



Local Government Association Tasmania

General Meeting

Agenda

10.00am

(Coffee on arrival from 9.30)

17 February 2017

**The Tramsheds Function Centre
Invermay**

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**PROCEDURAL MATTERS.
RULES REGARDING CONDUCT OF MEETINGS**

13. WHO MAY ATTEND A MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION

- (a) Each Member shall be entitled to send a voting delegate to any Meeting of the Association, such voting delegate exercising the number of votes determined according to Rule 16(a).
- (b) After each ordinary Council election, the Chief Executive Officer shall request each Member to advise the name of its voting delegate and the proxy for the voting delegate for Meetings of the Association until the next ordinary Council elections.
- (c) Members may change their voting delegate or proxy at any time by advising the Chief Executive Officer in writing over the hand of the voting delegate or the General Manager prior to that delegate taking his or her position at a Meeting.
- (d) A list of voting delegates will be made available at the commencement of any Meeting of the Association.
- (e) Members may send other elected members or Council officers as observers to any Meeting of the Association.

14. PROXIES AT MEETINGS

- (a) Up to 1 hour prior to any Meeting of the Association, a Member may appoint another Member as its proxy.
- (b) The form of the proxy is to be provided by the Chief Executive Officer and is to be signed by either the Mayor or General Manager of the Council appointing the proxy.
- (c) The Chair of the meeting is not entitled to inquire as to whether the proxy has cast any vote in accordance with the wishes of the Member appointing the proxy.
- (d) Proxies count for the purposes of voting and quorum at any meeting.

15. QUORUM AT MEETINGS

At any Meeting of the Association, a majority of the Member Councils shall constitute a quorum.

16. VOTING AT MEETINGS

- (a) Voting at any Meeting of the Association shall be upon the basis of each voting delegate being provided with, immediately prior to the meeting, a placard which is to be used for the purpose of voting at the meeting. The placard will be coloured according to the number of votes to which the Member is entitled:

Population of the Council Area	Number of votes entitled to be exercised by the voting delegate	Colour placard to be raised by the voting delegate when voting
Under 10,000	1	Red
10,000 – 19,999	2	White
20,000 – 39,999	3	Blue
40,000 and above	4	Green

- (b) The Chairman of the meeting shall be entitled to rely upon the raising of a coloured placard as the recording of the vote for the Member and as evidence of the number of votes being cast.
- (c) Except as provided in sub-rule (d), each question, matter or resolution shall be decided by a majority of the votes capable of being cast by Members present at the Meeting. If there is an equal number of votes upon any question, it shall be declared not carried.
- (d) (i) When a vote is being taken to amend a Policy of the Association, the resolution must be carried by a majority of the votes capable of being cast by Members, whether present at the Meeting or not.
 (ii) When a vote is being taken for the Association to sign a protocol, memorandum of understanding or partnership agreement, the resolution must be carried by a majority of votes capable of being cast by Members and by a majority of Members, whether present at the Meeting or not.
 (iii) When a vote is being taken to amend the Rules of the Association, the resolution must be carried by at least two-thirds of the votes capable of being cast by Members, whether present at the Meeting or not.

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* Denotes Attachment



GENERAL MEETING SCHEDULE

- 9.30** **Morning Tea on arrival**
- 10.00** **Meeting Commences**
- 10.30** **Tom Black, Chair, RDA Tasmania**
Craig Perkins, CEO, RDA Tasmania
- 11.00** **Alex Tay, Director, Local Government Division**
Greg Brown, Local Government Division
- 1.30 pm** **Approximately lunch**
- Close**

Opening Comment About New Meeting Format

At various times there has been criticism of the General Meeting format and the level of interest/engagement for attending councils. In response, the Association introduced items for topical discussion and has tried to ensure greater relevance in speakers who are presenting.

Reflecting on the level of interaction and engagement at the TasWater workshop held in Longford in early September, the GMC have agreed that LGAT could opportunistically apply a similar style of facilitation (small group work, collective feedback) to some of the items for topical discussion. For example, if seeking early impressions on State Government Policy (such as cat management) or in developing a strategic response to emerging issues (such as the Building Act).

Breaking into smaller groups might make it easier for all members to engage and lend itself to useful and targeted advice to LGAT from Members which supports our strategic/advocacy agenda.

It is not suggested this style be used for every item of topical discussion but where there would be a value add from having a conversation which was deeper and richer.

The rules allow a suspension of meeting procedures for items of topical discussion.

We will try this with **Item 4.1** on this Meeting Agenda.

Further, you will note we have reconfigured the meeting times to allow for us to end with lunch. We will start with a robust morning tea and have a late lunch at 1.30. We are trying this format to see if we achieve a better and more sustained momentum for the meeting.

I would welcome your feedback on these changes.

Dr Katrena Stephenson
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Katrena.stephenson@lgat.tas.gov.au

1. GOVERNANCE

1.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES *

Decision Sought

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2016, as circulated, be confirmed.

Background:

The Minutes of the General Meeting held on 4 November 2016, as circulated, are submitted for confirmation and are at **Attachment to Item 1.1.**

1.2 BUSINESS ARISING *

Decision Sought

That Members note the information.

Background:

At Attachment to Item 1.2 is a schedule of business considered at the previous meeting and its status.

1.3 CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA

Decision Sought

That consideration be given to the Agenda items and the order of business.

Background:

Delegates will be invited to confirm the agenda for the meeting and the order of business.

1.4 FOLLOW UP OF MOTIONS*

Decision Sought

That Members note the report.

Background:

A table detailing action taken to date in relation to motions passed at previous meetings is at **Attachment to Item 1.4.**

1.5 PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Decision Sought

That Members note the report on activity since the last General Meeting.

Meetings

- ALGA Board Meeting
- ALGA Launch of Disability Guide
- General Management Committee
- Launceston City Council Visit, Flinders Island Council Visit
- LGAT General Meeting
- LGAT Stakeholder BBQ
- Mayor's Professional Development Day
- National Roads and Transport Congress
- NW Regional Breakfast
- Premier's Local Government Council
- Regular meetings with the LGAT CEO

Media/Communication

- ALGA Vice Presidency
- The Pulse

Other

- Elected Vice President Australian Local Government Association.

1.6 CEO REPORT

Decision Sought

That Members note the report on activity since the last General Meeting.

