General Management Committee

Minutes

Wednesday 16 August 2006
A meeting of the General Management Committee was held at the Country Club Casino, Launceston, on Wednesday 16 August 2006, commencing at 2.46pm.

**PRESENT:**
- Mayor Mike Gaffney
- Lord Mayor Rob Valentine
- Mayor Kevin Hyland
- Mayor Mike Downie
- Mayor Ivan Dean
- Cllr Robert Legge
- Mayor Deirdre Flint
- Mayor Adriana Taylor

**APOLOGIES:**
- Mayor Jock Campbell
- Mayor Barry Easther

**IN ATTENDANCE:**
- Mr Allan Garcia
- Mrs Liz Gillam
- Ms Christine Agostinelli
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* Denotes Attachment
The President congratulated Mayor Kevin Hyland on his election to the Committee and welcomed him, along with proxies Mayors Adriana Taylor and Ivan Dean to the meeting.

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<tr>
<th>1.1 SUBJECT: CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES *</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mayor Mike Downie/Mayor Deirdre Flint</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>That the Minutes of the meetings held 9 May and 21 June 2006, as circulated, be confirmed.</td>
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<td><strong>Carried</strong></td>
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Minutes of the meeting held 9 May and 21 June 2006 are at Attachment to Item 1.1.

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<th>1.2 SUBJECT: BUSINESS ARISING *</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Lord Mayor Rob Valentine/Mayor Mike Downie</strong></td>
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<td>That the Committee receive the report on business arising from the previous meeting.</td>
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<td><strong>Carried</strong></td>
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Update of Policy items from the last meeting - not covered in this Agenda are at Attachment to Item 1.2.

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<th>1.3 SUBJECT: PRESIDENT’S REPORT</th>
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<td><strong>President/Mayor Mike Downie</strong></td>
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<td>That the President’s report be received.</td>
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<td><strong>Carried</strong></td>
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The President reported on his activities as follows –

- Attended Legislation Committee Meetings
- Sent a letter to all councils offering to attend council workshop
- Undertaking review of CEO
1.4 SUBJECT: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT MAY – AUGUST 2006

Mayor Adriana Taylor/Mayor Mike Downie
That the Committee note the Chief Executive Officer’s report.

Notable occurrences over the period since the last GMC Meeting in May are reported in the following comments:

**Interface with External Bodies**
- Building and Construction Industry Council Local Government response to issues raised in Better Planning Outcomes report
- Careers Expo – Derwent Entertainment Centre
- ACE CRC Climate change research users forum
- TCCI – Development programs
- Environment Awards Dinner – presentation of Local Government award
- HIA – planning and building issues
- Telstra – Connect Australia funding
- Property Council President – discuss dissatisfaction with media campaign
- Legislative Council Select Committee on Planning Schemes
- Clandestine Drug Laboratories Working Group
- Rosny Careers Fair
- Rural Health Week Steering Committee
- PWC – ALGA review of Local Government Finances
- Area Consultative Committee – rural healthcare
- Huon Link – Enabling Learning Communities,
- University of Tasmania Internships

**Local Government Forums**
- NTD Chair and CEO re Local Government sustainability
- PLGC Meeting and Officials Meeting
- CMP Insurance Meeting
- Attendance at Dog and Cat Conference, Queensland
- Legislation Committee
- Air Quality Regulations Forum
- Roads Reference Group Meeting
- Local Government Forestry Consultative Committee
- Local Government Board Review Committee
- Conduct of Regional WorkChoices forums
- Visit to WALGA to discuss financial sustainability, attend workshop and meet consultants and independent panel members
- Induction for Standards Panel representatives

**State Government Meetings**
- Minister Kons - planning reforms
- Minister Wriedt – waste management issues
- Tas Hazardous Materials Management Committee
- DPIW – Climate change issues
- HLOG Waste Management Committee
- Attended Budget Lock-up
- Tasmania Together – future directions and Local Government involvement
- Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources – infrastructure planning and investment projects
- Premier’s Physical Activity Council Meeting and Local Government Working Group
- Litter Program Working Group
- Director of Local Government – general discussions
- DED – mature age workforces
- 10 Days on the Island Committee
- State Community Recovery Committee
- OPCET – Local Government Training Kit

**Media**
- Sundry interviews relating to rates increases
- Stateline – water and sewerage
2. POLICY

Policy Items for Discussion & Decision.

2.1 SUBJECT: ALGA REVIEW

Mayor Kevin Hyland/Mayor Adriana Taylor

That the Committee note the following report.

Carried

Background
In late 2005 the Executive of the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) commissioned an independent group, the Allen Consulting Group, to review the governance structures of the ALGA.

The review included full access to information concerning finances, governance, meetings of the ALGA Board and other relevant materials.

In February 2006 the Allen Consulting Group reported to the ALGA Executive for due consideration of their report. The extensive report contained 25 recommendations for change and included a recommendation that a taskforce be appointed to consider and progress these recommendations.

The Board moved that the report be received and that a taskforce be established to conduct further consultation with members and develop recommendations relating to structure, governance and constitutional issues identified in the report for consideration of the Board.

Some of the key recommendations are as follows:
- There be one Board member per state nominated by the Association member
- That ALGA Board membership be the principal activity beyond local Council membership
- 6-8 Board meetings per annum
- Participation by Board members on a broader range of policy development issues and representation at national level on policy committees and Ministerial councils
- Administrative matters to be dealt with by the Executive and a brief report provided to each Board Meeting
- Attendance at Board Meetings by Association CEO’s should be reviewed
- Conduct of Board proceedings to be made less formal in relation to passing of motions
- ALGA to remain engaged in COAG activities with other Ministerial Councils and Officials meetings to be shared more broadly across Associations
- Review to be undertaken of resourcing requirements of ALGA in light of re-prioritising of activities and focus on COAG type activities
- Association CEO’s to meet regularly to review cross jurisdictional cooperation capacity.
- ALGA to review externally funded programs and assess benefits and risks of extending resources
- Need to better manage relations with other sector parties such as LGMA, Capital City Lord Mayors, Sea Change Group, etc
The matter has been listed here for some broad discussion and to canvass any specific concerns GMC members may have that can be considered in discussions at the next ALGA Board Meeting.

