President's Message

Last week a Deloitte Access Economics Report, commissioned by the Property Council of Australia - Tasmania Division, identified “up to a 35% efficiency gain if structural reform of Local Government is effectively undertaken in Tasmania”!

I invite you to read the report, which can be sourced from the Property Council website and I am sure that, like me, you will be concerned that such a scant desktop analysis can come to such a conclusion. To suggest that savings of this order, and transcribed into rate reductions, is nothing short of fanciful. There is no evidence that savings of this magnitude have been achieved through Local Government reforms anywhere in the country.

Professor Brian Dollery from the Centre for Local Government, University of New England, who is frequently quoted in the report, has written in other places that he questions the proposition that bigger is always better in Local Government and that amalgamation has failed to improve financial sustainability where it has been tried. It is interesting to Google ‘Brian Dollery’ and read some of his papers, especially the article titled When big is not Better. I am pleased that this report has received very little airing and that comment in the media has been minimal!

On a similar note, I alert you to another release, a discussion paper from the independent panel established by the Southern Tasmanian Councils Authority (STCA) to review the structure and develop options for improving the performance of Local Government in Southern Tasmania. This document is available from the STCA website at http://stca.tas.gov.au, and I commend its reading to all Tasmanian councils.

Reform is in the air, and I trust that the Southern Councils’ review will identify issues that need to be considered by the Local Government sector as a whole. It is through the identification and discussion of issues that improvements in our existing forms of governance can be achieved.

In closing, and on behalf of all involved in Local Government in Tasmania, I wish Robert Legge a very happy and fulfilling retirement. Thank you Robert for your 47 years of service, your contribution at the local, state and national level of Local Government has been greatly appreciated.

Planning Reforms on the Way

Planning reform in Tasmania has continued to gain momentum with the implementation of the new residential building code for single dwellings which came into effect this week. A new code for multi-dwellings is also now well advanced. Key industry stakeholders will progress the reform in the coming weeks. The State Government has committed $6 million over the next four years to ensure planning laws keep pace with the aspirations of local communities and potential investors. Reforms for all types of development are being implemented under new Local Government planning schemes, based on a standardised state-wide template.

Currently there are 38 planning schemes administered by 29 councils. The state-wide code reduces the extent a planning authority can intervene in the house development process. In many cases, people will no longer need planning approval if their application complies with the new code. This will streamline development assessment and cut red tape, without sacrificing the quality of the decision-making. The single dwelling residential code will also provide for the first time greater consistency across Local Government boundaries for builders, architects and surveyors.

Break O’Day Mayor Retires

Mayor Robert Legge has resigned from Break O’Day Council after 47 years of service. Out of the 18 years at Council, Robert has served as Mayor for 13 of those years, as well as approximately 29 years at Fingal Council prior to the amalgamation with Portland Council in 1993.

During his years of service, Robert has been a representative on the Local Government Association of Tasmania’s (LGAT) General Management Committee, as well as other State bodies, and the Australian Local Government Association Board. Robert’s commitment and loyalty to the community was recently acknowledged by the Local Government Association of Tasmania when he was presented with a Life Membership Long Service Award. LGAT would like to congratulate Robert on his achievement and on his years of dedicated service to the Break O’Day community, and we wish him well for the future.
New ALGWA Office Bearers Elected
At the August AGM of the Australian Local Government Women’s Association - Tasmania, Clr Cheryl Fuller of Central Coast Council stepped down as State President and Clr Alwyn Friedersdorf of Waratah-Wynyard Council was elected to the position for the next two years. Alwyn brings a wealth of ideas and vitality to the organisation and cited the adoption of a marketing plan as a priority. Ald Heather Chong of Clarence City Council took on the position as Vice President, Ald Kaye McFarlane of Clarence City Council was elected as Secretary and Public Officer, and Ald Annette Rockliff of Devonport City Council was appointed as Treasurer. Clr Cheryl Fuller was applauded for her commitment and drive in leading the group through a number of significant events during her time as President.

New ALGWA Office Bearers Elected

Comments invited from Digital Local Government Program Stakeholders
Comments are sought from stakeholders on the draft program guidelines for the Digital Local Government program. The draft guidelines provide information on the purpose and objectives of the program, as well as the process for councils to access the initial funding round. The $17.1 million Digital Local Government program encourages the development and delivery of online solutions made possible by the National Broadband Network (NBN). The potential of NBN-enabled high-speed broadband can be used to improve the quality, availability and speed of local government services. The Digital Local Government program will provide funding to local governments representing the first 40 communities to benefit from the NBN. Councils are encouraged to comment on the draft guidelines to ensure the program delivers services that meet the needs of local governments and their communities. Comments must be submitted by 9 September. To view the draft guidelines, visit www.dbcde.gov.au/digitallocalgov.

Want to Get Healthy?
The Tasmanian Government’s Get Healthy Information and Coaching Service provides free information and coaching support to Tasmanian adults who would like to learn healthier eating habits, be more active, or achieve and maintain a healthy weight. For more information, call 1300 806 258 between 8am and 8pm, Monday to Friday, or visit www.gethealthy.tas.gov.au.

The Importance of Energy Efficiency
Low Carbon Australia (previously known as the Australian Carbon Trust) was set up by the Australian Government in 2010 to work collaboratively with business and public sector organisations to develop, co-design and co-deliver energy efficiency finance solutions, and facilitate the transition to a truly low carbon economy. The organisation’s Energy Efficiency Program can provide low-cost finance and advice to sectors including Local Government, through innovative programs to encourage investment in the take-up and use of energy efficient technologies and practices for cost-effective carbon reductions, including energy efficiency retrofits of existing non-residential buildings. Supporting project financing in the Local Government sector is of particular interest to Low Carbon Australia due to the high demonstration value that energy efficiency projects in this sector can achieve. For further information, visit www.lowcarbonaustralia.com.au.