Key meetings and events

- Alex Tay, Director of Local Government
- ALGA Strategic Planning
- Audit Office regarding new related parties standards (working group)
- Audit Office regarding Report on Local Government
- AustCham Shanghai teleconference
- Breakfast meeting with other peak bodies to discuss State Budget priorities
- Commonwealth Bank regarding LGAT investments
- Concepts of Change, TasWater Stakeholder Discussions (pricing)
- Electoral Commissioner – general catch up
- Flood recovery review team

- General Management Committee
- GO1 training providers
- Interview by UTS (Telephone) on Local Government and NDIS
- Kim Evans – Secretary State Growth
- Launceston City Council, Southern Midlands Council, Sorell Council, Hobart City Council, Flinders Island Council, Huon Valley Council
- Launch of Towards Zero Road Safety Strategy
- Legislative Council Committee – TasWater
- LG PR Working Group
- LGAT Assist Board Meeting
- LGAT General Meeting
- LGAT Stakeholder BBQ
- Local Government Professionals Tasmania Board Meeting
- Mark Media regarding future magazine printing
- Mayor’s Professional Development Day
- McCarthur regarding LG remuneration survey
- NW Regional Breakfast
- Planning Reform Taskforce x2
- Premier’s Local Government Council
- Premier’s Local Government Council Officials’ Meeting
- Presentation to Women in Leadership Summit
- Regional Authorities regarding State Budget
- Road Safety Advisory Council
- Southern Tasmanian Councils Authority Meeting
- T21 stakeholder update
- Tasmanian Workforce Planning Reference Group Teleconference
- Telstra regarding mobile roaming/impacts on communities
- Tony McCall – Advisor to Minister Gutwein
- VEC Civil Engineering
- Will Joscelyne, Chief of Staff for Minister Hidding

Strategic Policy Activity

- Submission on the State Budget
- Submission to Legislative Council Scrutiny Committee, TasWater

Media and Messaging

- The Pulse Newsletter
- Print and radio regarding Audit-General’s Report on Local Government, changes to Building Act/Regulations, Huon Valley Council, TasWater, Air BnB, Council Rates, State Planning Provisions
- Planning Op Ed picked up by the Advocate and the Mercury
- Letter to Editor, TasWater Dividends
- Media release ALGA Vice Presidency

Organisational

- GMC Elections
- Probation Performance Review Executive Officer
- Review of the LGAT Assist Rules
- Introduction of electronic voting at General Meetings
- Changes to LGAT Communications/Better Councils Campaign
- LGAT Member Survey
- Workshop to look at LGAT Sponsorship arrangements and opportunities
- Development of LGAT Sponsorship Policy
- Review of LGAT Investment Policy

1.7 MONTHLY REPORTS TO COUNCILS*

Decision Sought

That Members note the reports for October, November and December 2016

Background:

Monthly reports to Councils that briefly outline Association activities and outcomes for the previous months are at **Attachment to Item 1.7**.

2. ITEMS FOR DECISION

2.1 MOTION – ELECTED MEMBERS ACCESS TO ELECTORAL ROLLS Council – Clarence City

Decision Sought

1. That LGAT Supports the entitlement of all councillors in Tasmania to be provided with a hard copy or electronic copy of the electoral roll for their Local Government Area, including the General Manager's Roll for that area, with regular updates; and
2. That LGAT calls on the Tasmanian Government to put forward the legislative changes necessary to give effect to this entitlement, noting that details such as the regularity of updates, permitted uses of the roll and how the costs of providing the roll will be funded; and what safeguards will be put in place to ensure copies of the roll are transmitted securely are matters to be determined by the Tasmanian Government in consultation with Local Government.

Background

Candidates in Local Government elections in Tasmania are entitled to a hard copy of the electoral roll for their Local Government Area, including the General Manager's Roll, after the roll closes for that election.

Subsection 261(6) of Tasmania's *Local Government Act 1993* provides:

"The returning officer on request is to provide each candidate in an electoral area with one copy of the list of electors free of charge as soon as practicable after the roll closure day".

Subsection (7) provides:

"A person, body or organisation must not, without reasonable excuse, use information obtained from a list of electors provided under subsection (6), unless the information is used for purposes connected with an election.

Penalty:

"Fine not exceeding 50 penalty units".

By law, State and Federal Members of Parliament are entitled to ongoing access to electronic and/or print editions of the electoral roll, updated regularly, for the division they represent throughout their term.

This entitlement is provided by Section 40 of Tasmania's *Electoral Act 2004* and Section 90B of the Commonwealth *Electoral Act 1918*.

It stands to reason that if State and Federal Members of Parliament need to access the electoral roll in order to communicate with the electors they represent then the same argument can be applied to representatives in Local Government.

Under the current law, councillors elected as endorsed candidates of a registered political party may receive an unfair advantage, as it could be reasonably argued that they are entitled to use the electoral roll information supplied to their registered political party for electoral purposes at any time during their term.

A similar advantage may be available to a member of a political party who would seek to be a candidate in a Local Government election and use their party's entitlement to the roll to support their candidacy.

2.2 MOTION - EXTENDING TERM OF GMC MEMBERS

Contact Officer – Katrena Stephenson

Decision Sought

That the Members agree to an extension of the term of office of the two Southern GMC Members elected to fill casual vacancies during 2016.

Background

An election to fill the casual GMC vacancy (Southern Electoral District, councils with populations less than 20,000) left by the resignation of Deidre Flint has been undertaken with Mayor Tony Bisdee declared the new representative in December 2016. In July 2016 Alderman Heather Chong was elected to fill the vacancy left by Mayor Kristie Johnston.

Under our Rules, GMC elections are to be held next year, with nominations to be requested in March and commencement of the newly elected GMC after the AGM/Conference.

It has been usual practice, when a casual vacancy falls close to an election, to extend the term of that GMC Member rather than run a second election so close to the first. The extension of term must be agreed through a General Meeting.

The Meeting last agreed to an extension of term in February 2015 in relation to the President (then Barry Jarvis) when Barry Easther retired before the completion of his term and also to Mayor Perkins, who was filling the casual vacancy created by the election to President of Mayor Jarvis.

Given the membership has only recently voted these positions, the GMC recommend the extension of their terms, noting that the elections for the other GMC positions would be conducted in the normal way.

Budget Impact

Does not apply.

Current Policy

As per LGAT Rules s20 and s21.

3. ITEMS FOR NOTING

3.1 STATE BUDGET SUBMISSION Contact Officer – Katrena Stephenson

Decision Sought

That Members note the following report.

Background

LGAT was invited to make a submission to the 2017-18 State Budget Community Consultation process. Submissions were to be provided by 8 December, 2016.

In preparation, LGAT:

- Sought feedback from General Managers in relation to last year's priorities and emerging priorities;
- Met with the regional bodies to identify overarching structural/resourcing issues;
- Initiated a meeting with a range of peak bodies to look at areas of common interest; and
- Reviewed last year's submission against key current policy drivers at a state and national level.

In addition to the LGAT submission, we are working with a range of peak bodies on a joint vision statement to be released in 2017. TasCoss is co-ordinating this work. Each peak body has been asked to submit a few lines related to a broad vision for the State/from the State Government.

Based on our Electoral and Budget submissions last year, LGAT suggested as a starting point:

"We are seeking a range of investments that:

- *Will serve the State well in increasing productivity and securing the wellbeing of all communities.*
- *Improve community outcomes across areas such as education, health, ageing and social inclusion.*
- *Ensure vibrant, resilient, healthy and safe communities.*

There should be clearly understood roles and responsibilities across governments, industries and communities and a joint commitment to outcomes".

As usual, the timeframe to make submissions was very tight and did not allow for much too-ing and fro-ing.

We have indicated that the President and CEO would like to meet with the Minister to run through the submission. The final submission was provided to councils in December and is also available on the LGAT website.

Budget Impact

Does not apply.