**Budget Implications**
Does not apply.

**Current Policy**
Does not apply.

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### 2.2 SUBJECT: COAG REFORM

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<th>Mayor Robert Legge/Mayor Ivan Dean</th>
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<td>That the Committee note the developments at the COAG Meeting held earlier this year in terms of the potential impacts on Local Government.</td>
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**Carried**

**Background**
At the February 2006 meeting of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), involving the Australian, State and Local Governments, agreement was reached on a new National Reform Agenda. It is aimed at further raising living standards and improving services by lifting the nation’s productivity and workforce participation over the next decade.

The new round of reforms follows the National Competition policy adopted by COAG in the nineties.

The three streams of the COAG National Reform Agenda are:
- Human capital;
- Competition and
- Regulatory reform.

**Human Capital**
The human capital stream of reform aims to provide Australians with the opportunities and choices they need to live active and productive lives. A key objective is boosting workforce participation and productivity.

For rural and remote communities, the National Health Call Centre network and efforts to improve access to primary care services will be of interest.

Workforce initiatives which may benefit Local Government include those aimed at developing a more mobile workforce. COAG also agreed to further improve labour market participation in groups such as the mature aged and women. This may provide opportunities for Local Government in retaining or replacing skilled workers lost to other industries.

**Competition**
The competition reform stream focuses on further reform and initiatives in the areas of transport, energy, infrastructure regulation, planning and climate change and technological innovation and adaptation.
For Local Government, proposed reforms in transport and infrastructure will be of greatest interest. Transport reforms cover the topics of road pricing, use of over-dimension or over-mass vehicles, planning and project appraisal processes and reduction of current and projected urban transport congestion.

The review of urban transport congestion will focus on national corridors but will examine local networks where they interact with, and impact on, national corridors. The review will examine:

- Current and emerging causes, trends and impacts of urban traffic growth and congestion due to freight and passenger transport;
- Improved infrastructure planning, regulation, travel behaviour change incentives including charges, levies and taxes, infrastructure and service pricing, land use planning and institutional coordination across tiers of government;
- Better integration of national corridors and adjoining local networks and systems
- Better management of local, cross urban and through-urban flows
- Implementation of integrated land use and transport planning, to protect performance of national corridors and improve productivity over the long term, and
- Options for demand management and other travel behaviour change initiatives
- A new national Climate Change Plan of Action will include incentives for land use planning and building practices to reduce energy demand and adaptation to climate change.

**Regulatory Reform**

The regulatory reform stream of the COAG National Reform Agenda focuses on reducing the regulatory burden imposed by the three spheres of government.

Of particular relevance to Local Government are three of the six priority “hotspot” areas where COAG believes that overlapping and inconsistent regulatory regimes are impeding economic activity. These priorities are:

- Occupational health and safety;
- Development assessment arrangements; and
- Building regulation.

COAG has agreed to establish a COAG Reform Council to replace the National Competition Council. It will report to COAG annually on progress in implementing the National Reform Agenda

**Budget Implications**

Does not apply.

**Current Policy**

Does not apply.
2.3 SUBJECT: TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT ON POSITIVE AGEING

Lord Mayor Rob Valentine/Mayor Robert Legge

That the Committee note the following report.

Carried

Background
In August 2003, the President signed a protocol with the Australian and State Governments for the development of a Partnership Agreement on Positive Ageing in Tasmania, with these objectives:

- to deliver improved services to the community for the care of older Tasmanians; and
- to improve living and community environments for older people living in Tasmania.

The following principles were to underpin the development of this Agreement:

- the desire for improved cooperation between Commonwealth, State and Local Government aimed at developing a genuine partnership for the health and well being of ageing Tasmanians;
- the identification of shared objectives and ways in which all spheres of government can work effectively towards meeting those objectives;
- any amendment to existing service delivery arrangements will be the subject of contractual arrangements between parties to ensure appropriate accountability and transparency of implementation; and
- outcomes from the Agreement should be measurable through agreed performance indicators.

In August 2004, Councils considered the draft Partnership Agreement at a General Meeting and approved its signing by the President.

In the meantime there has been a State election, a Federal election and a change in Minister, all of which have delayed the signing of this Agreement.

The Tripartite Agreement will be signed on Monday 28 August, to co-incide with a visit to Hobart of the Federal Minister.

President Michael Gaffney will be a signatory to the Agreement and it is hoped a number of other Local Government representatives will also be present.

Budget Implications
The Association’s role in implementation will be covered and will become part of the ongoing policy development work program.

Current Policy
Member Councils supported the signing of this Agreement at a General Meeting in August 2004.
2.4 SUBJECT: WASTE MANAGEMENT

Mayor Mike Downie/Mayor Adriana Taylor

That the Committee note the following report.  

Carried

Background

In March 2005 a High Level Oversight Group on Waste (HLOG) was convened under the umbrella of the Premier’s Local Government Council. Its brief is to progress the following issues left outstanding from the Tasmanian Waste Advisory Committee’s agenda when it was disbanded in 2003:

- The improved management of controlled waste
- The implementation of a waste classification and measurement system to provide consistent data and inform performance monitoring programs
- The progressive development of a state waste management strategy, with an initial focus on controlled waste management
- The maintenance of the focus on developing and implementing a regional approach to waste management issues.

