1. NOTICE OF MEETING

A meeting of the General Management Committee was held in the Executive Board Room at Wrest Point Casino, Hobart, commencing at 3.20pm.

DISTRIBUTION:

Mayor Mike Gaffney
Lord Mayor Rob Valentine
Mayor Kevin Hyland
Mayor Lynn Laycock
Mayor Barry Easther
Mayor Robert Legge
Mayor Deirdre Flint
Mayor Graham Bury

President
Hobart City Council
West - North West Region
West - North West Region
Northern Region
Northern Region
Southern Region
Southern Region

PROXIES:

Deputy Mayor Eva Ruzicka
Mayor Mike Downie
Mayor Alvyn Boyd
Mayor Albert van Zetten
TBA
TBA
Mayor Tony Bisdee

Hobart City Council
West-North West Region
West-North West Region
Northern Region
Northern Region
Southern Region
Southern Region

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Allan Garcia
Ms Christine Agostinelli

LGAT
LGAT
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* Denotes Attachment
1.1.1 SUBJECT: CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES *

Mayor Robert Legge/Mayor Deirdre Flint

That the Minutes of the meetings held on 14 May and 18 June 2008, as circulated, be confirmed.

Carried

Minutes of the meetings held 14 May and 18 June 2008 are at Attachment to Item 1.1A and 1.1B.

1.2 SUBJECT: BUSINESS ARISING *

Mayor Kevin Hyland/Mayor Lynn Laycock

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

Carried

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

Lord Mayor Rob Valentine/Mayor Lynn Laycock

That the President’s report be received.

Carried

Since the 14 May the President has attended, organised, represented or been involved with the following:

Media

Print

- Compulsory Voting
- Amalgamation

Radio / TV:

- Compulsory/Non – compulsory voting
- Elected members allowances

Correspondence:

- The Hon David Bartlett,
- The Hon Paul Lennon
- The Hon Sue Smith MLC
- All Mayors
- Nick McKim, MP
- Peg Putt
- All newly Elected Members
- Julie Collins MP,
- Paul Jenkins,
- Barry Isaac
- Alexandra Misfud
Meetings

ALGA (Canberra 20 – 22 May)
Demographic Change Advisory Council (July 15)
IJSC (Implementation Joint Steering Committee, 3 June, 7 July)
Local Government Division (May 22)
GMC (June 18)
Claire Bugg (MLC assistant – Comp / Non Comp, May 29)
Annual General Meeting (June 18)
General Meeting (June 18)
Julian Punch & Mick Wickham (July 4)
Wesley Vale Pulp Mill (July 18)
Dorset Council (July 31)
Examiner Function (Launceston July 31)
ALGA (NGA August 6)
Climate Change Dinner (Premier, Hobart, August 7)
"Stronger Services – Better Councils" (Hobart, August 7)
Margaret Reynolds (Nat Disability Services Hobart August 12)

Presentations

Cr Beryl Marshall (July 21 – Central Coast Council)

Writings

LGAT Newsletter  May 23, June 6, July 4, 18, Aug 1
Local Government Focus (2 editions)
LGAT News
Councillor
Handbook (draft)

Ben Hutchinson
Tasmanian Local Government Embracing the Future -

Workshops

Dr. Don Lenihan (Public Engagement July 22)

Forums

Women on Farms (Ulverstone- May 17)
Housing Affordability (July 3)
University Of Tasmania (Health & Well being – Hobart July 24)
 Constitutional Convention (Campbell Town August 1)

Conferences

Shared Services (MAV- June 4 & 5))
Inaugural Ageing Ministerial Meeting (ALGA Gold Coast June 12,13)
LGAT Annual Conference “Waves of Change” (June 19, 20)
TFGA (Launceston – July 17)

Events

Water and Sewerage (House of Assembly, May 30)
Environment Dinner (Hobart May 30)
Ministerial Ageing Dinner (June 12)
ALGWA Cocktail and 30th Birthday Dinner
LGAT Conference Dinner (June 20)
School of Performing Arts (Launceston – July 10)
TFGA Conference Dinner (July 17)
1.4 SUBJECT: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER’S REPORT