Current Policy

Aligns with already articulated positions.

- *Strategic Plan: Priority Area 1: Strengthening Strategic Relationships*

3.2 CODE OF CONDUCT *

Contact Officer – Katrena Stephenson

Decision Sought

- 1. That Members note the report by LGAT and presentation by the Local Government Division; and**
- 2. That Members note the Government has committed to a twelve month review of the Code of Conduct legislation.**

Background

Concerns have been raised about the Code of Conduct legislation which commenced in April 2016. With the significant change of elected members at the October 2014 elections, some of the history on sector led advocacy has been lost. Many of the current provisions relate directly to requests from our sector.

It appears timely to provide some background to Members ahead of the review.

The new code of conduct framework and the subsequent model code of conduct order, is the outcome of significant consideration and consultation with Local Government. This included discussion papers issued by LGAT in June and November 2010, a Working Group Paper issued by LGAT in Sep 2013, an outline of recommendations to the State Government to the December 2013 General Meeting, a discussion paper on the Amendment Bill issued by the State Government in October 2014, and draft Bill for consultation in early 2015.

A joint State Government and Local Government working group developed the new framework. The model code of conduct was developed in close consultation with Local Government and the Integrity Commission.

At the July 2015 General Meeting, the following motions were carried in relation to LGAT's advocacy on the Code of Conduct Bill.

- That the Meeting agree that Mayors will write to MLCs in support of the Local Government (Code of Conduct) Bill, noting the significant consultation that has occurred with councils since 2010.
- That the single Code of Conduct Panel be able to investigate, hear and determine code of conduct complaints.
- Provide for some flexibility for councils to expand upon core elements in the Regulated (Model) Code of Conduct.
- That there continue to be a requirement to pay a fee to lodge a complaint, noting that the fee is reimbursed if the complaint is upheld.
- That there remain an ability to withdraw a complaint.
- That given the need to contain costs and to deal with complaints expeditiously, legal representation not be allowed in Standard Panel Hearings.
- That the legislation allow for a Code of Conduct complaint to be submitted locally to the General Manager to check that proper procedure has been adopted before forwarding to the Standards Panel.

- That the one month suspension sanction be changed to allow for up to three months suspension in order to offer an effective deterrent for bad behaviour.

The Bill was passed in September 2015 and commenced on 13 April 2016.

A key change was that the independent Panel (previously known as the Standards Panel) which was administered by LGAT is now administered by the Local Government Division.

This was an important change for the Association with two impacts:

1. It freed up resources to focus on governance policy and training; and
2. It allowed a more appropriate alignment with the overarching authority for the Local Government Act (the Director of Local Government) as opposed to having a Member body appearing to be sitting in judgement of its Members and charging them for that.

LGAT provided significant support to hand over tools, templates letters and reports and training notes which had been updated to reflect changes to the Act, but undoubtedly there will be a difference in approach and gaps in experience in the early period of transition. The Association continues to provide support and feedback on process as appropriate.

There were a significant number of amendments made by the Legislative Council during the passage of the legislation. A key change of concern was a much more regulated Code with little flexibility for councils to vary the settings. However, the eight standards of conduct set out in the model code of conduct are the same standards as those provided for under the previous framework (e.g., conflict of interest, use of office, and gifts and benefits).

The standard of 'decision making' is technically new however this standard was included in the former Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT) model code and was included in a number of the council code of conducts.

An extract from the 2014 LGAT Model Code of Conduct is at **Attachment to Item 3.2**.

The Local Government Division has noted the concerns expressed that councillors cannot speak frankly for fear of causing offence and this is fettering debate.

Part 7 (1) – Relationships with community, councillors and Council employees of the Model Code states that a councillor must treat all persons with courtesy, fairness, dignity and respect and that a councillor “must not cause any reasonable person offence or embarrassment”.

They explain that while a “reasonable person” is a common law term and is not defined within the Model Code or the Act, a minor infringement of a council’s code of conduct has the ability to be dismissed by the chairperson at the initial assessment stage on the basis that it is frivolous or possibly vexatious.

As the Division continues to work with new Panel Chairs and they gain experience, it is our expectation that there will be more use of these provisions.

The new framework actually provides a number of improvements to the previous system. For example, an initial assessment stage allows complaints to be dismissed at an early stage. This could not be done under the old legislation, once referred to the Standards Panel the matter had to be heard.

It is LGAT’s understanding that two complaints have been dismissed without hearing under these new provisions. Further the requirement to have local panels was abolished.

Other improvements which the sector advocated for include:

- Stricter sanctions including suspension of office for up to three months;
- A penalty for failure to comply with a sanction;
- More flexible investigation and hearing provisions which mean that a panel is not obliged to conduct a hearing automatically, thus saving time and expense in appropriate circumstances; and
- A review provision on the grounds of failure to provide natural justice.

Eleven code of conduct complaints have been received by the Local Government Division between 13 April 2016 and 1 December 2016 however it should be noted there were few complaints lodged prior to councils adopting the Model Code and this figure actually represents a higher rate of complaint if the timespan between the first and last complaint is considered.

This likely is a reflection of public interest generated by media coverage of the changes as well as renewed faith in the process because of improvements to process, sanctions and enforcement.

The costs being experienced by councils where complaints have been lodged are not dissimilar to LGAT's full cost attribution (applied to Hobart City Council while they were not a member) but may reflect a higher direct cost than previously experienced by councils because the administration costs were funded through LGAT subscriptions. As outlined earlier, the resource is now being used to support governance policy and training instead.

Regardless of the origin of the changes, as with any significant change process, evaluation is critical and supported.

LGAT will be engaging with councils as part of the review process and will be seeking both general and specific feedback on all aspects of the Code of Conduct legislation and process.

Budget Impact

Does not apply.

Current Policy

As outlined above.

3.3 REVIEW OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT
Contact Officer - Katrena Stephenson

Decision Sought

That Members note the following report.

Background

Following consultation on a targeted review of the *Local Government Act 1993*, the Steering Committee made recommendations to the Minister in September 2016. Cabinet approved the drafting of an amendment Bill on 20 December 2016.

The Local Government Division has advised that drafting on the Bill will commence shortly and as soon as it is completed it will be released for public consultation. A communication plan is being developed.

The key amendments are:

- Clarifying and expanding upon the role of mayor to include, for example, promoting good governance, carrying out civic and ceremonial functions;
- A power to issue Ministerial Orders on matters such as the key roles of mayors and deputy mayors, the recruitment and performance appraisal of general managers and operational and strategic matters;
- Implementing Performance Improvement Directions as a quicker way of addressing dysfunction in a council before requiring a Board of Inquiry or Local Government Board review;
- Improving outcomes and processes for Boards of Inquiry that provide greater efficiencies and flexibility, for example the ability to dismiss individual councillor(s) rather than a whole council;
- Mandating the disclosure of gifts and campaign donations for elected members; and
- Requiring councils to deliver financial statements in line with model statements issued by the Director of Local Government.

The amendments will also include the two additional matters, raised by the Tasmanian Electoral Commission, namely the extension of the Local Government election polling period by one week and amending Schedule 5 of the Regulations to address a technical error regarding vacation of office by elected members.

