General Management Committee

Minutes

Wednesday 12 May 2004
GENERAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Wednesday 12 May 2004

1. NOTICE OF MEETING

A meeting of the General Management Committee was held in the Macquarie Room at the Hotel Grand Chancellor, Hobart on Wednesday 12 May 2004 commencing at 9.00am, prior to the Annual General Meeting of the Association.

PRESENT:

Clr Lynn Mason President
Lord Mayor Rob Valentine Hobart City Council
Mayor Ross Hine West - North West Region
Mayor Mike Downie West - North West Region
Mayor Janie Dickenson Northern Region
Clr Robert Legge Northern Region
Mayor Deirdre Flint Southern Region
Mayor Cathy Edwards Southern Region

APOLOGIES:

Mayor Terry Martin Glenorchy City Council

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Allan Garcia LGAT
Mrs Liz Gillam LGAT
Ms Christine Agostinelli LGAT
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1.1 SUBJECT: CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES *

Lord Mayor Rob Valentine/Clr Robert Legge

That the Minutes of 24 February 2004, as circulated, be confirmed.

Carried

Minutes of the meeting of 24 February 2004 are at Attachment to Item 1.1 coloured buff for consideration.

1.2 SUBJECT: BUSINESS ARISING *

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

Noted

Update of Policy items from the last meeting - not covered in this Agenda are at Attachment to Item 1.2 coloured pink.
1.3 SUBJECT:  PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Mayor Mike Downie/Clr Robert Legge

That the President’s report be received.

Carried

The President reported on her activities since the last meeting as follows:

February 25      ALGA Strategic Planning Day
February 26      ALGA Executive Meeting, Hobart
March 16         Meeting with Minister Cox re Local Government Act Review, with additional phone conferences
March 31         Cat Forum organised by Greens Party
April 1          Informal meeting of PLGC, Launceston
April 7          General Meeting
April 16         Ministerial Council meetings, Natural Resource Management and Environment Protection and Heritage Councils (ALGA)
April 18 – 30    12th Session of the Commission for Sustainable Development, United Nations, New York (ALGA)
May 2 – 5        Inaugural Meeting of United Cities and Local Governments, Paris (ALGA)


1.4 SUBJECT:  CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER’S REPORT FEBRUARY-MAY 2004

Mayor Ross Hine/Clr Robert Legge

That the Committee noted the verbal report on the day.

Noted
2. POLICY

Policy Items for Discussion & Decision.

2.1 SUBJECT: AMENDMENT OF ASSOCIATION RULES

Clr Robert Legge/Mayor Deidre Flint

That the Committee note the report and consider a further amendment to the Rules in relation to proposed Rule 17 (xiii) should be moved from the floor at the Annual General Meeting, 12 May 2004.

“That Rule 17 (xiii) of the proposed Rules be deleted and the following sub-rule inserted –

‘Determine the number and select the Employer Directors of the Board of Directors of Quadrant Superannuation Pty Ltd in accordance with the Trust Deed providing for the management and operation of the Quadrant Superannuation Scheme (formerly known as the Municipal Employees Assurance Scheme) dated 30 November 1995, as amended.’ ”

Carried

Background
At the April General Meeting, amendments to the Rules were considered.

In the papers accompanying the proposed amendments, in relation to the Functions and Powers of the General Management Committee it was indicated that advice was being sought from Quadrant to ensure that references to the name of the Fund are correct and that the Association Rules reflect the Trust Deed.

Currently Rule 16 states “(x) to exercise the powers and discretions and perform the functions of the General Management Committee and the Association which are contained in the Trust Deed providing for the management and operation of the Municipal Employees assurance Scheme and dated 30 November 1995 and determine the payment of any remuneration to the trustee by the participating employers or form the assets of the scheme.”

Currently the Trust Deed provides for the appointment of Employer Directors as follows: “the number (determined by the General Management Committee) of directors selected by the Employers in the manner determined by the General Management Committee”.