The HLOG is chaired by the Director of Environmental Management and comprises Local and State Government representatives.

A considerable amount of work has been undertaken by the State Government on improving the management of controlled waste and the HLOG’s current focus is predominantly on strengthening regional approaches to waste management. This matter was the subject of a discussion paper, released by the previous Minister for Environment in late 2005, along with a further paper that proposed the introduction of a ‘user pay’ waste disposal fee, or statewide waste levy.

Both papers were circulated to Councils for comment and subsequent feedback was summarized in two response papers by LGAT.

Feedback from Councils indicated little or no support for the introduction of a waste levy, but acknowledged that greater resources were needed to support improvements to the waste management system in the State. Comments on the regional waste paper generally supported the view that there was a need to strengthen regional waste strategies particularly in the North and North West, although there was no agreement on a fixed model. This indicates that regional waste approaches will need to be flexible and responsive to the needs of each region and its member councils. A strong message to emerge from the responses to both papers is the need for the development of a statewide waste management strategy, progress towards which could be best achieved through a facilitated professional strategic planning process involving representatives from State and Local Government, regional bodies and waste industry service providers.

At its June meeting the HLOG considered Local Government comments on both issues and, while recognising the good work that is currently being carried out by many Councils, reaffirmed its intention to improve the development and implementation of regional approaches to waste management. The Group agreed:

- That Local Government requires flexibility to tailor regional approaches to waste management to suit each regional group of Councils.
- That adoption of a non-prescriptive model for regional approaches to waste management nonetheless requires a common framework for all regions. This framework should include objectives for regional approaches, broad principles for intra and inter-regional communications, principles for funding regional projects and mechanisms for measuring and reporting progress towards achieving objectives.
− That a strategic planning process would be initiated through a series of independently facilitated forums that would set agreed strategic directions that would feed into regional approaches.
− That the development of regional approaches does not need to wait for the proposed strategic planning process to be completed. The proposed statewide strategic planning process will provide overarching principles and objectives to be furthered by the regional groups and will therefore provide input to the priorities to be covered in the regional strategies.

At the request of HLOG, the Department of Tourism, Arts and Environment and LGAT have prepared a draft framework for regional waste management, drawn up on the basis of the Discussion Paper, the responses that were received from Councils and the HLOG discussions. This has been sent to each regional waste group (and copied to all General Managers) with a request that they provide, within a specific time frame, an assessment of whether their current structures and processes can meet all of the requirements of the framework and, if not, that they provide advice regarding the changes that the region is willing to put in place to deliver the framework by 1 July 2007.

The HLOG believes that the voluntary implementation of a common and effective regional waste management framework in Tasmania is likely to be the most timely and effective way to progress this issue. A comprehensive response will negate the need for a legislated approach and probably forestall any attempts by the Government to impose a statewide waste levy.

The development of statewide waste objectives will be pursued through a strategic planning process in due course.

**Budget Implications**
The Association will most likely be requested by the State to contribute towards costs associated with the strategic planning process.

**Current Policy**
1. The principle of ‘user pays’ and ‘polluter pays’ should be applied where possible in addressing the issue of charging for waste management services.
2. The introduction of a waste management disposal level is an unacceptable impost on Councils and communities that is strongly opposed by Local Government.
2.5 **SUBJECT:** **PLANNING UPDATE** *

Mayor Ivan Dean advised the Meeting that he may have an interest as he is a Member on the Select Committee. It was determined that as the report was only for noting, there would be no conflict in his remaining in the room.

**Mayor Ivan Dean/Mayor Mike Downie**

That the Committee note the prevailing arrangements in Tasmania, South Australia and NSW in relation to planning reforms. Carried

**Background**

**Tasmania**
A recent meeting with the Minister for Planning confirmed a commitment to pursuing the proposals outlined in the Better Planning Outcomes project. While the priorities were still being worked upon, the Minister indicated his intention to take the issue to Cabinet at the earliest opportunity and to commence a program of implementation as soon as possible.

In particular, up-to-date and regular maintenance of planning schemes, regional planning, state policies, assessment of regionally significant developments and improved state-based information were identified as potential priorities.

In an address to the Parliament, Minister Kons also mentioned that he would be looking at the recent review undertaken in South Australia to assess whether there were any merits associated with the arrangements that have been put into effect in that jurisdiction. Subsequent discussions with the Minister indicate no pre-conceived notions of possible outcomes but rather a desire to better understand the current national agenda.

**South Australia**
The recently passed South Australian legislation has a range of components impacting on the current arrangements for Local Government in South Australia. The State Government is in the process of preparing a State Strategic Plan, parts of which will be included in a State Planning Strategy.

Councils are required to establish a Strategic Planning and Development Policy Committee to:

- Provide advice to the council on its strategic planning and development policies and ensure that these are in accord with the Planning Strategy;
- Assist the council to undertake strategic planning and monitoring; and
- Provide advice on strategic directions and infrastructure report and plan amendment reports.

Councils will be required to establish a Strategic Directions and Infrastructure Report to:

- Address the strategic planning issues within the area of a council with particular reference to the Planning Strategy; and
- address appropriate amendments to any Development Plan that applies within its area.

The report must set out council’s priorities for achieving sustainable development through the implementation of planning policies, local infrastructure development and the integration of transport and land-use planning within its area.