Budget Impact

Does not apply.

Current Policy

As per LGAT submission.

3.4 ALGA STRATEGIC PLANNING Contact Officer - Katrena Stephenson

Decision Sought

That Members note the verbal report provided by the President.

Background

The Australia Local Government Association (ALGA) is the peak body for Local Government at the national level. The current strategic plan is for the period 2014-2017. The ALGA Board and Association CEOs will be workshopping the strategic priorities going forward from 8-9 February.

Current core policy priority areas are:

- Local Government Financing
- Roads, Infrastructure and Transport
- Natural and Built Environment
- Regional Equity and Development
- Community, Sustainability and Resilience
- Strengthening Democratic Processes

Budget Impact

Membership and Board Participation is fully budgeted.

Current Policy

There is significant alignment with LGAT's priorities.

3.5 TASWATER* **Contact Officer – Katrena Stephenson**

Decision Sought

That the Meeting note:

- 1. The submission made by LGAT with regard to TasWater; and**
- 2. That LGAT is currently seeking advice from council GMs in relation to a possible submission to the Price and Service Plan.**

Background

LGAT was invited to make a submission to the Legislative Council Government Business Scrutiny Committee A Hearing with regard to TasWater and a meeting informally with the Committee the day before the formal hearing with TasWater (5 December).

A brief submission was made which focussed on the use of dividends by councils in order to pre-empt suggestions that there be further reductions of dividends. The material reflected the outcomes of the Longford Forum and other papers considered by the broad LGAT Membership.

A copy of this submission is at **Attachment to Item 3.5**

At the time of writing TasWater was seeking written submissions on the Issues Paper as part of the Price and Service Plan 2018-2021. The closing date is 17 Feb 2017. The PSP is required by the Tasmanian Economic Regulator, through the Office of the Tasmanian Economic Regulator (OTTER), to determine prices for water and sewerage services in Tasmania.

The LGAT CEO met with the consultant engaged by TasWater to secure input and advocated strongly that they also meet with some council general managers to get user and owner perspective.

LGAT is seeking advice from council General Managers in relation to a possible sectoral submission.

Budget Impact

Does not apply.

Current Policy

Aligns with already articulated positions.

- Strategic Plan: Priority Area 1: Strengthening Strategic Relationships

3.6 LGAT COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

Contact Officer – Katrena Stephenson

Decision Sought

That Members note the changes to LGAT Communications.

Background

Last year LGAT developed a new Strategic Communications Plan. An early action under that plan was to review our current communication activities and determine the contribution each makes to the strategic and communication objectives. Two other key actions were to develop and articulate key messages and undertake a member engagement survey.

This agenda item seeks to provide an update against those three priority activities.

Public Relations Working Group

Late last year, LGAT was tasked with considering a broad public relations campaign to improve understanding of and confidence in Local Government. This was to leverage off the Better Councils Better Communities television commercial and was to engage General Managers in a working group. A working group was convened comprising relevant LGAT staff and the General Managers of the City of Hobart, Break O’Day Council and Kentish/Latrobe Councils.

While initially looking to deliver something quite immediate, upon the announcement of the dismissal of Huon Valley Council the working group perceived a significant risk to the sector in moving forward at that time. It was agreed that likely any campaign would be perceived as reacting to the governance issues in the South.

The working group agreed additional expertise was required and LGAT engaged a consultant to facilitate a planning workshop on 28 November. This workshop broadly mapped resources, agreed key messages, identified risks and supported the development of a high-level implementation plan and timeframe. It is intended to proceed with the television commercial and related campaign early in 2017 with grass roots support to ‘shine a light on the great things happening in municipalities – on what councils deliver’.

Similar to the Constitutional Recognition campaign we will be seeking the support of councils to mirror key messages and link to the materials produced by LGAT (websites, local publications, Mayor’s messages, local media).

The major objective of the campaign will be to educate the public about the wide variety of roles, responsibilities and functions that their local council performs. It aims to show them how their council is vitally important to their quality of life and lifestyle. People do not know the diversity of what councils do, nor how innovative and valuable they are. This campaign aims to start the dialogue.

In the meantime, LGAT has continued to collect and develop material for the website to support the Better Councils campaign.

Sponsorship Review

LGAT engaged a consultant to undertake a review of sponsorship opportunities across LGAT and in relation to the new partnership arrangements with Local Government Professionals.

Some different and new ways of thinking about sponsorship were identified but there is some key work that will need to be undertaken first.

The review considered the need to be focussed and efficient (limited staff, time and finances but a lot going on); and to deliver quality and get a greater financial return from sponsorships, adding value for Members.

LGAT and Local Government Professionals have a number of sponsorship assets which overlap to larger or lesser extents. Some of our membership base is the same (e.g. General Managers) and we run some similar style events for example, both have an annual conference.

What became clear is that a core mechanism for leveraging enhanced sponsorship is our website and better utilisation of that by LGAT and more frequent access by our Members and other stakeholders. The focus on our website is also identified as a priority in the Strategic Communications Plan and the Strategic Technology Plan.

Also clear was that we are possibly under valuing our current sponsorship opportunities and we should start reviewing and transitioning those.

Finally, it may be possible to leverage three levels of event sponsorship with a combined conference but that this needed considerable additional thought and work and requires consideration not just of financial and resource feasibility but risks to both Member bases.

LGAT will consider this amongst other priorities when undertaking strategic planning.

Magazine and Newsletter

Over the last two years it has been increasingly difficult to attract advertising to the Magazine and to offset the costs of production. Further, there have been concerns that the content of both the Magazine and the Pulse is too externally driven.

So as part of the broader strategic communications agenda there will be changes to the website, magazine and newsletters. Through a greater focus on what councils are delivering for communities, we aim to build a better understanding of Local Government across Government, industry and communities as well as enable more sharing and learning across our Member councils.

Changes include:

- The Pulse Newsletter will evolve into a monthly electronic publication which has longer feature articles and strong Local Government content. There may be additional themed Pulses quarterly (eg a training Pulse, a procurement Pulse). The Pulse will also continue to inform members about significant legislative and policy issues that are emerging.
- The LGAT News Magazine has served the Association well for many years but communications styles are changing and so in March we are launching a new hardcopy newsletter that will be delivered twice a year. This will further allow us to showcase exciting activity in the Local Government sector.
- Our Annual Report will gain a new lease on life and be reinvigorated as an annual magazine.
- Our website will be providing more information about what councils do through the Better Councils, Better Communities pages. As well as council stories, there will be videos and fact sheets about a range of council activities and processes.
- We will also have a Notice Board on our website where councils can go to find information about grants, training, products and services that can be of use.

Member Survey

The 2016 member survey has been sent to all General Managers and Councillors with a closing date of the end of January. The results will be discussed in relation to **Item 4.1: Strategic Planning**.

This year's survey looks at continuing collection on satisfaction levels amongst membership as well as seeking some broad feedback on LGAT's future focus.