There are no other functions given to the GMC under the Trust deed. The Trust Deed now deals with remuneration of Directors, making the last clause of Rule 16 (x) redundant.
It was advised that Rule 16 x (proposed Rule 17 xiii) be amended to reflect the Trust Deed:

“Determine the number and select the Employer Directors of the Board of Directors of Quadrant Superannuation Pty Ltd in accordance with the Trust Deed providing for the management and operation of the Quadrant Superannuation Scheme (formerly known as the Municipal Employees Assurance Scheme) dated 30 November 1995, as amended.”

The Agenda for the Annual General Meeting, including the proposed Rules, was sent out to Councils without a further amendment being made to reflect the advice received. Although Councils have not received formal notice of this amendment, the need to make this amendment was foreshadowed previously.

It is recommended that an amendment to the Rules, reflecting the advice received, be moved:

“That Rule 17 (xiii) of the proposed Rules be deleted and the following sub-rule inserted –

‘Determine the number and select the Employer Directors of the Board of Directors of Quadrant Superannuation Pty Ltd in accordance with the Trust Deed providing for the management and operation of the Quadrant Superannuation Scheme (formerly known as the Municipal Employees Assurance Scheme) dated 30 November 1995, as amended.’ ”

Budget Implications
Does not apply.

Current Policy
Does not apply.
2.2 SUBJECT: FINANCIAL REFORM

That the Committee note the following report.

Background
With implementation of the reforms due to commence on 1 July 2004 issues associated with the operational aspects continue to arise and require resolution. Fortnightly meetings with Department of Treasury and Finance and Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment are occurring at present with most issues being resolved through this process.

Advice has previously been provided in respect of the delay that will occur in relation to rating land occupied by Forestry Tasmania. Advice has been provided on this issue to councils, together with estimates of rates on a municipality by municipality basis. An undertaking has also been given that those councils most affected/benefiting from this occupation will be dealt with first in terms of supplementary valuations.

Other issues being attended to include ensuring that the ownership of State Government land is actually correct and up to date. This is occurring although not necessarily at the speed preferred. Major agencies such as DPIWE are being dealt with first and this is where the predominant problem lies.

There are also issues associated with the identification of public reserves. Under the financial reform legislation, rates are not payable on public reserves. This should not cause any concern but the difficulty is that while many of these were gazetted in 1998 as part of the review arrangements under the Regional Forestry Agreement they have not been recorded as such on the list or notated on the valuation role. The impact of this is that councils may have an expectation of rate revenue from particular parcels of land for which no rates will ultimately be payable. Discussions are continuing with DPIWE to ascertain a solution to this problem.

Budget Implications
Does not apply.

Current Policy
Implementation is in broad accord with previous positions agreed at LGAT General Meetings.
2.3 **SUBJECT: SEX INDUSTRY REGULATION**

**That the Committee note the following report.**

**Noted**

**Background**
In March 2004, following consultation with Councils, the Association submitted a response on the Sex Industry Regulation Bill.

The major concern of Local Government with the proposed legislation is that obtaining a permit to operate a sexual service business under the Bill is not dependent on planning approval being obtained. Without such a requirement, Councils are concerned that planning approval will not be sought and that they will have to then pursue the matter.

There were also concerns about the practical implementation of the proposed legislation:
- The necessity for Councils to review their planning schemes and what will happen during the time this is taking place.
- How existing sexual services businesses will be dealt with.
- How home-based businesses will be dealt with.
- How the 200 metre exclusion zone will be applied.

Local Government’s concerns with the Bill were raised with the Premier at PLGC. The Premier suggested that further discussion take place with the Minister for Justice but he did point out that the Government was keen to progress the legislation.