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

Noted

The recent months have been dominated by the Water & Sewerage issue. Participation on the Implementation Joint Steering Committee (IJSC), driving the process to select owners’ representatives, establishing the Selection Committee, engaging councils in relation to the constitutions of the new entities and making contributions to the development of consequential legislative amendments. Meetings have also been conducted with the Australian Services Union and significant effort has been put into the development of an area of the LGAT website which is totally devoted to water & sewerage. It contains details of the reform process but also will provide a detailed question and answer section for employees and members of the public. The website will be further built upon to provide regular updates on activities being undertaken through the reform processes.

Other key meetings being dealt with by the Association over recent months have included –

Interface with external bodies
- Quadrant Meetings
- Australia Post - Postal Services Consultative Council
- Forest Practices Advisory Council
- UTAS Planning Courses Advisory Board
- Presentation to Drug and Alcohol Seminar

Local Government Forums
- Constitutional Recognition Forum
- LGMA Congress
- Disability Bus Stop Forum
- Aged Care Forum
- Local Government Climate Change Summit
- Aged Care Forum

State Government Meetings
- Demographic Change Advisory Council
- Housing Affordability Fund Consultation
- Ministers Housing
- Fire Service Levy Meeting
- NRM Council Meeting
- Local Government Office Planning Day
- Budget Lock Down
- State Policy Water Quality Management Steering Committee
- Premiers’ Physical Activity Council
- Environment industry Council Meeting
2. POLICY

Policy Items for Discussion & Decision.

2.1 SUBJECT: AUDIT COMMITTEES

Mayor Deirdre Flint/Mayor Lynn Laycock

That the Committee note the feedback received in relation to the Audit Committee discussion paper and intended next steps.  

Carried

Background

West Tamar council put forward a motion at the General meeting in relation to the Audit Committee discussion paper released as part of the financial sustainability project.

Why the Paper was Prepared.

The discussion paper was prepared in response to a series of recommendations contained within the Access Economics report on council sustainability in Tasmania.

In particular, the recommendations proposed that

1. Each Council establishes an audit committee that has external membership and does not include the Council’s mayor as chair or its general manager as a member;
2. LGAT takes on responsibility for developing a template for the establishment, conduct and scope of audit committee activities in the Tasmanian context;
3. That one of the functions assigned to the audit committee be the review of the effectiveness of: (a) the Council’s financial governance arrangements, and (b) the Council’s planning and monitoring processes in ensuring the sustainability of the Council’s long-term finances; and
4. Rural councils or smaller councils give consideration to establishing regional or joint audit committees.

These recommendations were based on the best practice governance involving the establishment of internal structures that provide for independent review of processes and decision making to assist councillors to meet their accountability to ratepayers and the community with an audit committee overseeing and advising council on matters of accountability and internal control.

Audit Committees are mandatory in a number of states across the country and form a key component of the standard set of arrangements being considered by the Local Government Ministerial Council. While the State Government has not determined that audit committees should be compulsory for councils, it is nonetheless keen to ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place to underpin the financial sustainability of councils.

What Councils Thought?

Only seven responses were received in relation to the paper.

Most responses did not really address the detail of the paper, concerned that the need for audit committees had not been established or addressed. It is true the discussion paper did not tackle this, taking as the starting point the recommendations made by Access Economics following their intensive review which all councils supported.

One response cited no meaningful engagement in the issue by Council.
Common across six responses was the concern about cost and ability to recruit and retain skilled committee members. Most also commented that ‘open to the public’ meeting would not be supported and could have potentially adverse impacts. A couple suggested audit committees duplicated the works of the Auditor-General, Local Government Board, Local Government Office, Civic Mutual Plus, Councillors, General Managers and Staff. One response provided detailed feedback on the paper which was very useful.