Feedback

Collectively our communications strategy embraces a lot of change, and along the way we will be seeking your feedback and your stories. While there will be some formal opportunities for input, feel free at any time to drop a line to reception@lgat.tas.gov.au.

Budget Impact

- Unbudgeted consultancy costs for the workshop and to support campaign implementation estimated at \$9000, to be funded from reserves.
- The Television Commercial is already funded through subscriptions as per the budget passed July 2016.
- Some small cost related to website improvements and newsletter design.
- Sponsorship is being sought for the hard copy newsletter.

Current Policy

Strategic Plan:

- Priority Area 2: Leading Reform and Lifting the Sector's Profile.

3.7 WASTE

Contact Officer - Dion Lester

Decision Sought

That Members note that

1. **The Environmental Protection Authority has commenced preparation of an updated Statewide Waste Strategy and is very keen to seek Local Government input;**
2. **The LGAT Waste Reference group (WRG) has met on two occasions (November and February) with a draft Statewide Waste Strategy from a Local Government perspective being presented at the most recent meeting; and**
3. **Once endorsed, this document will be used as a tool for engagement with the EPA during their updating of the State Waste Strategy.**

Background

At the July 2016 LGAT General Meeting, members moved that LGAT re-establish the Waste Reference Group (WRG) to develop recommendations for Members, with respect to a waste strategy and/or levy.

At the November 2016 General meeting, members moved that LGAT reconfirm its commitment to the introduction of a statutory waste levy of \$10 per tonne to be collected by public and private landfills as endorsed at the Local Government General Meeting in July 2012.

The Waste Reference Group (WRG) consists of representatives from each of the three regional waste authorities and the LGAT Policy Director. The group met for the first time on Friday 11 November 2016, with a follow up meeting on the 9 February 2017.

At the first meeting the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) gave a presentation, indicating their current thinking for the proposed process and content of the updated State Waste Strategy, noting the process is still not fully defined. They informed the group that a Waste Levy was currently off the table, but that it was not being ruled out in the future.

It was anticipated that the updated State Waste Strategy would address issues such as:

- Container Deposit Scheme;
- Waste tyres;
- The C-Cell; and
- Organics.

With other issues under consideration including (but not limited to) asbestos, E-waste, plastics, litter, household hazardous waste, construction and demolition waste, industrial and commercial waste and waste tracking.

The draft Strategy was expected to be released by mid 2017, with a three to five year time horizon. It was likely to be project and action based in the first instance.

It was determined that the WRG would prepare a “statewide waste strategy” from a Local Government perspective that pulls together the key issues and projects from each of the three regions and this document will be used as our main tool to engage with the EPA.

This report is due to be completed by the end of February. It will be made available to the three regional waste authorities, Council elected representatives and staff in early May 2017.

MRA Consulting was selected to undertake this work and their initial draft findings were presented to the WRG at the recent February meeting.

Key Issues:

- There are a number of practical waste management projects that require funding.
- The State Government has advised that they would not be introducing a waste levy.
- The Tasmanian Waste and Resource Management Strategy is now seven years old and a new State-wide strategy is needed to deal with issues that are beyond the capacity of regional waste authorities.
- There remains a need to collaboratively consider key waste issues strategically, from a whole of sector basis.

Budget Impact

Being undertaken within current resources.

Current Policy

Strategic Plan:

- Priority Area 1: Strategic Relationships
- Priority Area 5: Land Use Planning & Environmental Sustainability

3.8 PLANNING REFORM

Contact Officer - Dion Lester

Decision Sought

That Members note the progress of the State Government's planning reforms and the key issues for the Local Government sector.

Background

At the time of writing the Planning Minister had received the Tasmanian Planning Commission's (TPC) report on the State Planning Provisions (SPPs) and was awaiting advice from the Planning Reform Taskforce, Planning Policy Unit in the Department of Justice and the Interdepartmental Committee, on how to respond. The Minister is expected to release his response and the final SPPs in February.

Once the State Provisions are made then councils will need to commence the development of the Local Provision Schedules. This will be a substantial amount of work and LGAT are in discussions with the TPC and the Planning Policy Unit about how they can assist the sector in this task. In anticipation of this task the TPC has commenced, on a regional basis, discussions with councils on the updating of each of the Regional Land Use Strategies (RLUSs).

The release of the next tranche of the State Governments Planning Reform agenda is imminent, with the draft legislative amendments to facilitate the development of Tasmanian Planning Policies and Major Project Approvals expected to be released to the sector sometime in February.

Key Issues:

- The final SPPs should be available in February
- The development of Local Provision Schedules needs to commence straight after and this is likely to require significant resources.
- Local Government may bear the brunt of implementation and community angst in relation to the new provisions.

Budget Impact

Being undertaken within current resources, noting this currently forms a significant workload.

Current Policy

Strategic Plan:

- Priority Area 1: Strategic Relationships
- Priority Area 2: Sector Profile & Reform
- Priority Area 5: Land Use Planning & Environmental Sustainability

3.9 FEASIBILITY STUDIES

Contact Officer – Katrena Stephenson

Decision Sought

That Members note the President will provide a verbal report should there be new information since the last General Meeting.

Background

As per last meeting one of the feasibility studies examining voluntary amalgamation in the South of the State has been released, the South-Eastern Councils modelling (Clarence, Sorell, Tasman and Glamorgan Spring Bay Councils).

The other southern feasibility study for the Greater Hobart Councils (Hobart City, Clarence City, Glenorchy City and Kingborough Councils) had not been completed at the time of writing this report.

The North and Northwest studies are progressing but it will be some months before reports are finalised.

Budget Impact

Within current resources at this stage. Further funding or resources may be required to develop supporting tools depending on scale/scope.

Current Policy

Does not apply.

3.10 BUILDING ACT 2016

Contact Officer – Melanie Brown

Decision Sought

That Members note the commencement of the Building Act 2016 and related instruments and LGAT's continued advocacy on behalf of the membership.

Background

As Members will be aware from previous updates, the *Building Act 2016* ('the Act') and associated legislative instruments commenced on 1 January 2017. LGAT worked alongside councils throughout 2016 to represent sectoral interests to the State Government in relation to this significant piece of regulatory reform.

Councils have raised, and continue to raise, a range of concerns and queries, both in relation to the mechanics of the new legislation and its interaction with other instruments, including planning legislation. LGAT has been liaising closely with the Consumer Building and Occupational Services (CBOS) in relation to issues raised by the sector and is endeavouring to provide councils with assistance where appropriate.

In addition, LGAT raised the concerns from the sector at the December PLGC meeting, resulting in the direct contact point being set up (see further below) and a commitment from State Government to consider a review of how the Act is functioning sometime in the first half of 2017.

To this end, LGAT continues to collate feedback received from councils regarding any components of the Act that councils reasonably believe require amendment.

In late 2016 the Consumer Building and Occupational Services (CBOS) Division within State Government ran a series of workshops, and attended numerous additional forums facilitated by both council groups and LGAT, as part of a broader effort to assist council practitioners with the transition to the new legislative framework.