Perhaps the most significant change under the legislation relates to the establishment of Development Assessment Panels (DAPs). At present, South Australian councils must establish a DAP and determine the extent to which they will delegate development assessment decisions to the DAP. There is no restriction on the number of members or the composition of council DAPs although members need not be members of council.
Under the new arrangements the council must delegate all its powers and functions as a planning authority to its council DAP. Council appoints the DAP which has a maximum membership of 7. There must be an independent chair that has qualifications in urban and regional planning, building, environmental management or a related discipline or any other qualifications or experience as approved by the Minister. Not more than half of the remaining members of the panel may be members or officers of the council, with the remaining members required to be external appointments and satisfying the qualification/experience criteria required of the chair.

New South Wales
Another state where planning matters have created significant media interest and unrest among councils has been in NSW.

A major overhaul of the planning system was announced in NSW in late 2004 focussing on strategic planning for growth areas, simplifying planning controls, improving development assessment processes and allowing flexibility in the use of developer levies for local infrastructure.

In the past twelve months the planning reforms have included the following;
- Councils are to submit local environment plans (LEPs) – similar to planning schemes – to an expert panel to assess whether they should be put on public exhibition
- LEPs are standardised across the state, untangling local planning definitions into one uniform language. Councils have 5 years to prepare a new principle LEP for their area
- Independent Hearing Assessment Panels (similar to our RPDC) have been given the task of reviewing LEPs – previously undertaken by a State Government agency
- Parliament has voted to allow the Planning Minister to take control of the planning process if under-performing councils are leaving development applications in limbo
- NSW has also implemented a “projects of state significance” regime similar to Tasmania’s with a call in power by the Minister

This item is provided for the information of GMC members to draw attention to the types of reforms that are taking place across the country. While the planning systems prevailing in each state differ, there is a long history of particular principles being adopted on a national basis and it is important that Tasmanian Local Government is aware of circumstances in other jurisdictions and the potential impact of those arrangements.

Legislative Council Select Committee on Planning Schemes
The CEO of the Association appeared before the Inquiry on 4 July and provided evidence in support of a written submission which is at Attachment to Item 2.5 for reference.

Budget Implications
Does not apply.

Current Policy
Does not apply.
2.6 SUBJECT: REVIEW OF TASMANIAN COMPLIANCE CORPORATION (TCC)

Mayor Ivan Dean advised the Meeting that he may have an interest as he is a member of the Select Committee. It was determined that as the report was only for noting, there would be no conflict in his remaining in the room.

Mayor Mike Downie/Mayor Kevin Hyland

That the Committee note the following report.

Carried

Background

The Association has been invited to make submissions to the following enquiries in relation to the Tasmanian Compliance Corporation (TCC):

− The TCC Investigation being conducted by KPMG
− The Legislative Council Select Committee on the Accreditation of Building Practitioners and Administration of the Building Act 2000.

The Terms of Reference and the timeframe for the KPMG Investigation made it very difficult for the Association to make a useful response. However a short submission was made.

The Terms of Reference for the Legislative Council enquiry are much broader and present the opportunity to raise a number of issues of concern that have previously been expressed by Councils.

Councils have been asked to provide input by Wednesday 9 August as the submission is due with the Clerk of Committees by Friday 11 August.

Budget Implications

Does not apply.

Current Policy

Does not apply.
2.7 **SUBJECT:** FOLLOW UP OF MOTIONS – 21 JUNE 2006 GENERAL MEETING

Mayor Adriana Taylor/Mayor Deirdre Flint

That the actions as detailed below for each of the motions be undertaken.

**Carried**

**Background**

A matrix detailing proposed action in relation to motions passed at the 2006 Conference is at Attachment to Item 2.7.

While most motions can be dealt with fairly straightforwardly, there are four items that require further consideration by GMC given they have been the subject of previous motions and have thus been referred either to ALGA or the State Government on more than one occasion.

**Motion 3.1 - Share of Taxation**

*That the LGAT continue support for any proposals by the ALGA to secure, from the Australian Government, a guaranteed share of taxation as an income stream for Local Government.*

**Action**

That the Association write to the ALGA indicating continued support of their proposals to secure a share of taxation as an income stream for Local Government, with a copy of the letter to be forwarded to all Mayors.

As noted in the Conference agenda, this matter has been raised and supported at a number of previous General Meetings and LGAT continues to pursue this policy position vigorously with ALGA. In September 2005, following the passage of a similar motion at the 2005 Conference, the Association wrote to ALGA expressing formal support for this position.

Fair Federal Funding is one of ALGA’s current three major policy platforms, the others being Fair Treatment and Formal Recognition, and it has recently commissioned Price Waterhouse Coopers to undertake an extensive study into Local Government finances to underpin the arguments for a more equitable share of national funding. The recently signed Intergovernmental Agreement is the first step in the fair treatment process and seeks to eliminate practices such as cost shifting.

Given the matter is a current policy priority for ALGA it would not seem necessary for the Association to continually reiterate formally its support.

**Motion 3.2 - Share of GST**

*That the Local Government Association of Tasmania continually lobby the State Government to allocate annually a fixed percentage of GST revenue for distribution to Local Government.*

**Action**

That a letter be sent to the State Government requesting a share of GST revenue or an alternative source of funding for Local Government.

As noted above, ALGA is currently pursuing with the Australian Government, through its fair funding policy approach, an improvement to the funding arrangements for Local Government across the country. The national agenda is strongly focused on obtaining a share of revenue that excludes GST. Given GST is paid to the states, this has been a deliberate strategy to avoid confusion in dealing with the Commonwealth on funding responsibilities.

While the national strategy does not preclude Local Government approaching individual State Governments with regard to revenue sharing, the response from the Tasmanian Government...
when this matter has been raised on previous occasions clearly indicates an unwillingness to consider allocating a share of GST funds to Local Government. In its advice provided in response to this motion, the Government clearly regards GST as principally addressing the problem of vertical fiscal imbalance inherent in Commonwealth/State relations for many decades, and essential to supporting the provision of its services. The Treasurer reiterated this position in a press release following the passage of this motion at the Conference.