**Next Steps**

The feedback received will be supplied, as appropriate, to the Governance Group working under the *Stronger Councils, Better Services* project. It is likely that it will not be progressed further at this time. Looking at the Audit Committee recommendations was a bite sized piece of work under the Financial Sustainability Project and was perceived as being able to be progressed discretely. Priority will be given to progressing recommendations related to long-term strategic, financial and asset management planning which form the core of sound governance.

**Budget Impact**

Does not apply.

**Policy Implications**

Does not apply.

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**2.2 SUBJECT: CONSTITUTIONAL RECOGNITION * **

**Mayor Deirdre Flint/Mayor Kevin Hyland**

That the Committee note the following report.

*Carried*

**Background**

Further to the report provided for General Meeting, on 1 August 2008, LGAT hosted a Constitutional Recognition Forum in Launceston. The forum was attended by 21 participants from 14 councils. The President and Chief Executive Officer addressed the forum and the CEO and Policy Director facilitated two workshop sessions. A copy of the forum outline is at Attachment to Item 2.2.

Participants engaged well and there was consistency of thought across two working groups, particularly that financial recognition was a priority, with symbolic recognition in itself unlikely to affect positive change for Local Government. It was agreed that community knowledge of the issues was likely to be low, with apathy high and a strong marketing campaign selling the positive benefits for the community would be required. This campaign would require input from both the August Experts Forum and the December Constitutional Forum being convened by ALGA.

The day will be written up in detail for participants and a summary document prepared for all Mayors and General Managers.
In relation to the August experts forum, six nominations were received by councils. As this did not exceed the allowable number for each State all can attend and have since been provided registration information. The President, CEO and Policy Director will also attend. The nominations were from:

- The Lord Mayor Rob Valentine
- Ald Eva Ruzicka  Hobart
- Clr Alwyn Friendersdorff  Waratah Wynyard
- Clr Ian Howard  Meander Valley
- Ald David Traynor  Clarence
- Clr Cheryl Fuller  Central Coast.

Clr Max Burr from West Tamar Council, who has long had an interest and passion for this area is unable to attend in August but will attend in December and has provided notes to LGAT.

**Budget Implications**
The Association has made a commitment to contribute $250.00 towards air travel per attendee.

**Current Policy**
This is one of the three pillars of ALGA’s strategic ‘3Fs’ agenda and consequently will be a key issue for LGAT in 2008/09.

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2.3 **SUBJECT : GENERAL POLICY DISCUSSION**

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

- It was felt that the Premiers statement in support of compulsory Local Government Elections at the Annual Conference of Local Government was not timely and that the issue should be raised at the next PLGC meeting.

- Further to discussion at the General Meeting earlier in the day, it was agreed that it was up to individual councils to resolve what matters were deemed appropriate to be included in their Partnership Agreements.

**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: CLIMATE CHANGE *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>That the Committee note the report and endorse the work direction for the Climate Change Officer over the next 12 months.</th>
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<td>Noted</td>
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Background
A report on the proposal to establish a Partnership Agreement on Climate Change was made to the General Meeting.

You will also be aware that Christine Materia’s focus has shifted from primarily Natural Resource Management to Climate Change, with the position currently funded until 30 June 2009.

In 2007 the General Management Committee endorsed the following principles to guide Local Government in developing strategies and actions to combat climate change:

- Combining mitigation and adaptation strategies at all levels of government and industry.
- Commitment to long-term and strategic consideration of climate change across Local Government functions.
- Leadership within the local community in understanding and acting on climate change.
- Flexibility and resilience within Local Government processes to adapt to climate change impacts upon human and natural environments.
- Recognition of shared responsibility and collaboration across all levels of government, industry and community.

LGAT convened a Local Government Climate Change Forum in Launceston on the 29th May 2008. A number of guest speakers provided updates and information on Tasmanian Climate Change projects and initiatives. The above principles were reviewed and supported.

