

Minutes
Meeting No. 46
Hobart, 13 May 2015

PARTICIPANTS

State Government

Hon Will Hodgman MP, Premier
Chair Minister for Planning and Local Government
Hon Peter Gutwein MP

Local Government Association of Tasmania

Cr Barry Jarvis Mayor, Dorset Council; President, Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT)
Cr Darryl Quilliam Mayor, Circular Head Council; Vice President, LGAT
Cr Jan Bonde Mayor, Central Coast Council
Ald Sue Hickey Lord Mayor, Hobart City Council
Cr Deirdre Flint Mayor, Central Highlands Council
Ald Doug Chipman Mayor, Clarence City Council
Cr Craig Perkins Mayor, Meander Valley Council

Officials in attendance:

Local Government

Dr Katrena Stephenson Acting Chief Executive Officer, LGAT
Mr Robert Dobrzynski General Manager, Launceston City Council
Mr Peter Brooks General Manager, Glenorchy City Council
Ms Sandra Ayton General Manager, Central Coast Council

State Government

Ms Rebekah Burton Deputy Secretary, Department of Premier and Cabinet
Mr James Pirie Adviser, Office of the Premier
Mr Tony McCall Adviser, Office of the Minister for Planning and Local Government
Mr Kim Evans Secretary, Department of State Growth

Mr Phillip Hoysted	Director of Local Government, Local Government Division (LGD), Department of Premier and Cabinet
Mr Greg Brown	Deputy Director, LGD
Ms Harriet Close	Senior Policy Analyst, LGD
Ms Bridget Dwyer	Policy Analyst, LGD
Ms Greta Boots	Graduate Policy Officer, LGD

Apologies

Apologies were received from Alderman Albert van Zetten, Mayor, Launceston City Council, and Councillor Graham Bury, Councillor, Kingborough Council.

Welcome

The Premier welcomed members to the first Premier's Local Government Council (PLGC) meeting for 2015 and welcomed Mayor Craig Perkins and Lord Mayor Sue Hickey to their first PLGC meeting.

The Premier noted that it was Robert Dobrzynski's last meeting representing northern councils on the PLGC and thanked him for his participation.

The Premier acknowledged and thanked Allan Garcia, the former CEO of LGAT for his commitment to the PLGC and local government and recommended a letter of thanks be sent to Allan.

The Premier noted the apologies received.

Agenda item

1) Draft Minutes of the PLGC meeting on 3 December 2014

The PLGC accepted the minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2014 as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

2) Matters of Topical Interest

I. Voluntary Amalgamations / Shared Services

The Minister expressed his thanks to all mayors and councils for the way they had engaged on the voluntary amalgamations / shared services initiative and stated that he hoped reasonable proposals would be brought forward to assess.

Barry Jarvis stated that work is being done on proposals by councils and that LGAT has requested copies of proposals from interested councils.

II. Transfer of Forestry Tasmania Roads

Barry Jarvis stated that the case studies report prepared by LGAT outlining infrastructure impacts resulting from the transfer of Forestry Tasmania roads to the Department of Primary Industry, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE) highlighted the significant concerns councils across the State have in relation to the possible safety, economic and amenity effects on communities and the tourism industry.

The Minister advised that the maintenance of the roads had been raised in budget discussions.

Kim Evans advised that funds are limited and priorities need to be set.

The Premier advised a significant amount of responsibility for funding the roads sits with State Growth and that a strategic decision that identifies priority areas for funding will occur as part of the development of the Tourism Supply Strategy.

It was resolved to provide the PLGC with an update on the Tourism Supply Strategy once the Strategy is finalised.

III. Valuation and Rating

Supplementary Valuations

Katrena Stephenson stated that LGAT had consulted with councils since Phillip Hoysted and Allan Garcia (former CEO – LGAT) met with the Office of the Valuer-General (OVG) to raise the issue of extended delays in the completion of supplementary valuations. The OVG outlined major progress in reducing the backlog in supplementary valuations. The feedback from councils was that the situation had improved considerably.

It was resolved that councils experiencing delays maintain a dialogue with the OVG.

Forestry Valuations

Barry Jarvis stated councils were concerned about the delay in valuation of former forestry land transferred to Future Potential Production Forest (FPPF), resulting in a loss of revenue for councils.

Phillip Hoysted informed the PLGC that the OVG had advised that, although they will not have all required information to staff to undertake valuations in time for councils to rate the land this financial year, they will for the next financial year.

Barry Jarvis also stated some councils were concerned about the possibility of Forestry Tasmania selling off some of their reserves.

The Minister informed members that the Government is not considering selling off land but that it is considering selling off the trees (crop).

Capital Value of Complex Properties

Phillip Hoysted informed the PLGC that when he and Allan Garcia met with the acting Valuer-General (VG) in December 2014, with an expectation that additional work would be funded by local government the VG was supportive of maintaining Assess Annual Valuations for rating individual tenancies in complex properties and confirmed their willingness to continue to provide the necessary valuation format to assess complex properties.

It was resolved that Phillip Hoysted and Katrena Stephenson meet with the OVG now a new Valuer-General was in the role to raise the issue of rating individual tenancies in complex properties.

The Premier requested that the outcomes of the meeting be reported back to the PLGC at the September 2015 meeting.