Motion 3.4 – Heavy Vehicle Funding:
That LGAT lobby the State Government to provide a greater share to Local Government in Tasmania of the heavy vehicle registration fees to enable councils to develop a sustainable model for more adequate maintenance of their roads.

Action
The President and Chief Executive Officer will be meeting with Minister Jim Cox in the near future, this issue will be raised and councils will be advised as to the outcomes.

As advised in the Conference agenda papers, this matter has been raised on many occasions with various premiers, ministers and budget committees and the response from the State Government has not deviated from its view that there are other and more pressing budget priorities.

The case that the Association has presented to the State Government on previous occasions is detailed below and remains current:

“The issue of heavy vehicles on council roads and the resultant impact on that infrastructure continues to be of major concern to Tasmanian councils. Former taxing arrangements in respect of heavy vehicles using local roads are considered fairer in the context of both user pays and the damage actually being done to the road.

The introduction of the national heavy vehicle motor taxing regime resulted in Local Government foregoing access to timber and mineral tolls. In place of the tolls Local Government was provided with access to an alternative source of road income in the form of a share of all heavy vehicle licence fees paid.

As has been advised in previous Budget Submissions the original agreement involved the sharing of total receipts across the two spheres of government with State Government receiving 85% and Local Government receiving a 15% share of the fees collected. The analysis undertaken at the time to determine this sharing arrangement was considered thorough and the payment to Local Government equitable on the basis of the demonstration of road usage at the time.

Unfortunately, while the sharing levels have remained constant, so too has the funding pool which remains at the original 1996 level. The percentage received by Local Government in lieu of the road tolls is a constant 15% of the licensing receipts. No adjustment has been made to the funding level to reflect changes in licensing receipts over the ensuing years. The actual level of receipts in that period has now risen from $10 million to over $12 million.

The Association believes that the present situation is inequitable and not in the spirit of the original agreement. The freight task has increased considerably in recent years with an anticipation of further increase over the next 20 years. The State Government’s policy of doubling agricultural production in the next decade means that greater yields will be required from farming properties. And to achieve these significant outputs it will be necessary to obtain efficiencies at the transport level. Deliveries of bulk inputs such as fertiliser and the collection of commodities such as milk and vegetable crops is being undertaken by larger and more efficient trucks but the impact on rural roads and bridges is significant. Construction of the road infrastructure in many of these areas was not undertaken on the premise that the size and
types of trucks now in existence would actually use them. The common response to this claim is that the technology associated with these vehicles and the load spreading across axles places no additional pressure on roads than smaller units. The reality is that local roads in many areas of the state were never originally constructed to take the loads of the smaller units on a consistent basis let alone the larger rigs now in existence.

Intensive forestry operations are also significantly impacting on council roads in many areas and while reluctant to impose load limits on particular routes, councils are being faced with such decisions to ensure the sustainability of their networks. In recent times where the weather has meant that log haulage cannot be undertaken in various parts of the state there has been a convergence of activity in areas where the soil and terrain is less arduous for logging activity. The intensity of logging operations has not only placed increased pressures on councils to maintain the roads in these areas more vigorously but also to utilise council equipment to assist trucks that become bogged.

In response to concerns expressed, in 2003, by one council to the then Minister for Economic Development, Energy and Resources, in relation to the impact of log trucks on the road network, there was an indication that the Government might be willing to investigate having the present motor tax on heavy vehicles indexed for CPI. However, this matter was never progressed and, while welcome, the offer of CPI increases falls way short of adjusting the base amount in line with actual receipts and maintaining that level in line with ongoing receipts.”

Given the State Government’s repeated negative response to representations, GMC is asked to consider the appropriate action in relation to this matter.

**Motion 9.1 – Pensioner Rate Remissions**

*That LGAT be asked to again lobby the State Government for an increase in the Pensioners’ Rate Rebate*

**Action**

That Association again write to the State Government lobbying for an increase in the Pensioners’ Rate Rebate and include examples of situations currently being faced by pensioners due to the revaluations.

This matter has been repeatedly raised with the State Government, following previous Conference resolutions to this effect. In response to previous representations by the Association the State Government extended the remissions to part pensions and indexed them.

The Association wrote to the Treasurer in September 2005, following the 2005 Conference resolution, which sought an increase in the rebate, and has recently received a response to that letter that essentially reiterates previous advice that the State Government sees the provision of welfare as an Australian Government responsibility but nonetheless elects to provide a range of concessions including the Pensioner Rates Remission Scheme. It estimates this Scheme cost approximately $15 million in 2005-6 and is not prepared to increase the rebate.

In light of this most recent advice, received in July 2006, it would not seem appropriate to pursue this matter with the Treasurer.

**Budget Implications**

Does not apply.
2.8 SUBJECT: GENERAL POLICY DISCUSSION

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

Noted

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.

Mayor Flint Suicide Prevention
There is concern for young people in rural and remote areas that may be at risk of suicide.

It has been observed that teachers in local rural schools are in an ideal position to identify ‘at risk’ your people through their contact within the education system. These teachers require support in identifying ‘at risk’ young people and putting in appropriate early intervention strategies to ensure positive outcomes for those at risk of youth suicide.

- The President will write to the relevant Ministers expressing the concerns of Local Government and asking them to provide a web link that can be placed on each of the Councils web sites.
- The Association is currently involved in the organisation of a Youth Forum to be held in October and consideration will be given to this issue being included as one of the sessions of the forum.
3. PROJECTS & SERVICES

Projects & Services Items for Comment and Decision.