Conferences, Workshops & Seminars

Open Space Facilitation Training (Moonah)
In this workshop you will learn how to facilitate small groups, or large, using Open Space Technology (OST). You will be able to use OST in meetings, forums and other settings where it can assist in creating and achieving goals within your organisation, or community. The workshop will be held in Moonah from 29-30 September. The cost is $385. For further details about OST, visit www.openspaceworld.org. To register online, visit http://omni-consulting.com.au/workshops.html.

Annual Public Sector Update 2011 (Hobart)
Ever felt like you’re hitting a brick wall when it comes to planning and implementing governance practices across your organisation? Do you feel that more could be done to deliver integrated governance that provides public value, integrity and transparency? The Annual Public Sector Update, themed Governance without barriers — the holistic approach, will be held on 5 October in Hobart. Critical issues to be addressed include: the significant state budget cuts and new government initiatives; impact and efficiencies of social media in the public sector; strong risk management frameworks that can be implemented to avoid fraud; and managing governance through reform and change. For details, head to www.csaust.com/Content/NavigationMenu/CoursesEvents/Annualconferencesandevents/AnnualPublicSectorUpdates/Public_Sector_Update.htm.

Designing and Facilitating Effective Workshops (Moonah)
This training will equip you with the skills to design and facilitate fantastic workshops in your field of interest. Being able to create workshops will assist you to conduct effective meetings, help your community learn new skills and assist you to present information to groups effectively. In this two-day workshop to be held from 6-7 October, in Moonah, you will learn how about: engaging people and effectively communicating your message; learning styles; dealing with diversity; and creating a strong community. The cost is $385. For further information, or to register online, visit
Environmental Health Australia State Conference (Ulverstone)
The Environmental Health Australia State Conference is to be held in Ulverstone from 12-14 October. The theme is Environmental Health: Expanding Our Horizons, recognising the need to constantly challenge the traditional public and environmental roles. Topics will include improving food security, managing environmental health issues in actual emergencies, climate change, food sensitive planning and urban design. To view the full program, visit www.aieh.org.au/branches/ tas/index.php.

Power of Play National Playgroup Conference (Melbourne)
Early childhood professionals and policy-makers are invited to attend Playgroup Australia’s Power of Play National Playgroup Conference, to be held in Melbourne from 12-14 October. Keynote speakers include one of the UK’s leading thinkers on childhood, Tim Gill; child psychology and education scholar and researcher, Paula Barrett; Deputy Director of Developmental Medicine, Royal Children’s Hospital Melbourne, Dr Catherine Maraffa; Founding Director for the Centre for Community Child Health at the Royal Children’s Hospital Melbourne, Frank Oberklaid; child psychologist Dr John Irvine; and children’s author, and television and radio personality, Andrew Daddo. For more information, visit www.powerofplay.com.au.

Tasmania’s Inaugural Spatial Innovation Showcase (Hobart)
The Tasmanian Spatial Information Council (TASSIC) has joined forces with the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE) and the Tasmanian Region of the Surveying and Spatial Sciences Institute to host Tasmania’s inaugural Spatial Innovation Showcase in Hobart on 27 October. The theme for this year’s event is Get a new outlook on the world . . . why location REALLY matters for Tasmania’s future. The event will showcase relevant national and international ideas and initiatives for addressing multiple business needs and achieving operational efficiencies through the use of spatially referenced information in day-to-day operations. For more information, visit www.tassic.org.au. To register, go to www.sssi.org.au/index/region/8.html.

The Hobart Leadership Journey 2011 (Hobart)
The Hobart Leadership Journey is a brand new program developed by Women and Leadership Australia to meet the needs of today’s dynamic female leaders. The Leadership Journey 2011 has been shaped by expert advice from top female leaders, trainers and academics, as well as countless hours of face-to-face interactions with thousands of Australian women. The full-day program, to be held in Hobart on 27 October, is built around four distinct but complimentary modules. Through mastery of each of the elements, participants can take an important step towards understanding and achieving their personal goals. For full details, see www.wla.com.au/programs/lj.

2011 National Local Government Human Resources Conference (Gold Coast)
To prepare ourselves for the significant challenges facing our industry in the future, Local Government human resource professionals must be able to embrace change on many fronts, including leadership, industrial relations, organisational development, recruitment, social media issues and the rising impact for new workplace health and safety legislation. Discover the challenges ahead and learn how they come together in HR’s world of tomorrow. This premier professional development event for human resource professionals in Local Government will be held on 7-9 November on the Gold Coast. Registration costs $990 (incl conference dinner and GST) until 10 October. Register online at https://lgsa.wufoo.com/forms/registrationnational-hr-conference.

Cycle Training for all Ages (Launceston, Hobart)
AustCycle has been developed to provide all Australians access to consistently high quality cycle training, through accredited cycle instructors. The AustCycle Teacher Accreditation Program (ATAP) Level 1 course focuses on training teachers to provide a wide range of cycle training programs – from beginners learning how to ride, through to cyclists wanting to learn how to ride in traffic environments. Accredited AustCycle teachers run programs that give people of all ages, ability levels and backgrounds the skills and confidence to ride safely, which in turn has potential to improve public health, reduce traffic congestion and create more sustainable, accessible and connected communities. Teacher training will be offered from 10-11 November in Launceston, and from 12-13 November in Hobart. Cost is $495. More information about the program can be found at www.AustCycle.com.au.

Upcoming Events
- General Managers’ Workshop, Bridport
- GMC Meeting & General Meeting, Brighton
- LG & Sponsor Appreciation Event, Berriedale
- Local Government Election Nomination period
- Local Government Election Polling Period

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