General Management Committee

Minutes

Wednesday 12 December 2007
1. NOTICE OF MEETING

A meeting of the General Management Committee was held at the Launceston Country Club on Wednesday 12 December 2007 commencing at 12.30pm.

PRESENT:

Mayor Barry Easther Acting President/Northern Region
Lord Mayor Rob Valentine Hobart City Council
Mayor Kevin Hyland West - North West Region
Mayor Mike Downie West - North West Region
Clr Robert Legge Northern Region
Mayor Deirdre Flint Southern Region
Mayor Jock Campbell Southern Region

APOLOGIES

Mayor Mike Gaffney President

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Allan Garcia LGAT
Dr Katrena Stephenson LGAT
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* Denotes Attachment
1.1 SUBJECT: CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES *

Mayor Dierdre Flint/ Mayor Robert Legge

That the Minutes of the meeting held 26 October 2007, as circulated, be confirmed.

Carried

Minutes of the meeting held 26 October 2007 are at Attachment to Item 1.1.

1.2 SUBJECT: BUSINESS ARISING *

That the Committee receive the report on business arising from the previous meeting.

Noted

Update of Policy items from the last meeting - not covered in this Agenda are at Attachment to Item 1.2.

1.3 SUBJECT: PRESIDENT’S REPORT

That the President’s report be received.

Noted

Since October 26th the President has attended, organised, represented or been involved with the following;

**Media**

*Print*
- Elected Members Kit
- Local Government Elections
- Dog legislation
- Cat issues

*Radio/TV*
- Water and sewerage
- Local Government Elections
- New Zealand Council – business interest (VDL)

**Meetings**
- 14 November - LGAT General Meeting
- 20 November - Water & Sewerage Meeting
- 25 November - ALGA Board Meeting
- 26 November - ALGA - AGM

**Presentations**
- Launch of Councillor Resource Kit

**Conferences**
- National General Assembly, Darwin
- ALGA delegation, China
1.4 SUBJECT: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER’S REPORT OCTOBER 2007 – DECEMBER 2007

That the Committee note the Chief Executive Officer’s report.

The Chief Executive Officer provided a verbal report at the Meeting on:

- The ALGA conference held in Darwin in November 2007. The conference presented interesting but not surprising material. In November 2008, instead of the General Assembly, there will be a forum on constitutional recognition with State Associations required to undertake work at the ground level in preparation.

- National Agenda – to date there has not been much traction on national agenda items through the ALP but following the election national lobbying has commenced.

- Water and Sewerage submission (Agenda Item 1.5)

- New Staff (Agenda Item 5.2)
2. POLICY

Policy Items for Discussion & Decision.

2.1 SUBJECT: WATER AND SEWERAGE REFORM

That the Committee note the report.  

Noted

Background
The Chief Executive Officer provided a verbal report at the meeting.

The CEO tabled the submission developed by LGAT on behalf of Local Government which was provided to Department of Treasury and Finance on 12 December 2007. It was circulated to General Managers and Water Authorities. The CEO noted that while Councils had determined they would work up submissions on a regional basis, this had not occurred, leaving little time for LGAT to develop a submission. The focus of the submission was on how a regional response would be achieved, noting that the timeframes would be difficult. As a positive note, meetings with the Water and Sewerage Reform Project Manager which had been occurring monthly have now been elevated to meetings with the Don Challen, Secretary of the Department of Treasury and Finance. Each region is also represented at those meetings. The last meeting discussed ‘sticking’ and ‘bending’ points and had a positive feel. The next meeting with Don Challen will take place on 14 December 2007. It is expected that a position on the way forward will be taken in February/March 2008 with an expectation that it will be take to PLGC prior to being considered by Cabinet.

The Burnie City Council Media Release was tabled. It was felt that this independent approach undermined the process being undertaken and was not endorsed by GMC. GMC agreed to request that the Premier not give opportunity to individual councils to present their position but rather consider the statewide view.

2.2 SUBJECT: LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUSTAINABILITY

That the Committee note the report.  

Noted

Background
The Chief Executive Officer provided a verbal report at the meeting noting that the five working groups all first met on 11 December 2007. Numerous actions were identified, many of which would have to be progressed by LGAT in the first instance. The CEO intends to provide an update to the Steering Committee out of session including a revised timeframe.
2.3 SUBJECT: 2008/09 BUDGET COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

That the Committee note the following report.

Noted

Background
On 28 November 2007 the Treasurer, the Hon Michael Aird MLC, hosted a Community Consultation Roundtable, with the State Government’s Budget Committee, as part of the 2008/09 Budget Process.

Representatives from a range of peak community organisations were invited including: TasCOSS, Anglicare, Master Builders’ Association (MBA), Housing Industry Association (HIA), the Property Council, the Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (TCCI), the Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association (TFGA), the Minerals Council, the RACT, Unions Tasmania, the Tourism Council, and the Australian Education Union.

LGAT was represented by Katrena Stephenson and Liz Gillam.

All organisations attending had made a submission as part of the budget process and had opportunity to make a brief presentation relating to their submission.

LGAT reiterated the five recommendations outlined in the written submission. These were (in brief):

1. Establishment of a fund to encourage innovative practices by councils in the sharing of resources and technology.
2. Extension of the Main Street Makeover program.
3. Adequate future funding to ensure ongoing review of the Better Planning Outcomes project.
4. Rates relief for farmers affected by drought.
5. Review of the distribution arrangements for fees collected from heavy vehicle registrations in order to improve equity in terms of the share provided to Councils.