3.1 SUBJECT: STANDARDS PANEL UPDATE

The Standards Panel Update was dealt with in a closed session and the Minute for this item will be provided to Committee members only.

3.2 SUBJECT: CONFERENCE REPORT

Mayor Deirdre Flint/Mayor Adriana Taylor

That the Committee note the following report.

Carried

Background
At the time of writing, conference feedback forms have yet to be fully collated in order to determine responses to the 2006 conference.

This year, the Association again claimed a modest administration fee in return for providing administration support to the ALWGA for the breakfast as well as retaining a commission on accommodation bookings.

In a departure from previous years, the 2006 Local Government Awards for Excellence finalists’ videos presentations were scheduled during plenary sessions throughout the day. Without having reference to the feedback form data, anecdotally, this appears to have worked very well.

Attendance numbers were again solid with excellent representation from around the State.

Sponsorship was up from 2005 to $99,600 with 42 companies involved with the conference trade exhibition, a conference peak, also achieved in 2004.

After deducting LGAT administration costs, the conference achieved a surplus of $12,000 which was evenly divided between the three event partners, IPWEA, LGMA and LGAT.

The coordinator has entered into discussions with Wrest Point Hotel regarding the viability of holding the 2007 conference at that venue. Consideration will also be given to whether the event could be moved north. Sponsors have been asked to provide feedback on their ability/willingness to participate in a northern event and this information has yet to be collated.

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.

Current Policy
Does not apply.
3.3 SUBJECT: COUNCILLOR DEVELOPMENT

Mayor Mike Downie/Mayor Adriana Taylor

That the Committee note the following report.

Carried

Background
LGAT has scheduled a one day Crisis Communications Management Workshop for General Managers and Mayors in Launceston on August 4 and two workshops on Financial And Asset Management in Devonport September 2 & 3.

28 delegates from 17 councils have registered for the crisis communications workshop.

Further to the survey of councils undertaken during July, LGAT has entered into discussions with Quill consultancy regarding a program of courses aimed at demystifying the Internet and building skills and confidence to fully utilise the Internet for research and communications. It is unclear at this early stage where and when these courses will be offered.

LGAT will progress a 2 day weekend workshop in February 2007. These workshops are historically well attended and offer up a mini-conference experience for councillors, covering a range of topics, in a resort style setting.

Over the next few weeks, a calendar of events will be developed which will include the February weekend workshop, the conference and a series of regional workshops.

Budget Implications
Does not apply.

Current Policy
The Association has as an internal policy a requirement to provide Elected Members with the information and resources necessary to maximise their representation.
### 3.4 Subject: Mayors’ Meeting

**Mayor Deirdre Flint/Mayor Robert Legge**

That the Committee provide input to the conduct of the format of the next Mayors’ Meeting to maximise the participation, benefits and outcomes for attendees.

Carried

In order to maximise participation and ease time constraints for Members, these sessions should coincide with other meetings. It was suggested that two dates be offered for the next workshop and that Mayors be canvassed as to their availability and preference.

The following issues/subjects were suggested -
- Code of Conduct
- Confidentiality
- Negotiation and management skills
- Council finances – how they are managed, best practice
- Round table sessions which will enable open discussion and opportunity for comparison between councils on topics such as meeting procedures within councils, the issues that arise and how they are handled.

**Background**

The concept of an annual Mayors’ Meeting was established some years ago and has been a popular and extremely valuable forum for council Mayors to network, gain information, share ideas and obtain insights into emerging policy issues, access tools to assist them in their roles and learn about practices in other councils.

In bringing Mayors together it is important that participants obtain the maximum benefit from attendance. In the past the format has involved presentations, discussions on particular issues, provision of training and free-range debate.

Generally all Mayors are canvassed for ideas on the types of issues they wish to have covered and the Association usually has some view on the types of matters it considers may be of interest to Mayors.

Prior to embarking on the organisation of the October Mayors’ meeting, GMC is invited to contribute to ideas to add value to these sessions and optimise the experience for participants.

**Budget Implications**

These meetings are organised on a cost recovery basis.

**Current Policy**

The conduct of such sessions is in accord with the Association’s policy of maximising opportunities for access to learning and growth opportunities by Elected Members.
3.5 SUBJECT: NRM UPDATE

Mayor Adriana Taylor/Mayor Robert Legge

That the Committee note the following report.

Carried

Background
The three NRM regions in Tasmania launched their second Regional Investment Plans (RIPs) in July, attracting funding of almost $14 million dollars for natural resource management activities. The activities funded in the second round of RIPs extend for a two-year period ending July 2008.

There are a range of NRM outcomes that will benefit Local Government, with some projects specifically focused on enhancing Local Government activities to generate improved NRM outcomes.

In the NRM South region, the Southern Tasmanian Council’s Authority have undertaken a project to improve NRM decision-making within southern councils through the development of GIS-based tools and associated decision-making models.

Other activities, such as the development and implementation of weed management strategies at a regional level, highlight what can be achieved through partnerships between councils and regional NRM bodies.

The Australian Government is currently assessing funding options for the regional NRM model beyond 2008. Feeding into this assessment are the results of a number of reviews into the success of the NRM process to date.

The current regional NRM programmes have been largely positive and successful in fostering the sustainable use of Australia’s natural resources. However, a number of barriers to greater Local Government involvement remain, and recent NRM reviews have identified the need for improved engagement with councils.

Some of the key recommendations that have been made for the future of NRM include the importance of a smooth transition between existing NRM initiatives (under NHT 2) into any future programmes (proposed NHT 3).