Discussions have been held with Richard Bingham, Secretary, and other officers of the Department of Justice. The following points emerged from these discussions:

- The State Government acknowledges Local Government’s position that the planning responsibilities of Councils should not be unduly interfered with but that this is likely to result in different approaches being taken around the state. Further, although Councils might consider an application on planning grounds, it is quite likely that the community will take a different position. Both these factors could be counter-productive to the aims of the legislation.
- A mechanism such as a planning directive is considered to be too intrusive and may not be able to provide sufficient flexibility.
- However, it is clear that a considerable time period will elapse before most Councils are in a position to consider applications for sexual services businesses under their planning schemes. This will create a major problem for implementation of the legislation, particularly in relation to existing businesses. Consideration is being given to developing an alternative mechanism, that could be used in the interim which would recognise the planning authority...
responsibilities of councils, although the task is not without significant challenge and may not be a realistic proposition.

- It is very likely that the 200 metre exclusion zone will be removed. Although Local Government initially supported this concept, further consideration indicates that it would be extremely problematic to implement. In some municipal areas it would exclude any sexual service business.

- Whilst the position of Local Government in relation to a link between registration and planning approval was acknowledged, there was no response that suggested the Government might change its position on this matter.

Given the complexity of some of the issues discussed at the meeting, it seems unlikely that this Bill will be introduced in the near future. There is a good working relationship with the Department of Justice on the Bill and further discussions are anticipated.

**Budget Implications**

Does not apply.

**Current Policy**

Does not apply.

### 2.4 SUBJECT: Elected Member Allowances

**Lord Mayor Rob Valentine/Mayor Deirdre Flint**

That the Committee note the pending advice in relation to the establishment of a Board of Inquiry and the intent for it to report to the Minister by 31 July 2004.

That the President write to the Minister re the lack of response or consultation in relation to the Terms of Reference.

Carried

**Background**

The Association wrote to the Minister Assisting the Premier on Local Government in January 2004 seeking consideration of a formal review of elected members’ allowances. A response has not yet been received but discussions with the Local Government Division indicate that the matter has been addressed with formal notice of the review to be advised shortly.

Members of the Tasmanian Industrial Commission have been appointed as a Board of Inquiry under the Local Government Act 1993 and will be required to report on their findings to the Minister by 31 July 2004. President Pat Leary and members, Tim Abey and Jim McAlpine, have been appointed to the Board of Inquiry.
The terms of reference for the last review have been extended to include consideration of issues such as indexation and it was felt that the existing terms of reference can deal with matters such as an increased number of categories and superannuation for elected members.

The Board of Inquiry intends to invite submissions and conduct public hearings. The Association will develop a submission and will encourage all councils to participate in the review process.

**Budget Implications**

Does not apply.

**Current Policy**

Current Policy advocates regular reviews (four yearly) of elected members’ allowances.
2.5 SUBJECT: MUNICIPAL REVALUATION SYSTEM

That the Committee note the following report.

Noted

Background
The Steering Committee overseeing this project has now received the final report from the Working Group and is presently reviewing the various aspects with a view to formulating an appropriate model that can be put into effect.

At this stage the preferred model is likely to have a number of key components including:

- competitive tendering system;
- changed role for State Government with the Government Valuation Service not participating in competitive tendering and potentially undertaking all supplementary valuations on a cost recovery basis;
- indexation of valuations with two yearly updates;
- forward program of 6 year cycle revaluations;
- separation of revaluation and supplementary valuations;
- attraction of private sector valuers; and
- new contracting and tendering procedures.

It is proposed to conduct workshops with councils over the next month to obtain a clear position on these individual components and an acceptable package for the future. The matter will then be referred to the Minister for Planning and the Environment for consideration.

Budget Implications
Does not apply.

Current Policy
A Valuation Working Group was established to address this matter. Its input has been consolidated into the governance arrangements associated with this joint project with the State Government.
2.6 SUBJECT: REVIEWS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND POLLUTION CONTROL ACT 1994 (EMPCA)

That the Committee note the following report.

