakeholders.

This motion seeks to initiate a structured conversation and sets a clear position for Griffith City Council in advocating a more responsive and locally governed health system for the Western Riverina.

Anne Napoli,  
Deputy Mayor.  
Sent from my iPad

**Anne Napoli**  
Councillor  
 0407 001 849



Griffith City Council  
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**w** griffith.nsw.gov.au

Griffith City Council acknowledges and respects the Wiradjuri people as the traditional custodians and ancestors of the land and waters where we work.