DARK SKY COORDINATING COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

MINUTES
OPEN MEETING

26 May 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 RECORD OF ATTENDANCE 4

1.1 ATTENDANCE 4

1.2 PRAYERS 4

1.3 APOLOGIES 4

1.4 LEAVE OF ABSENCE PREVIOUSLY APPROVED 4

2.0 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING 5

2.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS DARK SKY COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEETING 5

3.0 REPORTS OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES 6

3.1 DRAFT VISITOR EXPERIENCE PLAN 6

3.2 WORKING GROUP UPDATES 9

4.0 GENERAL BUSINESS 12

4.1 RESIGNATION OF COMMITTEE MEMBER 12

THE PUBLIC IS ADVISED THAT IT IS COUNCIL POLICY TO RECORD THE PROCEEDINGS OF MEETINGS OF COUNCIL ON DIGITAL MEDIA TO ASSIST IN THE PREPARATION OF MINUTES AND TO ENSURE THAT A TRUE AND ACCURATE ACCOUNT OF DEBATE AND DISCUSSION OF MEETINGS IS AVAILABLE. THIS AUDIO RECORDING IS AUTHORISED BY THE *LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MEETING PROCEDURES) REGULATIONS 2025.*

MINUTES OF AN DARK SKY COORDINATING COMMITTEE OF THE CIRCULAR HEAD COUNCIL TO BE HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 33 GOLDIE STREET, SMITHTON ON TUESDAY 26 MAY 2026, COMMENCING AT 3:00 PM

	From	To	Time Occupied
Open Committee	3:01pm	4:14pm	73 minutes
TOTAL TIME OCCUPIED	3:01pm	4:14pm	73 minutes

AUDIO RECORDING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS POLICY

The Chairman is to declare the meeting open (time), welcome those present in attendance and advise that the meeting will be recorded, in accordance with the Council Policy '**GOV.017 - Audio Recording of Council Meetings**' to "record meetings of Council to assist in the preparation of minutes and ensure a true and accurate account of debate and discussion at meetings is available".

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Circular Head Council acknowledges the North West Tasmanian Aboriginal people as the traditional custodians of the country on which we stand, meet and play. We recognise their continuing connection to the land, waters, and community. We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

1.0 RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

1.1 ATTENDANCE

Sally Collins
Kerry Houston
Ellen Power
Jeremy Ward
Stephen Hafner

IN ATTENDANCE

Gerard Blizzard - (Mayor)
Paul Gardner - (Chief Executive Officer & General Manager)
Jodie Smedley - (Executive Officer/Minute Taker)

1.2 PRAYERS

1.3 APOLOGIES

CASSIE THOMAS

MARK DABNER

1.4 LEAVE OF ABSENCE PREVIOUSLY APPROVED

2.0 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

2.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS DARK SKY COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEETING

001/26

MOVED BY	HOUSTON
SECONDED BY	WARD

RECOMMENDATION
That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Circular Head Council held at Council Chambers 33 Goldie Street Smithton on Wednesday 25 March 2026, a copy of which having previously been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting, be confirmed as a true record.

The MOTION was put and was CARRIED.

IN FAVOUR

	CR COLLINS	HOUSTON	MAYOR BLIZZARD
POWER		WARD	HAFNER

3.0 REPORTS OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

3.1 DRAFT VISITOR EXPERIENCE PLAN

To:	Dark Sky Coordinating Committee
Reporting Officer:	Executive Officer
Responsible Manager:	General Manager
Report Date:	19 March 2026
File Reference:	
Enclosures:	1. Draft Visitor Experience Plan

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present the Circular Head Dark Skies Visitor Experience Plan (Draft) to the Committee for noting and Committee discussion.

BACKGROUND

Council has been progressing the Circular Head Dark Skies initiative, with a focus on achieving International Dark Sky accreditation and strengthening the region's tourism offering.

As part of this work, a Visitor Experience Plan has been developed to guide how night-sky tourism experiences can be delivered across the municipality in a structured and scalable manner.

DETAILS

The Circular Head Dark Skies Visitor Experience Plan outlines a staged approach to developing the region's night-sky tourism offering, built around accessibility, education, and low-impact principles.

The plan introduces a three-tier visitor experience model, including:

Tier 1 – Open Access / Self-Guided Experiences
Immediate, low-cost opportunities for visitors and the community to engage with the night sky.

Tier 2 – Guided & Hosted Experiences
Small-group, facilitated experiences incorporating education and storytelling.

Tier 3 – Premium & Immersive Experiences
Long-term, high-value tourism offerings targeting interstate and international markets.

The plan also identifies key supporting elements, including:

- Marketing and promotional strategies
- Recommended stargazing applications
- Infrastructure considerations
- Dependencies such as site identification and cultural consultation

The document is intended to act as a guiding framework, with implementation to occur progressively as locations, partnerships, and supporting infrastructure are confirmed.

STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

Statutory Requirements

There are no statutory implications as a result of this report.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan Reference

GOAL:	**Economy - To cultivate a resilient and prosperous economy that enhances the viability and character of Circular Head. Through fostering innovation, entrepreneurship, and diverse business clusters, we aim to create vibrant town centres, attract visitors and investment, and provide lifelong learning and employment opportunities for all community members - particularly young people and future generations.**
Desired Outcomes	
Support for local businesses and entrepreneurs	
Our Priorities	
Develop strong regional economic ties and connections between Smithton and Stanley	

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There are no policy implications as a result of this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental implications as a result of this report. The plan promotes low-impact and environmentally sensitive approaches to night-sky tourism.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no immediate financial implications associated with noting this report. Future implementation of identified actions may be considered through normal budget processes.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk implications as a result of this report.

Potential future risks relate to:

- Reputational risk if expectations are not managed during staged delivery
- Delivery risk associated with infrastructure and site identification

CONSULTATION PROCESS

Initial internal consultation has informed the development of the draft plan. Further consultation, including with key stakeholders and Aboriginal representatives, will be undertaken as part of implementation.

CONCLUSION

The Circular Head Dark Skies Visitor Experience Plan provides a structured and scalable framework to support the development of night-sky tourism within the region.

The plan is presented to the Committee for noting as a foundational document to guide future work under the Dark Skies initiative.

002/26

MOVED BY	MAYOR BLIZZARD
SECONDED BY	HOUSTON

RECOMMENDATION

That the Dark Sky Coordinating Committee note the Circular Head Dark Skies Visitor Experience Plan (Draft)

The MOTION was put and was CARRIED.

IN FAVOUR

	CR COLLINS	HOUSTON	MAYOR BLIZZARD
POWER		WARD	HAFNER

Roundtable discussion had amongst committee members.

3.2 WORKING GROUP UPDATES

To:	Dark Sky Coordinating Committee
Reporting Officer:	Executive Officer
Responsible Manager:	General Manager
Report Date:	19 March 2026
File Reference:	
Enclosures:	Nil

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide an opportunity for each Dark Sky working group stream to present a verbal update on progress, priorities, and emerging actions.

BACKGROUND

The Dark Sky Program has been structured into multiple working group streams to support a coordinated and strategic approach toward achieving Dark Sky accreditation and associated community, environmental, and tourism outcomes.

Each working group has been progressing actions in accordance with their respective Terms of Reference and initial planning discussions.

DETAILS

The following working group streams will provide verbal updates to the Committee:

Communications and Engagement

Update on community awareness initiatives, stakeholder engagement activities, education campaigns, and communication strategies supporting Dark Sky objectives.

Cultural

Update on engagement with cultural stakeholders, incorporation of Aboriginal cultural values, and opportunities to align Dark Sky initiatives with cultural heritage and storytelling.

Infrastructure

Update on lighting audits, infrastructure planning, policy development (including lighting guidelines), and any works or upgrades required to meet Dark Sky standards.

Accreditation

Update on progress toward Dark Sky accreditation requirements, including documentation, compliance measures, application readiness, and alignment with International Dark Sky standards.

Visitor Experience

Update on development of visitor experience opportunities, including tourism product development, interpretation, infrastructure to support visitation, and alignment with broader economic development initiatives.

STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

Statutory Requirements

There are no statutory implications as a result of this report.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan Reference

GOAL:	**Governance - To be trusted, high-performing Council that delivers quality services, demonstrates strong governance and accountability, embraces innovation and continuous improvement, and ensures long-term financial sustainability for the Circular Head community.**
Desired Outcomes	
Ensuring effective governance and accountability frameworks	
Our Priorities	
Management of Council's corporate governance responsibilities and accountabilities	

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There are no policy implications as a result of this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental implications as a result of this report.

(Note: Environmental outcomes are being considered within the broader Dark Sky Program.)

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk implications as a result of this report.

CONSULTATION PROCESS

There are no consultation requirements as a result of this report.

CONCLUSION

The verbal updates from each working group will provide the Committee with a consolidated overview of progress to date and support coordinated delivery of the Dark Sky Program across all workstreams.

003/26

MOVED BY	MAYOR BLIZZARD
SECONDED BY	WARD

RECOMMENDATION

That the Dark Sky Coordinating Committee notes the verbal updates provided by each of the working group streams.

The MOTION was put and was CARRIED.

IN FAVOUR

	CR COLLINS	HOUSTON	MAYOR BLIZZARD
POWER		WARD	HAFNER

All provided updates on their relating Working Group in a discussion format.

4.0 GENERAL BUSINESS

4.1 RESIGNATION OF COMMITTEE MEMBER

Chair Collins received on 26 May 2026 written resignation from Committee member Cassie Thomas.

Letter presented and accepted by Coordinating Committee without objection.

Chair Collins has nominated Tony McGillvery as Cassie Thomas' replacement. Committee unanimously approved this nomination. New nomination to be ratified at the next Council Meeting.

004/26

MOVED BY	MAYOR BLIZZARD
SECONDED BY	HAFNER

RECOMMENDATION

That the Dark Sky Coordinating Committee:

1. **Approves the nomination of Tony McGillvery to replace Cassie Thomas.**
2. **Approves the nomination to be sent to next Council Meeting for ratification.**

The MOTION was put and was CARRIED.

IN FAVOUR

	CR COLLINS	HOUSTON	MAYOR BLIZZARD
POWER		WARD	HAFNER

Confirmed,

CHAIR

22 July 2026