Feeding in information from the forum, LGAT is preparing a twelve-month work plan on climate change underpinned by the Climate Change Principles. A copy of the work plan is at Attachment to Item 3.1.

Work priorities identified for the coming year include development of a Local Government Climate Change Strategy; improving access to resources (including those related to adaption and mitigation) through the LGAT website as well as developing an action pack of fact sheets and resources; maintaining regular communications and profiling best practice at a local level; and hosting workshops on specific issues. LGAT will also continue to support several local, state and national projects on climate change.

Further, the Climate Change Officer will be the initial negotiation and information point in relation to the Partnership Agreement with the State Government, with initial focus on working with the Climate Change Office to identify possible models, tools and costings in relation to emission audits. In general, our goal is that The Partnership Agreement is focused on real activity with tangible outcomes for Local Government. We anticipate it will be supported by some funding.
As stated in the General Meeting report, the State Government has already undertaken significant work in this area and the Association’s intention would be to leverage off this activity to make any process as simple as possible for councils. A number of councils are already involved in the Cities for Climate Protection process and while this provides a model for climate change action it doesn’t necessarily translate that all councils have the capacity to resource this model.

A working discussion has been organised by Christine Materia for 7 August, comprising some representatives from councils participating in Cities for Climate Projection and some that aren’t. Both urban and regional councils are represented. The group will conduct preliminary evaluation of a number of auditing models being used by councils across Australia and inform development of an options paper by LGAT.

The Reference Group will continue to be a resource for LGAT in the gathering and dissemination of information and resources. Christine Materia is currently planning a number of regional reference group meetings, anticipated to take place at the end of August to early September. Smaller regional groups will provide the opportunity to explore issues in more depth and allow the sharing of experiences and learnings between neighbouring councils.

**Budget Impact**
This is within current budget.

**Current Policy**
Subject to endorsement of the work plan and endorsement of the partnership agreement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3.2 SUBJECT : 2008 LGAT ANNUAL CONFERENCE REPORT</th>
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<tr>
<td>That the Committee note the following report.</td>
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<td>Noted</td>
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**Background**

A good deal of positive feedback was received from delegates and trade exhibitors in relation to the 2008 Local Government Conference, held at the Country Club in Launceston for the first time since 1995. A significant level of television, radio and press coverage was also secured for the event.

While delegate and dinner numbers were down slightly on the previous year, and the number of trade exhibitors was limited due to the size of the venue, the Association was able to claim a modest fee to cover event administration.

In a departure from previous years, a series of concurrent workshops were held for non-conference delegates to make better use of the hired space. Whilst the workshops were well received among those who attended, some conference delegates felt they were a distraction from the overall conference program.

The Launceston event attracted a record level of sponsorship support at $112,875, including financial and on ground support provided by the Launceston City Council. The introduction of some new sponsor packages and handbook advertising for the first time has contributed to this achievement. In total, 28 companies were involved with the conference trade exhibition.

After deducting LGAT administration costs and conference expenses, the conference was able to provide a $500 donation to the ALGWA and $3,000 to each of our event planners, IPWEA and the LGMA from surplus funds.
The 2009 Local Government Conference will be held from 17-19 June at Wrest Point in Hobart.

**Budget Implications**
At current sponsorship and attendance levels, the conference is able to cover the cost of event administration and still deliver a surplus to event partners.

### 3.3 Subject: Planning Course for Elected Members

That the Committee note the following report.

**Note:**

**Background**

As a member of the Advisory Board that reviews the curriculum for the Graduate Diploma of Environmental Planning and Master of Environmental Planning, the opportunity was recently taken to hold discussion with the UTAS lecturers in relation to the possibility of developing a short course for planning that targets elected members.

The outcomes of the discussion included an agreement to work on a business case to assess what might be required, the cost, processes for development, delivery mechanisms and marketing.

It is anticipated that the cost would be in the vicinity of $20,000 although this is simply a ‘ball park’ estimate at this stage. It is not envisaged that the course be subject to assessment/examination but certification would be provided for participation. An optional workshop with case studies/site visits might be possible or even an optional assessment which would have some credit capacity toward a diploma course.