In terms of Local Government, the reviews have highlighted the need to acknowledge Local Government’s contribution and develop a vision for the future role of Local Government in NRM. Better linkages between local and regional planning and a greater focus on access to information and the sharing of data have been identified as key to achieving better NRM outcomes.

Budget Implications
Does not apply.

Current Policy
Does not apply.
### 3.6 SUBJECT: LOCAL GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lord Mayor Rob Valentine/ Mayor Adriana Taylor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>That the Committee note there have been no Local Government Representative appointments.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 June 2006 be received.

Carried

Background
At Attachment to Item 4.1, is Profit And Loss Report to 30 June 2006.

The report is only preliminary and does not include the balance day adjustments, which will be undertaken over the next few weeks, with the audit to commence early October.

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 months April and May 2006.

Carried

Mayor Deirdre Flint/Lord Mayor Rob Valentine

Following lengthy discussions of the Glamorgan Spring Bay Council circumstances, the Committee determined that the proposed revised subscriptions schedule provided a more equitable basis of categorisation and that the revised structure be put to the next General Meeting of the Association for consideration.

Carried

Background
At the time of preparing the agenda final account adjustments were still to be carried out for the Annual Conference profit distribution. These figures will impact on the June cash flow and the report will be provided at the next GMC meeting.

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: ASSOCIATION SUBSCRIPTIONS**

**Decision Sought**

That the proposed revised structure of the subscription categories be put to the next General Meeting of the Association for consideration.

**Background**
During debate at the recent Annual General Meeting of the Association under the item of Council Subscriptions for the 2006/2007 Financial Year, concerns were expressed by the Glamorgan Spring Bay (GSB) Council at the extent of the increase in its subscriptions for the year.

In supporting the adoption of the subscription schedule as presented at the meeting, the following amendment was made to the recommended motion -

*That the Association investigate ways to mitigate excessive increases as a result of revaluations.*

It should be noted that while there is not a direct reference to resolving the specific concerns of GSB Council in terms of its subscription levels, it can generally be implied that it is expected that the matter be considered.

**Current Arrangements**
Association subscriptions are set and determined in accordance with the Rules of the Association. The calculation for each member council is based on a formula which relates to the total adjusted Assessed Annual Value (AAV) of the municipality as at 1 July.

In effect, the capacity of the council to pay Association subscriptions is based on the relative AAV's for each council. The higher the AAV, the greater the proportional contribution to the Association subscription pool. Each council is placed in one of 7 categories, based on their adjusted assessed annual value, and a multiplier effected to determine the proportionate share of each member subscription.

This does not align directly with voting rights of councils which are allocated on a representational basis rather than rateability index.
The categories and percentage payable for subscriptions are detailed in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjusted assessed annual value category</th>
<th>Average percent payable by the category towards the Association’s annual subscription determined by the budget adopted at the Annual General Meeting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$</td>
<td>Average %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 – up to 5 million</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 million up to 10 million</td>
<td>1.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 million up to 15 million</td>
<td>2.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 million up to 25 million</td>
<td>2.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 million up to 50 million</td>
<td>3.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 million up to 150 million</td>
<td>4.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150 million and over</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Glamorgan Spring Bay Subscriptions**

As a result of its 2005 revaluation, the AAV for Glamorgan Spring Bay rose from $23,873,872 to $54,733,352, an effective increase of some 130%. This compares to an overall 37% increase for Launceston and a 51% increase for Waratah Wynyard for the same valuation cycle. The consequence of this dramatic increase has seen GSB move through two categories. This is the first time that this has occurred in recent memory with no other council having such a significant boost to its AAV as a consequence of revaluation.

The impact upon GSB Council is that it faces a $10,515 increase in its subscription level to $33,083. Had it only moved one category its contribution would be in the order of $26,817, an increase of $4,249.

The difficulty faced by the Association is the equity of treatment. The subscription levels are based upon a formula that takes into account each council’s capacity to rate.

**Options**

1. **Let the current subscription levels stand**

   This is the most equitable outcome for Association members. All members subject to significant AAV increases have been required to pay increases in subscription levels over a number of years and while few have been pleased by the requirement, there is an understanding and acceptance of the base determinant and the reasons for the increases.

   This would not necessarily satisfy the GSB Council.

2. **Provide a direct rebate to GSB Council**

   This could take one of two forms.
   
a. A full rebate to place the council at the level it would have been had it stayed in the same subscription category as last year which would equate to an amount of $9,936, taking the payment level down to $23,141
   
b. A partial rebate that acknowledges the increase in AAV but only rising one category. This would equate a rebate of some $6266, with a payment level of $26,817.

   The impact of either of these options would involve a shortfall in the Association’s budget to the level of the rebate. Some councils would be sympathetic while others would not.
3. **Provide an indirect rebate to GSB Council**

This would involve the provision of additional services/products to the level of the agreed rebate. This could take the form of a contra payment against things such as conference attendance, training programs and other services provided by the Association where direct payment may otherwise be required. It is unlikely that such offsets would equate to a full rebate but could be contemplated as a goodwill measure.

Again, this would not necessarily be supported by all councils but would provide the opportunity for some subtlety in respect of the rebate process.

4. **Review the current structure of subscription categories**

This option seeks to address the longer term structural elements of the subscription levels and to “smooth out” some of the anomalies that have arisen recently and are likely to be encountered in the future.

**Amending Subscription Categories**

The following discussion should be read in conjunction with the table at the bottom of page 24.

With the recent increases in land values there has been quite a swift movement of councils through the categories with only 8 councils falling within the bottom 4 categories and 3 in the bottom 3.

The ranges vary dramatically between the lower and upper categories with 21 councils now covered by the upper 3 categories. This is largely caused by the second highest category where the range is $100 million. It is considered that this category misrepresents the relative capacity of councils to pay and is remote from the representational aspects associated with voting.

