President's Message

I have just attended a launch by Planning Minister Bryan Green of the Launceston City Council’s new Interim Planning Scheme, to be gazetted on 17 October. As I commented to the media, “One swallow does not make a summer”, nor does the approval of one planning scheme provide planning consistency across the northern region. It is necessary for the other planning schemes with the Tasmanian Planning Commission (TPC) to be approved and we wait anxiously for this to occur. To the north-west and southern councils, I wish you every success as you progress your schemes through the process at the TPC.

It is important to provide an update for you on the work of the Water and Sewerage Working Group and Implementation Steering Committee as it progresses. We have responded to the draft legislation, highlighting a number of issues, and whilst Treasury have made some amendments to the legislation based on our proposals, not all were embraced. On the matter of ownership and restrictions, and the sale of securities where councils may amalgamate sometime in the future, they have suggested this is better dealt with if and when it occurs. In relation to borrowings, Treasury has advised that reference to the Treasurer is facilitative in its objective, as opposed to being inserted, in order to allow the Treasurer to assert control. The objective is to provide the option for greater borrowing flexibility. On the issue of a referendum requirement for privatisation, Treasury have reiterated that the Government has no appetite at all for this.

Feedback on the first draft of the Constitution is being received and to date no major issues have emerged. General support is shown for the requirement that the Owners’ Representatives are to be elected members; the Selection Committee members are to be Owners’ Representatives; and for a hybrid voting structure for changes in voting rights and distributions.

Readers would no doubt be aware that the first meeting of the Owners’ Representatives has been held, with Mayor Tony Foster being elected as Chief Representative and Councillor John Perkins elected as Deputy Chief Representative.

Membership of the Selection Committee has also been determined and is as follows:

**North West**: Mayor Jan Bonde (Central Coast), Cllr John Perkins (Latrobe)

**North**: Cllr Ian Goninon (Northern Midlands), Mayor Barry Easther (West Tamar)

**South**: Mayor Tony Foster (Brighton), Mayor Tony Bisdee (Southern Midlands), Mayor Doug Chipman (Clarence) and Mayor Graham Bury (Kingborough)

The first meeting of the Selection Committee is scheduled for 17 October.

**Parliamentary Committee for Constitutional Recognition**

A key plank in the process to achieving Constitutional Recognition for Local Government was put into place this week with the establishment of a Parliamentary Committee to look into the specific issue of funding within the Constitution. The significance of the committee is that it will include representatives from all sides of politics and it will be important to have support from all parties and independents to achieve a positive referendum outcome. It is expected that the Committee will present its report by February 2013.

Despite the Government’s decision last month to defer a referendum on indigenous recognition, the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) continues to work with the Commonwealth on putting in place the conditions for a successful Local Government referendum, which will ensure that important federal funding for local communities can continue. ALGA has long maintained that the only way to protect direct federal funding for community services and infrastructure is to have Local Government recognised in the Australian Constitution.

Earlier this year, Local Government called on the Australian Government to establish a Parliamentary Committee to consider the timing of a referendum and the wording of the constitutional amendment. ALGA is seeking an amendment of Section 96 of the Constitution so that it would read: ‘Parliament may grant financial assistance to any state or local government body formed by or under a law of a state or territory on such terms and conditions as the Parliament sees fit’.

Polling commissioned by ALGA in 2011 found that 60% of Australians believe that Local Government is important and up to 68% of adults said that they might support financial recognition of Local Government in the Constitution.

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**DIARY DATE**

101st Local Government Conference
24-26 July 2013
Wrest Point, Hobart
LGAT News Readers’ Survey

Don’t miss the opportunity to win a Peppermint Bay Cruise for two people, valued at $236, simply by completing a brief, online survey seeking your views and perceptions of the LGAT News magazine. To be entered in the prize draw, please forward your comments by 16 November. Full details can be found in the September edition of LGAT News. To complete the survey, visit www.lgat.tas.gov.au. For details about Peppermint Bay, head to http://peppermintbay.com.au/cruise_pbc.php.

National Local Roads and Transport Congress

The 2012 National Local Roads and Transport Congress, themed ‘Delivering Your Agenda’, will be held in Hobart from 14-16 November. This year’s congress will discuss Local Government policy initiatives and position statements that will form part of an election document to be submitted to political parties and independent candidates ahead of next year’s Federal Election. The congress provides an opportunity for councils to unite and focus on the key issues affecting roads, transport and infrastructure provision in Australian communities. The key policy elements to be discussed at the congress include: mobility and access in rural and regional Australia; road safety; Local Government capacity; and freight. Ensure your Council is represented at this year’s congress by visiting the ALGA website at http://alga.asn.au.

Tasmanian Early Years Foundation Grant Program

Applications are invited for the 2012-13 Tasmanian Early Years Foundation annual grant program which aims to support and promote the wellbeing, development and learning of Tasmanian children up to the age of six years. Service providers from all tiers of government and not-for-profit organisations are eligible to apply. Eligible projects must meet the Foundation’s objective and build capacity through: fostering opportunities for engagement of young children and families in creative experiences; supporting fathers and male caregivers; and promoting optimal infant mental health. Grants are available in two tiers: up to $5,000 and between $5,001 and $25,000 (GST exclusive). Applications close on 2 November. For further information, visit www.earlyyears.org.au.