LGAT also took the opportunity to remind the State Government that any reform of water and sewerage will not be without significant cost and that until there is a clearer understanding of the structural and regulatory reform intended it is difficult to fully assess the likely impact of changes.

A wide range of issues and recommendations were raised however there were some common issues. These were affordable housing, capacity building and skills gaps, infrastructure (improved, aligned, maintained) and Local Government sustainability.

While unsurprisingly, planning inconsistency between councils and headworks charges received some negative comment from MBA and HIA the issue of the sustainability of councils and amalgamations were raised by HIA, the Property Council and the TCCI. This seemed outside the scope of the budget roundtable. Negative comment was also received in relation to individual council viability ratings not being publicly released.

LGAT provided a response, referring back to our presentation which talked about the Association’s project, following the Access Economics Report, focussing on improving financial governance within Councils and underpinning financial sustainability through long term financial and asset management plans. We reminded participants of the policy of no forced amalgamations and that amalgamation would not necessarily achieve financial sustainability because of the geographic barriers and dispersed population in Tasmania. The innovation fund proposed in the budget submission was one mechanism which may, over time, enhance efficiency. Additionally, the issue of cost shifting to Local Government was raised as a pressure on sustainability.
Budget Implications
Does not apply.

Current Policy
Both LGAT and the State Government have a policy of no forced amalgamations.

The CEO and Policy Director of LGAT will meet with critical stakeholders and commentators to address misperceptions and develop common understandings.

2.4 Subject: General Policy Discussion

That Committee members note the intent of this session and contemplate any matters they consider worth raising.

No Matters Raised

Background
This is a standing agenda item intended to allow members the opportunity to raise any matters of strategic policy not addressed elsewhere in the agenda.
3. PROJECTS & SERVICES

Projects & Services Items for Comment and Decision.

3.1 SUBJECT: LOCAL GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE

That the Committee note the following Local Government Representative appointments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee</th>
<th>Representative</th>
<th>Elected Member/Officer</th>
<th>Coordinating Agency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tasmanian Heritage Council</td>
<td>Mr Roger Howlett</td>
<td>Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mrs Sandra French</td>
<td>Elected Member</td>
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Noted
4. FINANCES

Financial Items for Discussion & Decision.

4.1 SUBJECT: PROFIT AND LOSS REPORT *

Mayor Deirdre Flint/ Mayor Robert Legge

That the profit and loss report to 30 November 2007 be received.

Carried

Background
At Attachment to Item 4.1, is a print out of the Profit And Loss Report to 30 November, 2007.

Budget Implications
Does not apply.

Current Policy
Does not apply.

4.2 SUBJECT: CASH FLOW STATEMENTS *

Mayor Deirdre Flint/ Mayor Robert Legge

That the Committee receive the reports for the month of October 2007.

Carried

Background
It is considered appropriate that the Committee should have access to information relating to the cash position of the Association detailing cash on hand, reserves, amounts held for projects and expenditures and revenues pending.

Detailed cash flow statements have been prepared for the information of the Committee and are at Attachment to Item 4.2

Budget Impact
As above.

Current Policy
The Association has a responsibility to manage the assets of the organisation in a responsible and transparent manner.
5. ADMINISTRATION

Administration Items for Discussion & Decision.

5.1 SUBJECT: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER’S PERFORMANCE REVIEW

The Chief Executive Officer’s Performance review was dealt with in a closed session of the Committee with information provided to Members at the Meeting.

The Minute for this item will be provided to Committee members only.

5.2 SUBJECT: STAFFING UPDATE

That the Committee note the report.

Background
The Chief Executive Officer provided a verbal report at the meeting. Items included:
- Dr Katrena Stephenson has commenced as Policy Director
- Christine Materia has commenced as the NRM Coordinator
- Maxine Lowry has commenced as the Policy Officer
- Liz Gillam is reducing her hours in 2008 to three days per week
- Allan Garcia hopes to be able to take a stronger networking/advocacy ‘CEO’ role and reduce the policy functions.

5.3 SUBJECT: DATE OF NEXT MEETING

That the Committee meet on 12 March 2007 in Hobart.

Background:

2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tr>
<td>5-6 March</td>
<td>General Managers Workshop</td>
<td>TBC</td>
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<td>12 March</td>
<td>General Meeting/GMC</td>
<td>Hobart</td>
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<td>15-16 March</td>
<td>Elected Member Workshop</td>
<td>TBC</td>
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<td>18 March</td>
<td>Demographic Change Council</td>
<td>Hobart</td>
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<td>14 May</td>
<td>GMC</td>
<td>TBC</td>
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<td>18 June</td>
<td>AGM/General Meeting</td>
<td>Launceston</td>
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<tr>
<td>19-20 June</td>
<td>Annual Conference</td>
<td>Launceston</td>
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<td>13 August</td>
<td>General Meeting/GMC</td>
<td>Hobart</td>
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<td>17-18 September</td>
<td>General Managers Workshop</td>
<td>TBC</td>
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<td>15 October</td>
<td>GMC Meeting</td>
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5.4 **SUBJECT: OTHER BUSINESS & CLOSE**

Discussion ensued re the agenda for the PLGC meeting, including the proposal regarding the development of a work plan, it was also felt that state infrastructure could possibly come off the PLGC agenda and that most items were for noting only.