Noted

Background
The Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994 (EMPCA) is currently subject to 2 Reviews.

1. Statutory Review of EMPCA
Under Section 108 of EMPCA the Minister must ensure the Act is reviewed within 10 years from the date of commencement. Parts of EMPCA commenced on 1 January 1995.

DPIWE has now initiated the review, which involves a two-stage consultation process. In accordance with Section 2 of the Guidelines for Communication and Consultation between State and Local Government Tasmania, Local Government is to be involved at all stages of the consultation process.

In the first stage, Terms of Reference will be released and public submissions on issues and options invited. A survey of stakeholders with a regulatory role will also be carried out by questionnaire and this will include all councils.

LGAT has approved the Terms of Reference.

In the second stage, regional focus groups of selected stakeholders will be convened to consider and comment upon an Issues Paper that will be prepared following the first stage of consultation.

A Steering Committee and a Reference Group will be formed to operate during the life of the review. LGAT has nominated Greg French, Manager of Environmental Planning and Development at Glenorchy City Council, to the Steering Committee; and Adele Gliddon, Chief Environmental Health Officer, Launceston City Council, to the Reference Group. Dr. Christine Standish, LGAT Policy Officer, will also attend Steering Committee meetings to help facilitate the communication process with councils.

2. EMPCA Legislation Review Program
Certain aspects of EMPCA (assessment timeframe, Schedule 2 activities and fees) have been subject to a separate review through the Tasmanian Government’s Legislation Review Program.

DPIWE will shortly be releasing an options paper proposing revised assessment timeframes and fees. An agreed consultation process has been formulated that will allow Local Government to comment on the options paper.
LGAT will circulate the paper to councils and collate their responses. Of course, this will not preclude any council from making a direct response to DPIWE.

An information session for Local Government will be held shortly after the release of the options paper at which time expressions of interest will be sought from council officers willing to participate in a focus group to consider options for changes in annual permit fees.

**Budget Implications**
Does not apply.

**Current Policy**
Does Not Apply

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2.7 **SUBJECT: CAT CONTROL**

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**That the Committee note the following report.**

**Background**
As reported at the last meeting, a letter has been written to the State Government in relation to the control of feral cats.

No response has been received at this stage.

In the meantime the President has attended a forum on cat control organised by the Greens. If time permits, the President will give a verbal report on the forum.

It is also understood that some councils may be moving to address the issue of cat control within their municipal areas. For example, Latrobe Council is considering introducing voluntary registration of cats.

**Budget Implications**
Does not apply.

**Current Policy**
That the State Government support the development of a model by-law which councils may adopt, at their discretion, to control domestic and feral cats.
2.8 SUBJECT: COUNCILLOR CENSUS *

Mayor Deirdre Flint/Clr Robert Legge

That the Committee support the undertaking of a councillor census by LGAT in order to gain a greater understanding of the composition of Elected Members in Tasmania.

Carried

Background
In 2003, the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) conducted a Councillor Census in order to obtain, for the first time, a comprehensive understanding of Local Government representation in that State. Whilst this type of data is routinely collected in countries such as England and Wales, the MAV is the first Association in Australia to have conducted such a survey.

Seventy one percent of all Victorian councillors participated anonymously in the survey and were asked to provide information on a range of demographic features. The data gathered from the 2003 census will be used as a baseline measurement for subsequent data collections and will enable the MAV to analyse trends and to monitor changes in participation of elected members over time.

Based on the success of the MAV Councillor Census, the Association believes that it would be worthwhile to conduct a similar survey of elected members in Tasmania. The data gathered would provide useful information about the representation of the Tasmanian community on councils and, through subsequent data collections in future years, reporting on patterns of consistency or changes in trends over time will be possible. It is expected that the results of the survey will also be used to inform the development of future LGAT service delivery.