Guidelines were produced both in relation to the Act and the *Building Regulations 2016* ('the Regulations') to help deal with the practical elements of implementation. In addition, the Local Government Division provided guidance on the amendments to Section 337 certificates pursuant to the *Local Government (General) Amendment Regulations (No. 2) 2016*.

CBOS has also set up a direct contact point for information on the Act and related reforms. From 1 January to 31 March 2017 Permit Authorities and Building Surveyors needing technical advice on the operation of the Act can contact a dedicated officer within CBOS who will assist them with questions and can escalate any queries that need a specialist response.

LGAT has initiated an online forum for council staff wishing to share information, discuss issues and pose peer questions regarding implementation of the new regulatory framework in a relatively informal but constructive format.

A number of council officers from around the State have already signed up and it is anticipated that the forum will run until March.

Budget Impact

Being undertaken within current resources, noting this currently forms a significant workload.

Current Policy

Strategic Plan:

- Priority Area 1: Strategic Relationships
- Priority Area 2: Sector Profile & Reform
- Priority Area 5: Land Use Planning & Environmental Sustainability

3.11 TRAINING

Contact Officer – Alyce Jordan

Decision Sought

That Members note the progress of the updated LGAT Training and Professional Development program.

Background

The Training and development section of the LGAT website has been updated and is due to go live shortly. Part of these improvements include the addition of PDF fillable forms for registrations and the addition of being able to submit an Expression of Interest for future courses.

Recent Training and workshops delivered include:

- Susan Law workshop;
- LGAT breakfasts (3 regional);
- Mayors Professional Development Day;
- Crucial Conversations Training; and
- Audit Panel workshops (3 regional).

Budget Impact

Being undertaken within current resources.

Current Policy

Strategic Plan:

- Priority Area 4: Sector Capacity

3.12 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Contact Officer – Georgia Palmer

Decision Sought

That Members note the following report.

Background:

Significant activity has been occurring in the emergency management sphere in recent times. This brief aims to update and inform members on the status of this activity.

Flood review

On 12 October 2016, Mike Blake was appointed to lead an Independent Government Review into the June 2016 floods. The Review also examined the Huonville floods. The Review received over 50 submissions from affected home owners, farmers, Government Agencies and various Non-Government Organisations.

These submissions are available on the Department of Premier and Cabinet website (<http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/osem>)

In addition to the submissions, the review team also conducted a number of face-to-face interviews with Emergency Management responders, affected Councils, LGAT and Government Agencies. Interviews focussed on the Review's terms of reference.

During January, a number of local papers ran stories on the flood review and reported on the information provided in many of the council submissions. Of particular focus was the inadequacy of the warnings to the public, the need for better flood modelling in some catchments, the adequacy of the current radar coverage, and the need to build better awareness of flooding with the community.

The Review Team is continuing to investigate and research the issues and is planning further face-to face meetings with the public and other relevant parties in early 2017.

The final report with recommendations is scheduled to be presented to Government by 1 June 2017.

Tasmanian Emergency Municipal Risk Assessment Project

An important new project, the Tasmanian Emergency Municipal Risk Assessment project, has commenced within the Emergency Management Unit of the SES. This project aims to support Municipal Emergency Management Committees (MEMCs) in updating and undertaking risk assessments.

A Project Manager has been appointed until October 2017.

The project will be aligned to the National Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines (NERAG) and build on the achievements of the Tasmanian State Natural Disaster Risk Assessment.

The project will be responsible for:

- Developing a Risk Management Framework, guidelines and a tool to assist with the conduct of NERAG compliant local risk assessments;
- Providing education to MEMC's and groups in relation to the risk management framework and the guidelines and tools to conduct local risk assessments;
- Providing support to MEMC's to undertake their natural hazard risk assessments; and
- Developing a regional risk profile.

LGAT is represented on both the project steering committee and the end user working group for the project. The project is intended to support Municipal Emergency Management Committees and groups by;

- Creating clarity in the system of risk based emergency management planning;
- Generating efficiencies through better aligned processes for emergency management planning;
- Improving effectiveness by building capability of planning participants and providing consistent risk assessment tools at all levels; and
- Supporting risk assessment activities.

Councils will be kept abreast of the project through their participation in regional committees, project newsletters and regular communication from the project manager.

Justice Review

The implementation of the recommendations to come out of the Justice review are progressing well.

Of note to councils are the following items:

- The Tasmanian Emergency Management Plan review is progressing well and the draft plan, to be renamed Tasmanian Emergency Management Arrangements (TEMA), will go out for broad consultation in early February.
- Drafting instructions on the amendments to the Emergency Management Act 2006 have been provided to the Parliamentary Counsel and a drafter has been assigned to commence preliminary work on the amendments.
- A business case has been prepared for a package of resources and recurrent funding programs to:
 - Enhance exercise and lessons management arrangements;
 - Improve the level of emergency management support and development for the municipal committees and local councils, including: training, assistance with planning, and building community resilience; and
 - Provide funding for a permanent recovery officer at the State level.

The State Emergency Management Committee has endorsed the business case.

SES Volunteer Funding Review

The process set up to review the SES volunteer funding model has stalled due to resourcing constraints at the state level. At this stage it is unknown when this work will recommence.

Budget Impact

Does not apply.

Current Policy

Strategic Plan:

- Priority Area 1: Strategic Relationships
- Priority Area 2: Sector Profile & Reform
- Priority Area 5: Land Use Planning & Environmental Sustainability

3.13 ENERGY

Contact Officer – Georgia Palmer

Decision Sought

That the Members note the following report.

Background:

Significant activity has been occurring in the energy sphere in recent times. This brief aims to update and inform members on the status of this activity.

Energy Security

Independent review into the future security of the national electricity market

At an extraordinary meeting of the COAG Energy Ministers on 7 October 2016 following the power outages in South Australia, Ministers agreed to an independent review of the national electricity market. The review, headed by the Australian Chief Scientist, Dr Alan Finkel is to take stock of its current security and reliability and to provide advice to governments on a coordinated, national reform blueprint.

The review team handed down their preliminary report in December 2016. The preliminary report identified the complex forces driving the rapid transition across the energy sector and is seeking input on key questions around how best to manage the transition.

Key observations from the interim report include:

- A shift from coal fired generators to wind and solar PV generators require solutions to effectively integrate variable renewable electricity generators into the grid. This will require a change in the way we currently operate. Solutions include: intelligent wind turbine controllers, batteries and synchronous condensers.
- The National Electricity Network needs to change to encourage the adoption of such solutions. Emerging markets for ancillary services, which are required to maintain system security, have not kept pace with the transition. New and updated frameworks, technical standards and rules may be required.
- Open cycle gas fired generators are well placed to complement variable renewable electricity generators; however the east coast gas market has undergone profound change with tight supply issues. The need for greater gas supplies for electricity is increasingly urgent.
- Transmission infrastructure remains critical and careful consideration needs to be given to whether additional interconnectors are the most effective way to strengthen the network.
- Affordability is an important consideration when new measures are proposed. New technologies such as battery storage and digital meters could help consumers manage their costs and support system security.
- Long term consistent policy signals are necessary to aid in investment decisions and optimise the allocation of resources. There is a need for an agreed national approach for addressing our emission reduction commitment

Submissions on the interim report are due by 21 February 2017. There are public hearings as part of the review being held in Hobart on 13 and 14 February 2017. LGAT will continue to follow the review with interest and will keep members updated.