IV. Legal risk and liability associated with managing coastal hazards risk and adapting to climate change

Doug Chipman informed the PLGC that the Australian Government Productivity Commission had released its report into Natural Disaster Funding. Recommendations in the report included addressing council liability and the development of a coherent policy package across recovery and mitigation funding.

The Premier advised that the State is yet to consider the recommendations of the report.

Rebekah Burton informed the PLGC that the Commonwealth Government had accepted the report but not yet considered the recommendations within the report.

Rebekah Burton informed the PLGC that a lot of work was being done at the State level on mitigating natural hazards that will help address the potential liability issue by providing councils with guidance for planning and decision making. This work will inform and be incorporated into a coastal hazards code for the State to be implemented through the statewide planning scheme.

The Minister advised that the Government is not considering statutory exemption from liability for councils in the first instance.

The Premier noted the information and requested that updates on key elements of the hazards work be provided to the PLGC when they are finalised. The Premier also noted that given the matter cuts across several portfolios, that he would brief his Cabinet colleagues.

V. Sharing Economy

The Premier noted there is a high level of interest from the Tasmanian business community about the emergence of the sharing economy in the State and that the Minister will be taking the lead on this issue.

The Minister stated the sharing economy is a challenging issue to deal with and that the safety of consumers was a priority. The Minister advised that the Government intended to develop an educational program on sharing economy issues.

The Premier advised that the Government will be consulting with local government on the issue.

Governance of Local Government:

3) Legislation update

The Minister informed the PLGC that the Local Government Amendment (Code of Conduct) Bill 2015 will be debated when Parliament resumes on 26 May

Barry Jarvis informed the PLGC that LGAT had written to non-government members in the Upper House informing them that local government fully the Bill.

Phillip Hoysted provided an update on other legislation the Local Government Division (LGD) is working on including;

- Dog Control Amendment Bill 2015 – will be finalised following the outcome of the Parliamentary inquiry into greyhound racing;
- *Burial and Cremation (Handling of Human Remains) Regulations 2005* and the *Burial and Cremation (Cemetery) Regulations 2005* are due to be remade by 5 June;
- *Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2005* due to be remade by 22 June; and
- *Local Government (General) Regulations 2005* due to be remade by 29 June.

Barry Jarvis stated that the General Management Committee discussed a review of sections of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

Phillip Hoysted informed the PLGC that a review of the Act to consider red tape reduction is one of the Role of Local Government project actions.

The Minister acknowledged the request for a review and noted resourcing issues may be a barrier.

It was resolved that the LGD meet with LGAT to seek clarification on issues of significance that councils may have with the Act and how the issues could be addressed.

4) Role of Local Government project

Phillip Hoysted informed the PLGC that the development of the Role of Local Government project Strategic Action Plan (SAP) had been a robust process and led to the identification of 26 initiatives for implementation.

Phillip Hoysted sought the PLGC's support to establish a PLGC sub-committee to oversee the implementation of the SAP. The sub-committee members would comprise two local government and two State Government nominees.

The PLGC endorsed the SAP, commit to the implementation of the plan and to the establishment of the committee.

5) Continuous Improvement Framework

Phillip Hoysted advised the PLGC that the LGD had prepared a scoping document that summarised the Continuous Improvement Framework Project as requested at the December 2014 PLGC meeting.

Phillip Hoysted advised the proposed framework was conceived following an evaluation of the Sustainability Objectives and Indicators project and the first step under the new project would be to consult with local government to identify what data the sector would like to see reported.

Katrena Stephenson stated that local government supported this project and that it was critical that the data reported had meaning and is useful.

The PLGC endorsed the development of the framework.

6) Disability Action Plan

Phillip Hoysted informed the PLGC that a working group had been established to work with local government to identify and develop resources that will help councils develop strategies for people with disabilities.

A strategy was expected to be made available to the PLGC at the September 2015 meeting.

Planning and Environment

7) State-wide Planning Scheme

The Minister informed the PLGC a draft Bill had been prepared and that it was being considered by the Planning Review Taskforce technical group. Once the technical group have provided feedback the Bill will go out for public consultation.

8) Other business

The Premier informed the PLGC that frustrations about the code for heritage buildings and the need to simplify the process was raised by South Australia at

the recent COAG meeting. The Premier advised members to note this issue may be raised with Tasmanian councils.

Barry Jarvis informed the PLGC that the General Management Committee elections would be held shortly and PLGC members may change. Barry Jarvis also thanked Robert Dobrzynski for his contribution to the PLGC.

Phillip Hoysted informed the PLGC that now the SAP had been finalised and endorsed by the PLGC a new PLGC work plan will be drafted for members consideration.

Meeting closed.

AGENDA ITEM	ACTION
I	A letter of thanks to be sent to Allan Garcia, former CEO of LGAT, for his commitment to the PLGC.
2ii	State Growth to provide the PLGC with update on the Tourism Supply Strategy once the Strategy is finalised.
2iii	LGD and LGAT to meet with OVG to raise the issue of rating individual tenancies in complex properties
3	LGD to meet with LGAT to clarify issues of significant local government have with the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> .
6	LGD to provide a Disability Strategy at the September 2015 PLGC meeting.
8	LGD to provide a PLGC Work Plan for endorsement at the September 2015 PLGC meeting.