The movement through the various categories occurs mostly when a council is subject to revaluation. Waratah-Wynyard and GSB Councils were subject to such movement this year while Sorell Council moved to a higher payment structure last year.

It is anticipated that with the introduction of two-yearly valuation indexation that these major shifts will be eliminated although there is likely to still be some creep through the various categories as the value of land continues to rise.

In order to correct this anomaly and in recognition of the significant upward movement in land values, a new set of categories is proposed which better reflect the capacities and sizes of councils in terms of their relative ability to meet the costs associated with Association subscriptions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed Adjusted aav category $</th>
<th>No of Councils in Each category</th>
<th>Average payable by each category %</th>
<th>Votes in each Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 – up to 10m</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1x1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10m up to 20m</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2x1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20m up to 35 m</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>7x1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35m up to 60m</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>4x1, 4x2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60m up to 100m</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3x2, 2x3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100m up to 180m</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>2x3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The new categories provide a more equitable spread in terms of linking like sized councils and recognises the significant differences between large and medium councils. The increased thresholds for each of the categories result in a more appropriate spread of councils.

Another matter requiring attention is the current averages that are applied to each category to make up the subscriptions. While some latitude exists in terms of applying these average percentage contributions under the rules, a new arrangement in the AAV categories would require an adjustment to the category contributions as well. A revised contribution percentage has been developed to better reflect contribution structure. This is detailed in the second last column of the table below. The categories have required some massaging but based on the number of councils in each category and a consistent escalation of the % by 0.6 in each grouping, a more equitable funding distribution results.

### Subscriptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grp</th>
<th>Grp</th>
<th>Council</th>
<th>05/06 Amount</th>
<th>06/07 Amount</th>
<th>% Subs</th>
<th>New Structure</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Flinders Island</td>
<td>11244</td>
<td>11445</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>13368</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>King Island</td>
<td>16788</td>
<td>16792</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>17543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Tasman</td>
<td>16788</td>
<td>16792</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>17543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Central Highlands</td>
<td>22568</td>
<td>23141</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>22556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Kentish</td>
<td>22568</td>
<td>23141</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>22556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>West Coast</td>
<td>22568</td>
<td>23141</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>22556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>George Town</td>
<td>22568</td>
<td>23141</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>22556</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Southern Midlands</td>
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<td>23141</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>22556</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Break O'Day</td>
<td>22568</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Circular Head</td>
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<td>26817</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>27569</td>
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<tr>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Dorset</td>
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<td>Brighton</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Northern Midlands</td>
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<td>3.30</td>
<td>27569</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Glam-Spring Bay</td>
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<td>Waratah- Wynyard</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>West Tamar</td>
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<td>Burnie</td>
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<td>3.90</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Central Coast</td>
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</tr>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Devonport</td>
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<td>33083</td>
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<td>37594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Kingborough</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Clarence</td>
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<td>Launceston</td>
<td>38881</td>
<td>40062</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total Subscriptions</strong></td>
<td>791872</td>
<td>835424</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>835424</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Budget Implications**

A potential budget shortfall this financial year depending on the decision.

**Current Policy**

As per the Rules of the Association.
4.4 SUBJECT: LGAT ASSIST INTEREST RATES

Mayor Robert Legge/Mayor Mike Downie

That the Committee endorse the resolution of the LGAT Assist Board that the annual percentage interest rates for General Purpose Loans be set at 7.5% and Special Assistance Loans be set at 7.35%.

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 2006/2007 to 7.30 per cent.

Budget Implications
Does not apply.

Current Policy
As above.
5. ADMINISTRATION

Administration Items for Discussion & Decision.

5.1 SUBJECT: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER’S REVIEW

The Chief Executive Officer’s Performance review was dealt with in a closed session and the Minute for this Item will be provided to Committee members only.

5.2 SUBJECT: PROXIES FOR GMC

Mayor Robert Legge/Mayor Mike Downie

That the Committee note the following report.  

Carried

Background
Following the GMC election earlier this year, there were two vacancies for proxy GMC members:
Southern Councils with populations over 20,000
Northern Councils with populations under 20,000.

The relevant Councils were invited to nominate candidates to become proxies.

One nomination was received from Southern Councils with populations over 20,000 - Alderman Adriana Taylor, Glenorchy City Council.

Alderman Taylor therefore becomes proxy to Alderman Jock Campbell.

Two nominations were received from Northern Councils with populations under 20,000: Councillor John McGiveron, Break O’Day Councillor Kim Polley, Northern Midlands

Voting papers were sent to all Northern Councils on Friday 4 August, to be returned by Friday 8 September. A period of five weeks was allowed to ensure Councils could deal with this matter at their next Ordinary Council Meeting.

Budget Implications
Does not apply.

Current Policy
The Rules provide a process for the selection of proxies.
5.3 **SUBJECT:** DATE OF NEXT MEETING

**Mayor Robert Legge/Mayor Deirdre Flint**

That the Committee meet on Wednesday, 11 October 2006 in Launceston. 

*Carried.*

**Background:**

Dates for GMC and General Meetings are as follows:

### 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date, Day</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17 August, Thursday</td>
<td>Legislation Committee Meeting</td>
<td>Hobart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 October, Wednesday</td>
<td>GMC</td>
<td>TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 November, Wednesday</td>
<td>General Meeting</td>
<td>Launceston, Country Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 December, Thursday</td>
<td>GMC (morning)</td>
<td>Launceston TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PLGC (afternoon)</td>
<td>Launceston TBC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.4 **SUBJECT:** OTHER BUSINESS & CLOSE

There being no further business the meeting was declared closed at 5.20pm.