Tasmanian Energy Security Taskforce Interim Report

During 2015-16 Tasmania experienced one of the most significant energy security challenges in its history. The combined impact of record low rainfall during spring, combined with the Basslink interconnector being out of service resulted in Hydro Tasmania's water storage levels falling to historically low levels.

As a result of these events the Government established the Tasmanian Energy Security Taskforce (the Taskforce) to advise government on how it could better prepare for and mitigate against the risk of future energy security threats.

In December 2016, the Taskforce handed down its interim report. The report provides initial findings and recommendations to the Tasmanian Government, with a focus on short term actions to support Tasmania's energy security.

The Taskforce has recommended 5 priority actions:

- Define energy security roles and responsibilities to make them absolutely clear;
- Strengthen independent energy security monitoring;
- Establish a more rigorous and more widely understood framework for the management of water storages. In particular, that water storages should be at 30% at the end of June and 40% at the end of Spring. In addition, it should be made clear when Hydro Tasmania can operate freely within its commercial interests and when it must take steps to avoid energy security risks;
- Retain the Tamar Valley Power Station as a backup power station for the present and provide clarity to the Tasmanian gas market; and
- Support new on-island generation and customer innovation by ensuring that new entrant development do not face barriers to entry due to Tasmania's market structure. Tasmania is an excellent test bed for energy innovation and should try to encourage private sector partners to trial new products and services such as storage integration and electric vehicles.

The feasibility of a second interconnector is currently under review by a joint Commonwealth and Tasmanian Government study and the outcome of the review will be included in the final report.

The interim report notes that a second interconnector would afford a substantial increase in Tasmania's energy security resilience and allow some other supply security measures to be set aside.

The final report is due to Government by the middle of 2107 and will provide evidence based solutions to strengthen Tasmania's energy security in the medium to long term. LGAT will update members once the final report is tabled.

Street Lighting

Northern Lights LED Replacement Project

The Northern Lights project has now moved to implementation phase with the roll out beginning in Launceston in February. Councils involved in the project include: Launceston, Meander Valley, West Tamar, George Town, Northern Midlands and Break O'Day.

The media launch for the project occurred on the 24 January.

Key features of the project include:

- Approximately 9,100 street lights replaced with energy efficient LED lights;
- These lights are up to 82% more efficient than the current mercury vapour street light;
- The project will save approximately 7,850 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions during the life of the new assets (over 20 years); and
- Across all councils cost savings will reach up to \$16 million over 20 years.

Southern and North West Council LED Replacement Projects

Business cases into the viability of the roll out of LED streetlights is currently being undertaken by a number of councils in the Northwest and South of the state. The business cases are expected to be complete by mid-February at which time councils will be able to assess whether they want to invest in the replacement project.

LGAT is currently examining funding opportunities for the project including the Building Better Regions Fund and the Smart Cities Fund.

State-wide Public Lighting Contract

The State-wide Public Lighting Contract concludes on 30 June 2017. The market prices for energy and Large Renewable Energy Certificates have both rallied strongly over the past year or so.

LGAT will shortly be contacting councils regarding the commencement of the competitive tender process, and to enable you to evaluate the impact of these market changes on Council budgets for 2017/18 & 2018/19.

Budget Impact

Does not apply.

Current Policy

Strategic Plan:

- Priority Area 1: Strategic Relationships
- Priority Area 3: Financial Sustainability

3.14 ANNUAL PLAN*

Contact Officer - Dion Lester

Decision Sought

That Members note the report.

A report against the progress of the LGAT Annual Plan is at **Attachment to Item 3.14.**

3.15 POLICY UPDATE

Contact Officer - Dion Lester

Decision Sought

That Members note the report on current Policy Activity.

Workforce Planning

The Centre for Local Government at the University of Technology Sydney, in partnership with LGAT, Waratah-Wynyard, Circular Head and Burnie Councils have recently completed a project to improve Tasmanian Local Government understanding of the benefits of workforce planning and build capacity to enable better workforce planning.

The project was funded from a grant by Skills Tasmania.

The key outputs from the project have been:

- A workforce planning 'how to' guide for Local Governments in Tasmania (available on the LGAT Extranet under the HR tab); and
- A capacity building program for senior staff in councils to develop a workforce plan.

The ultimate goal of this project was to ensure a more sustainable Local Government sector which is better able to support employment and economic growth in local communities. This will be achieved either through Local Government's role as a direct employer or by an increased ability to create favourable conditions for business and industry within their Local Government areas, with workforce planning being the tool to achieve such aims.

The project was successfully delivered and the Local Government staff involved in the project (including those that attended the initial half-day workshop and capacity building program, or who were involved in the Local Government Professionals HR Special Interest Group, or General Managers presentation) have certainly experienced an increased awareness about the value of workforce planning and its role in strategic capacity.

There is now an opportunity to create much broader Local Government understanding about workforce planning and the guidelines in particular, which will improve council service provision and sustainability.

LGAT staff are currently looking at what future opportunities exist in this light and also how to progress the priority recommendations in the final report.

HR Forum

LGAT has been involved in recent conversations with other State Local Government Associations in relation to the organising of the 2017 National Local Government Human Resources Conference, which will be held in Sydney on 29 and 30 March.

The 2017 program will feature keynote presentations, case studies, panel discussions and much more from industry thought leaders and award winners who will provide insight that will help provide the ideas, information and inspiration to move the industry forward.

Roads

LGAT met with Infrastructure Tasmania in December 2016 to discuss a range of road related issues as they pertain to Local Government, and as highlighted in the Audit of Tasmanian Roads in early 2016.

The following updates were provided.

Forestry Roads:

- LGAT has been advised that following the State Government's decision to restructure Forestry Tasmania, it has been determined that all forestry road assets will remain with Forestry Tasmania; that is, Forestry Tasmania will continue to manage its network, and its road assets will not be transferred to other agencies as has previously been contemplated.
- It has been recognised within that network there are some forestry roads that attract significant tourist traffic. Infrastructure Tasmania is presently working with Forestry Tasmania to ascertain the possibility of some additional funding being provided for high profile routes. This will not constitute a significant funding boost for Forestry Tasmania nor will it result in specific routes being upgraded to the standard of public roads.

Road trades:

- A small number of Local-State Government road trades are currently being negotiated, with some of these trades being acknowledged as strategic in nature.

Legislative Reviews:

- *The Roads and Jetties Act and Local Government Highways Act* – a review of these pieces of legislation is scheduled for 2017. Infrastructure Tasmania has indicated that the intention of the review will include ensuring the legislation promotes a consistent management approach across all road managers. The review will be undertaken by State Growth in full consultation with Local Government.

National Local Government Report

In January LGAT fed into the development of the 2015-16 National Local Government Report.