It is suggested that the Association undertake a Census later this year. Specifically, this will allow the data collection, analysis and reporting process to be trialed and provide adequate time for any problems in the delivery of the survey or with participation levels to be addressed. Post-2005 elections, the survey will once again take place and then be conducted following council elections in future years. It is proposed that the survey would be anonymous and take only a short time to complete. A copy of the questionnaire used by the MAV, and the results published in the 2003 Councillor Census are at attachment to Item 2.9 coloured gold for your reference.

The Association would seek to adapt the format of the MAV questionnaire to suit its own research objectives. Data collection could proceed in one of two ways: councillors could either voluntarily return their survey to the Association; or, a support officer within each council could be responsible for the distribution, collection and return of the survey (with assistance from LGAT staff). It is likely that the latter option would net a higher level of participation from elected members. On completion of the Census, a report would be compiled by the Association highlighting the major findings of the survey, which could be posted onto the LGAT website.
Budget Implications
Does not apply.

Current Policy
The Association seeks to provide targeted services and programs for elected members and the undertaking of a Councillor Census would assist this process.
3. PROJECTS & SERVICES

Projects & Services Items for Comment and Decision.

3.1 SUBJECT: LGPERFORMANCE TASMANIA *

That the Committee note the following report.

Noted

Background
The Association has entered into a strategic partnership with professional training company High Performance Management and Sales Training (HPMS) to deliver customised training to suit the distinctive needs of Local Government employees.

LGAT’s partner in developing these programs is Andrew Reimer, founder and principal trainer of HPMS, based in Hobart. Andrew has 20 years experience in US corporate media and 15 years in management training. He is a graduate of the University of California at Berkeley and, in 2002, he opened High Performance Management and Sales Training to bring his international expertise to Tasmania. His current clients include Australia Post, Southern Cross Television, The Mercury, Business and Employment Centre, Centacare, SEMF, AFL Tasmania, Tower Trust, Shadforth’s Limited, Retirement Benefits Fund, and other high profile Tasmanian businesses.

Developed as a result of feedback gained through forums conducted by the Association in conjunction with HPMS, with southern councils early in 2003, the new program delivers management training for entry level, middle and senior management, development training for customer service staff and communications training for all employee levels.

The program has been specifically branded to elevate awareness within Local Government of the unique nature of this training – customised specifically for Local Government in Tasmania. The program is being marketed as LGPerformance Tasmania (LGPT) and a promotional flyer is included at attachment to Item 3.1 coloured white.

A twelve month calendar of training courses at sites in Hobart, Launceston and Burnie has been developed. The arrangement between HPMS and the Association requires the Association to administer venues, bookings and accounts, as well as marketing through existing LGAT communications services. In return, HPMS Sales Executive, Denise Blizzard, is visiting every council in Tasmania to explain the program and stimulate uptake. The LGAT retains a proportion of the training fee and is able to recover costs and, in time, a small profit.
GMC members may be aware of promotion of LGPT through the March issue of the *LGAT News* magazine and regular prompts in the newsletter.

A collated report of participant feedback is supplied to the Association after every course and it is in the mutual interests of HPMS and the LGAT to monitor attendee levels and participant feedback with a view to ensuring the success of LGPT.

To date, Hobart City Council has put its middle management team through the management and communications training. Feedback from participants and the general manager, is favourable and encouraging for the future success of the program.

Whilst it is early days, councils are generally receptive and already the Association is receiving suggestions about other areas that could benefit from training customised to the Local Government context.

**Budget Implications**
The LGAT is to manage administration of venues, bookings and accounts on a cost recovery basis and will retain a portion of the training fee. It is expected that there will be a slight positive impact on the budget.

**Current Policy**
Does not apply.

### 3.2 SUBJECT: LOGONS REPORT

**That the Committee note the following report.**

**Noted**

**Background**
Funding received under the NTN project was $754,772.73 for the initial ten projects and $3,076,333 for the remaining projects. There was still some $1,942,000 to be received. Funds expended to 31 March 2004 were $3,079,995.01.