Social Inclusion in Australia - How Australia is Faring

How Australia is Faring tracks Australia’s progress against a range of social inclusion indicators and looks at how we’re performing in relation to health and disability, employment, financial stress, education, access to services, housing, feelings of safety and engagement in community activities. The report highlights that while we’re a thriving prosperous nation, around 5% (or 640,000) of working age Australians continue to experience multiple and entrenched disadvantage, and income inequality has grown steadily since the mid-1990s. Read the At a Glance Fact Sheet at www.socialinclusion.gov.au/node/209. For the full report, head to www.socialinclusion.gov.au.

National Youth Week Grants Program

National Youth Week (NYW) is a time to celebrate and recognise the value of all young Australians to their communities. NYW 2013 will be held from 5-14 April. The NYW 2013 Grants Program is now open to support NYW projects, events and activities. Three grant types are available including: Community Grants up to $2,000 for standard events, or up to $5,000 for regional events; Youngmibyondblue Grants of up to $3,000 for individual organisations, or up to $7,000 for events organised by multiple partners; and School Grants of $300. Local government and not-for-profit, incorporated community organisations are eligible to apply. Applications close on 9 November. The Guidelines and Application pack is available at www.dpac.tas.gov.au/nationalyouthweek.

Statewide Chemical Collection

Agvet chemical users in Tasmania have until 13 November to register their out-of-date and unwanted agvet chemicals for ChemClear’s statewide collection in December. Chemicals coming from chemical manufacturers participating in ChemClear will be removed for free. Any unknown, mixed, or non-participating manufacturers chemicals can be disposed of through ChemClear under a per litre disposal fee. Since 2003, ChemClear has collected 341,000 litres of chemicals through state and regional collections, with 98% of the chemical being used as an alternative fuel source in the manufacturing of cement. Call 1800 008 182, or visit www.chemclear.com.au.
Sister Cities Australia National Conference
From 11-14 November, the Sister Cities Australia National Conference will be held in Devonport, providing an opportunity to share with participants from all around Australia, New Zealand, China, Japan and South Korea. A feature will be the affiliated youth program. Registration information is available on the Devonport City Council website at www.devonport.tas.gov.au, or contact Ald William Wilson on 0439 363 149 for further information.

Assessing the Built Environment for Physical Activity
The Built Environment Assessment Training Institute has launched a free, online course to learn how to assess the built environment for physical activity. Participants will learn about the main variables found in most physical activity-focused built environment audit tools, with a more in-depth look at a few specific tools, and how to customise the tools and train others to conduct assessments. For more information or to register, visit www.med.upenn.edu/beat and click on 'Online Training'.

Physical Inactivity: The 21st Century’s Biggest Public Health Problem
The Premier’s Physical Activity Council joins Population Health – DHHS, and the Menzies Research Institute, UTAS, to present a free series of public presentations by Prof Steven Blair from the Department of Exercise Science at the University of South Carolina. The presentations are suitable for anybody who is interested in, or has a role in promoting or facilitating physical activity participation, including policy-makers, health practitioners and researchers. The presentations will be held in Launceston (26 October) and in Hobart (29 October). Please register by 24 October. For details, visit www.getmoving.tas.gov.au.

Going Smoke-Free: Your Workplace Kit
Being exposed to tobacco smoke at work, inside or out, is a safety issue. There is no safe level of exposure to second-hand smoke. A new, free resource is helping employers around Tasmania remove exposure to second-hand tobacco smoke in the workplace, making their workplaces safer and healthier for everyone. The new resource is also helping employers support their workers to adjust to the change. Protect your workers and your business. Download Going Smokefree: Your Workplace Kit from www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/peh/smoke-free_workplace. For printed copies, email healthyworkplaces@dhhs.tas.gov.au.

Can Creativity Save The Day?
The Time to be Creative Network is proud to announce their first conference to explore, enlighten and inspire Tasmanians about the potential and power of creativity to improve community health and wellbeing. The conference, to be held at Bridgewater on 23 November, will explore: why creativity is transforming at an individual, community and society level; how we can help to bring this transformation about more effectively; the power of creativity for social inclusion; embedding creativity and arts practice into the core business of our organisations; and ways to address community and health issues with creativity. Organisations that work with the creative/arts and community are invited to attend. The cost is $40 per person. For enquiries, please contact Jacqueline Maginnis on 6233 6924, or email jacquie.maginnis@dhhs.tas.gov.au.

Asset Management Study Tour to New Zealand
The Institute of Public Works Engineering Australia (NAMS AU) in association with NAMS NZ is pleased to announce a 6-day Asset Management Study Tour to New Zealand from 18 - 23 November. Tour highlights include attendance at the 2012 NAMS NZ International Asset Management Conference in Auckland, a welcome dinner and visits to Local Authorities. Learn firsthand from leading NZ councils on their experiences in implementing asset management and hear from leading asset management practitioners. The study tour costs $3,000 +GST. For further information, visit www.ipwea.org.au/2012NZStudyTour.

New Insights about Social Media for Local Government
The Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government has released a new report, Connecting with Communities: How Local Government is Using Social Media to Engage with Citizens, which reveals that councils taking a strategic approach to social media can achieve effective outcomes in engaging with communities. Research for the report involved a national online survey of 560 councils and a series of in-depth interviews with elected members, staff and professionals working in and with Local Government. As well as case studies, the report provides tools and resources such as a strategic communications matrix and framework; various social media platforms and mobile applications; benefits, adoption and implementation issues; useful websites and references. The report can be downloaded from www.acelg.org.au.

Upcoming Events

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<td>National Local Roads and Transport Congress, Hobart</td>
<td>14-16 November</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Meeting, Devonport</td>
<td>21 November</td>
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<td>Mayors’ Workshop, Devonport</td>
<td>22 November</td>
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