It is likely that the course would be offered over two, two day weekend sessions. Delivery may be possible via UTAS or could be contracted out. There may be the possibility of accessing funds from the Stronger councils, Better Services project or the Association could seek to maintain control of course development from its own sources.

In addition to offering the course to newly elected members, it is expected that existing elected members would take the opportunity to participate as well as council officers. There may also be the possibility of offering the course to external Local Government participants.

It is not clear what the cost of participation would be but it would need to exceed cost recovery to ensure that the course would be reviewed, maintained and upgraded from time to time.

**Budget Implications**

There could be a potential cost to the Association of $20000.00

### 3.4 Subject: Local Government Representatives

That the Committee note there have been no Local Government Representative appointments.

**Note:**
4. FINANCES

Financial Items for Discussion & Decision.

4.1 SUBJECT: PROFIT AND LOSS REPORT *

Mayor Kevin Hyland/Mayor Lynn Laycock

That the profit and loss report to 3 August 2008, be received.

Carried

Background
At Attachment to Item 4.1, is a print out of the Profit And Loss Report to 3 August 2008.

Budget Implications
Does not apply.

Current Policy
Does not apply.

4.2 SUBJECT: CASH FLOW STATEMENTS **

Mayor Kevin Hyland/Mayor Lynn Laycock

That the Committee receive the reports for the months of April, May and June 2008.

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.
4.3 Subject: LGAT ASSIST Interest Rates

Mayor Kevin Hyland/Mayor Lynn Laycock

That the Committee endorse the resolution of the LGAT ASSIST Board that the loan interest rate for 2008/2009 for General Purpose loans and for Special Assistance loans be set at 8.1%.

Carried

Background
Under the Loans Policy the LGAT Assist Board set the interest rate for loans annually. The policy reads –

"Section 1.8 Interest Rate
The reference interest rate is the Statutory Fringe Benefits Tax Interest Rate. This will be set annually at the first GMC meeting after the LGAT Annual Conference.

The loan rates will be set by the Board from time to time to reflect market conditions provided the rate is not less than the “reference interest rate”. The loan rates will be offered on the basis of them being per annum, compounding daily on the reducing balance with interest being applied at the end of the month on a retrospective basis.

The loan rates, as set, will be published in the first LGAT newsletter after any amendment”.

The reference interest rate for the fund is the Statutory Fringe Benefits Tax interest rate. The Australian Tax Office have set the benchmark interest rate for the fringe benefits tax for 2008/2009 to 8.1% per cent.

4.4 Subject: 2007/2008 Audit

Mayor Robert Legge/Lord Mayor Rob Valentine

That the Committee note the following report.

Carried

Background
Accounts for the 2007/2008 financial year have been forwarded to the Association’s accountants, Wise Lord and Ferguson, for the preparation of a signed, unaudited financial report to be provided to the Audit Office by 31 August 2008, as per the requirements of the Local Government Act.

Final audit testing will be carried out in the first two weeks of October with the view that the Audit will be completed and Financial Statements provided by mid November.
5. ADMINISTRATION

**Administration Items for Discussion & Decision.**

**5.1 SUBJECT: BUILDING LEASE**

Mayor Deirdre Flint/Mayor Barry Easther

That the Committee note the following report.

Carried

Following advice received from the current landlord that the rental for the premises presently occupied by the Association is proposed to be increased by 50% for the present year, the dispute clause has been activated within the existing lease.

The process associated with the dispute mechanism involves the referral of the matter to the Australian Property Institute which is required to appoint an independent valuer to ‘arbitrate’ an outcome. That person has been appointed and has called for submissions from each party. It is understood that the new landlord has sought independent valuations to justify the increase. At this stage it is not proposed that the Association seek its own valuation but rather, that we rely on the one completed last year for our previous landlord and then seek to apply adjustment factors following discussions with Hobart City Council and the Valuer General.