Areas of input sought on behalf of Tasmanian Local Government included:

- Developments in the use of long term financial and asset management plans by Local Government;
- Actions to develop and implement comparative performance measures between local governing bodies;
- Reforms undertaken during 2015-16 to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Local Government service delivery; and
- Initiatives undertaken and services provided by Local Governments to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

LGAT provided an overview of the achievements of and for the sector over the last two years, which included:

- Follow on benefits ensuing from the Local Government Financial and Asset Reform Project;
- The development of Financial and Asset Management Practice Summaries for councils;
- The positive results of Auditor-General Annual Performance Assessments;
- Review of the *Local Government Act 1993*; and
- Ongoing discussions and work regarding sectoral opportunities across resource sharing, collaboration and reform.

Climate Change

In recent months LGAT and other interested stakeholders have been awaiting the release of the final State Government Climate Action Plan, which was anticipated for release prior to Christmas 2016. Whilst it is still unclear as to when the finalised Action Plan will be released, one aspect of the previously released draft Action Plan that was supported by LGAT was the development of a work plan between State and Local Government.

We are keen to establish a program irrespective of the final Plan's release date. To this end LGAT met with the State Government's Tasmanian Climate Change Office (TCCO) in January to discuss the project and activity outlook for 2017 and to identify potential opportunities to partner and/or collaborate on initiatives.

The TCCO indicated an intention to work with the Local Government sector in the first half of 2017 on a governance project aimed at elected members and senior council management.

LGAT also met with Climate Tasmania (an independent body of Climate practitioners) in January to discuss planning for a Local Government Climate Forum that we will be facilitating in the first half of 2017. Whilst details are still being finalised, it is anticipated that the forum will be run as a one day workshop session in Hobart for all councils, and will feature case studies and presentations, both local and interstate, across a range of current relevant topics, including street lighting, governance and risk management, renewable energy, and Local Government mitigation activities.

Cats

Local Government supports the initiative to develop a state-wide approach to cat management however the effective management and control of cats is beyond the capacity of most councils in Tasmania. The cost impact of the plan is likely to be greater in relation to the management of domestic cats than for the management of feral cats.

This seems at odds with the intent of the plan to reduce the impact of cats on the environment, agricultural assets and human health.

Following public consultation, DPWIPE have provided Minister Rockliff with a revised Cat Management Plan and recommendations for changes to the legislation, a response is expected in February. DPIWPE have indicated that the amendments to legislation will enable councils to choose which parts of the legislation to enact/enforce following consultation with its ratepayers.

In our State Budget submission LGAT requested a clear resolution of the various roles and responsibilities; and to ensure that implementation of the plan should not come at an additional cost to local ratepayers.

Health Forum

LGAT is intending to run a forum in March to support Local Government with the delivery of health and wellbeing outcomes for their communities. The forum will seek to understand and describe what Local Government's role in preventive health should be, going forward. In addition, it will showcase current programs being delivered by some councils and identify future initiatives.

Topics the forum will cover include:

- What is the role of Councils in preventative health (including in physical activity, food security and nutrition, alcohol and drugs, mental health and social support); and
- How can Councils develop health plans that support environments for health.

Stay tuned for the final program and date.

Joint Select Committee on Gaming

LGAT provided a whole of sector response on 9 December 2016 based on the motions passed at the July General Meeting. The submission also stated that by removing the power of the *Gaming Act* to override other acts, including the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act*, councils could, via their planning schemes, have some influence on the location of gaming venues.

This is in the same way that they already determine the appropriate location for other land uses, such as commercial business, industrial areas or different types of residential uses.

Alongside Hobart, Brighton and Glenorchy Councils, LGAT will be addressing the Joint Select Committee hearing on 14 February.

In October 2016 the Government announced the *Gaming Control Amendment (Community Interest) Act 2016*, which introduces the requirement for a community interest test when a new Licensed Premises Gaming Licence is applied for.

The discussion paper for the Community Interest process is currently with Councils for comment (due 20 February to LGAT) with LGAT providing a whole of sector response by 27 February.

Related Parties

There have been changes to the Australian Accounting Standards with respect to related parties transactions. These changes will require new information/reporting in relation to elected members and key management personnel.

From 2016/17, Councils must disclose related party transactions and outstanding balances, including commitments, in the annual financial statements.

Related parties are likely to include the Mayor, Councillors, General Managers and senior managers. The standard also requires disclosures of transactions of close family members and any entities that they control or jointly control. Any transactions between council and these parties, whether monetary or not, may need to be identified and disclosed.

Councils need to start preparing for this change as soon as possible. Each council will need to have systems to identify related parties and capture transactions with them.

LGAT, in conjunction with the Audit Office and the Local Government Division have developed a set of guidelines for councils which will be released at the end of January.

In addition, information sessions will be presented by LGAT, the Tasmanian Audit Office and the Local Government Division to assist in understanding and applying the new standard, the information that will be required and the disclosures that will eventuate.

Councillors, members of audit panels, senior executives and relevant finance staff should consider attending. The sessions are being held following each of the three regional breakfasts during February, as follows:

Hobart:	Salamanca Inn	15 February	9.30 – 11.30
Burnie:	Wellers Inn	16 February	9.30 – 11.30
Launceston:	The Tramsheds	17 February	2.00 – 4.00

Budget Impact

Being undertaken within current resources

Current Policy

Strategic Plan:

- Priority Area 1: Strategic relationships
- Priority Area 2: Sector profile & reform
- Priority Area 3: Financial sustainability
- Priority Area 4: Sector capacity
- Priority Area 5: Land use planning & environmental sustainability

4. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

4.1 LGAT STRATEGIC PLAN* Contact Officer – Katrena Stephenson

Decision Sought

That the Members discuss priorities for the 2017-2020 LGAT Strategic Plan.

Background

In 2012 LGAT developed a 5-year strategic plan which, while significantly reviewed in 2015, is now due to be fully revisited. This is particularly imperative in the context of ongoing and significant reforms impacting upon the sector (e.g. Local Government Act, Feasibility Studies, Building and Planning) and with State Government and Local Government elections both likely to occur in 2018.

In December 2016, LGAT released a Member survey to aid us in assessing whether we are meeting member expectations and also in flagging concerns and priorities for the sector. This survey closes at the end of January and a summary will be provided to the General Meeting to inform this discussion.

The aim of this agenda item is to get some further, qualitative input, through discussion to inform the Strategic Planning process. GMC and LGAT Staff will be meeting April/May to further workshop priorities and a new strategic plan will be brought back to Members at the July AGM.

It is not intended to comprehensively describe all the work that LGAT undertakes or reflect all the activity within councils within a Strategic Plan and we expect that it will be a living document that will be reviewed regularly in order to appropriately reflect the social, economic and political environments within which councils are working. It will provide the basis for resourcing decisions and work planning by the LGAT CEO and staff and will be supported by an annual work plan.

The current strategic plan is provided at **Attachment to Item 4.1**.

In preparing for this discussion item Members should think about the anticipated environment for the sector over the next three years, the likely agendas which will be prosecuted by the State and Federal Governments, the pressures and issues being experienced by councils and the services which can be provided by LGAT which would most benefit Members.

5. OTHER BUSINESS & CLOSE