**Successful takeup of Content Management System**
Following meetings with Councils, 23 of the 29 Councils have signed up to use the Unity Content Management System, trialled by Kingborough and Sorell in 2003. This represents a 100% sign-up rate of those councils who had not already spent tens of thousands of dollars on systems. With 25 Tasmanian Councils, 55 South Australian Councils and, now, Palmerston in the Northern Territory using this system an excellent user base has been established. Many sites across the State are already under development.
Progress
The contract has been signed with the Dytech Consortium for the development of the second round of services. It is expected that testing of the services will commence within a fortnight. Councils will be asked to sign up for Round 2 services within the next month or so.

Overall there have been 10,107 unique users viewing a total of 226,483 pages on CouncilConnect and conducting 2,149 searches.

Of the initial 10 services the most commonly accessed services are Employment (13,572 visits) and Dog Info (8,313 visits). The council that has been interacted with the most is Glenorchy City Council with 3,582 interactions. The most commonly used search term with 65 requests, is "excess water meter charges policy".

It would appear that the utilisation of the CouncilConnect web site has stabilized and users are now interacting with the services rather than merely browsing or surfing.

Project Extension
After a protracted period, and representations being made at senior levels within Canberra, the Deeds extending a number of projects until 31 December 2004 have arrived. Since the last report, progress in this area had been slow and the inability to extend staff was causing frustration and increasing risk to the project. One staff member, Dr Christine Standish, has moved over to a position within the LGAT leaving a significant gap. This has been covered by a re-allocation of staff within the project and a slowing down of the Local Laws Online Part II project so that casual staff are able to help cover tasks associated with the vacated position. Advertising of the position without confirmation of the extension to the program was considered to be counter-productive as it would be unlikely that any applicants could be found for the short period of time as well as significant resources having to be spent to bring a new person up to speed.

Project Wind-down
A formal plan for this is yet to be determined, however some areas have already been identified that will require attention in the coming months:

- Staffing level required to support CouncilConnect at LGAT in the future;
- Strategic direction for online program for Tasmanian Councils in the future;
- Set up of user groups for support of various outputs (Unity CMS etc);
- Governance arrangements for CouncilConnect;
- Income stream via use of online conveyancing on theLIST (following evaluation process and previously agreed by GMC); and
- Transfer of unused funds in some projects to complete other projects (the rollout of the CMS will require more funds than allocated and applications to Networking the Nation have already been made to move some funds to cover the shortfall).

Performance Measurement Online System
This was launched by the Federal Minister, Hon. Daryl Williams in Launceston on 8 April 2004. It is fully operational and can be viewed at www.councilsatwork.tas.gov.au.
Local Government Conference
The LOGONS Project will have a booth at this year’s Conference titled, “The Lounge”. The idea is for delegates to come and relax in a familiar home setting with a computer in the corner emphasising that council services can be accessed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, from their home. It will showcase CouncilConnect, the CouncilsatWork website and individual council websites.

Budget Implications
Does not apply.

Current Policy
Does not apply.

3.3 SUBJECT: NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROJECT UPDATE

That the Committee note the following report. Noted

Background
LGAT employs a Natural Resource Management Facilitator, Timothy Phillips, to assist with engaging Local Government in regional Natural Resource Management processes. The project is a partnership between the LGAT and the Australian Government. The position is hosted and employed by LGAT and works statewide with Local Government, State Government and the three regional NRM bodies.

The project is for three years, during which LGAT receives $80,000 per annum towards salary and associated on costs. LGAT recently signed the formal project agreement with the Australian Government and is in the process of preparing a strategic plan and associated work plan for its approval by the Australian Government.