Submissions are to be provided by 12 August with a decision to be made shortly thereafter.

In terms of the existing lease, we are presently one year into a three year lease. There is an option for a further two years after the expiry of the first three years.

The current owners have lodged a development application to undertake modifications/extensions to the rear of the building. While this proposal does not have a direct impact on the Association’s present accommodation there will be disruptions and indirect impacts. The disappointing element of this proposal is that the landlord has not had the courtesy to advise tenants beyond the placement of the mandatory statutory notice on the building alerting the public to the proposal.

The Association continues to investigate alternative accommodation. The commercial market in the greater Hobart area is relatively thin with very little on offer in the market place. A couple of properties have been inspected in recent times but adequacy of space and suitability of accommodation remain the challenges.

**Budget Impact**

An allocation was made in the 2008/09 budget for a rental increase.
5.2 SUBJECT: LGAT STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION

That due to the possibility of a number of Committee Members being absent, the Strategic Planning Session be rescheduled to November 2008.

Carried

Background
A review of the Association’s strategic plan is now due. A key challenge for the Association’s forward planning is the extent to which its agenda is set by others. Much of the work is very responsive whether generated from member councils, State Government or other outside influences. That said, there are a number of key initiatives and issues driven and controlled by the Association itself which are able to provide a basis for the planning process going forward.

A booking has been made at The Grange, Campbell Town for 23 September 2008 for a strategic planning workshop. The choice of venue was made on the basis of relative proximity and transport for all members.

At this time a facilitator has not been appointed to assist with the workshop but it is hoped that this can be finalised in the coming weeks.

The current plan and some other documentation to stimulate thinking for the day will be circulated in the near future.

5.3 SUBJECT: LGAT ALUMNI

Mayor Deirdre Flint/Mayor Graham Bury

That the Committee note the following report.

Carried

Background
It is proposed to establish an alumni for the Association. This will entail building a data base of past employees of the Association and providing them with regular information in relation to happenings/issues being dealt with by the organisation.

This will involve alerting people to who is at the Association, a ‘where are they now’ section and a provision for people to alert the Association to either their availability, or that of others, to assist the Association in the conduct of its business.

The Alumni will serve as not only a way to maintain contact but also to identify opportunities for recruitment or even the return of past staff. The concept is derived from a process established by Brisbane City Council and, if successful, will be ‘sold’ to councils as a mechanism to assist with their ongoing recruitment and retention arrangements.

Budget Implications
Does not apply.
### 5.4 Subject: Date of Next Meeting

Mayor Kevin Hyland/Lord Mayor Rob Valentine

That the Committee meet on 22 October 2008 in Launceston, venue to be determined.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13 August</td>
<td>General Meeting/GMC</td>
<td>Wrest Point Casino, Hobart</td>
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<td>17-18 September</td>
<td>General Managers Workshop</td>
<td>Hobart</td>
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<tr>
<td>26 September</td>
<td>PLGC Meeting</td>
<td>Launceston</td>
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<td>22 October</td>
<td>GMC Meeting</td>
<td>Launceston</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 - 26 October</td>
<td>Elected Members Workshop</td>
<td>Hobart</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 November</td>
<td>General Meeting</td>
<td>Devonport</td>
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<tr>
<td>13 November</td>
<td>Mayor’s Workshop</td>
<td>Devonport</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 December</td>
<td>GMC Meeting</td>
<td>Hobart</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 December</td>
<td>PLGC Meeting</td>
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<td>4 December</td>
<td>PLGC Xmas Dinner</td>
<td>Hobart</td>
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### 5.5 Subject: Other Business & Close *

At Attachment to Item 5.4 is a letter received from the Premier, David Bartlett congratulating GMC on their election and advising his commitment to working with the Association and Tasmanian Councils.

The CEO updated the Committee on the recent media in relation to council amalgamations, the general comments made and the response and actions taken by the Association.

There being no further business, the meeting was declared closed at 5.00pm.