Over the three years it is expected that the position will work in the following areas:

- Building the capacity of the regional bodies and Local Government to work together on regional NRM programs and initiatives;
- Increasing the understanding of natural resource management issues within Local Government at the elected representative, senior management and officer level;
- Increasing Local Governments capacity to address NRM issues and to implement relevant areas of the respective NRM strategy through the provision of training, advice and information;
- Facilitating partnerships between Local Government and other relevant stakeholders to work cooperatively on NRM issues covered by the regional NRM strategies;
- Participation in the broader facilitator network support regional NRM processes; and
- Communication of relevant Australian Government programs and initiatives covered by the Natural Heritage Trust to Local Government.
Key activities to date

- Assistance to the three regional bodies to develop and deliver a series of forums, workshops and other communication aimed at increasing Local Government involvement in Natural Resource Management;
- Participation in forums and discussions related to the development of the regional NRM strategies;
- Coordination of the Local Government Forestry Consultative Committee;
- Participation in Tasmanian Together environmental benchmark working groups;
- Organisation and delivery of workshops for Local Government, in partnership with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), on the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999;
- Establishment and coordination of a temporary working group to review Local Government needs in relation to the TASVEG database; and
- Assistance to Mineral Resources Tasmania in the organisation and delivery of workshops for Local Government in the Tasmanian Landslide Hazard Map Series.

Budget Implications

Funding for this project is provided on the basis that the Commonwealth meets the costs of salary and travelling and the Association provides incidentals such as office space, telephone, administration support and access to a vehicle etc.

LGAT Policy

Does Not Apply
4. ADMINISTRATION

Administration Items for Discussion & Decision.

4.1 SUBJECT: PROFIT & LOSS REPORT TO 3 MAY 2004 *

Clr Robert Legge/Lord Mayor Rob Valentine

That the Profit & Loss Report to 3 May 2004 be received.

Carried

Background

A Profit and Loss Report to 3 May 2004 is at Attachment to item 4.1 coloured green for consideration.

4.2 SUBJECT: OVERVIEW OF LGAT 2004/2005 BUDGET *

That the Committee note the following report.

Noted

Background

The LGAT Budget this year maintains the agreed subscription increase (13%) endorsed at last year’s Annual General Meeting.

Key aspects of the budget include a significant reduction in administration income from externally funded projects, with the LOGONS Project due for completion in December 2004; a definitive allocation for GMC accommodation expenditure; a slight increase in costs associated with advertising, audit fees, office requisites, repairs and maintenance and electricity; land tax being recognised; a specific allocation for consultants and support for scholarships and awards and maintenance of staff salaries at the same level as last year but with a specific allocation for training.

An adjustment to the banking arrangements through the year warrants the specific allocation of funding for bank charges but these are basically offset through improved interest income from the working accounts.

A copy of the 2004/2005 budget is at attachment to Item 4.2 coloured blue.

Current Policy

That subscriptions be increased by 13% for a period of 5 years commencing 2002/03.
4.3 SUBJECT: PROJECTS COMPLETED FOR FINANCIAL YEAR

That the Committee note the following report.

Noted

Background
Two projects have recently been acquitted and closed off.

The Association received funding from the Commonwealth’s Local Government Incentive Program (LGIP) in 2002/03 which was largely used to meet the cost of two statewide satisfaction surveys associated with council activities and services. Some funding from this project was also utilised to adapt an asset management framework developed by the Municipal Association of Victoria for use by Tasmanian councils, with remaining funds being utilised to share costs associated with engaging an independent consultant to chair the municipal revaluation working group.

Two statewide community surveys were conducted, the first in October 2001 and the second in August 2002.

1240 Tasmanian residents were interviewed by telephone, selected from all Tasmanian Local Government areas on a proportional basis. Broad quotas were applied to ensure that each Council area was represented in a way that reflected the demographics of its resident population.

Nine areas of council services were covered: customer service; water and sewerage; waste management; community health and safety; recreational and cultural facilities and programs; social and community services; roads, footpaths and traffic; informing residents about Council activities and decisions; and, planning and development. 31 distinct services were identified within these categories.

Councils said that they had used the survey in decision making in respect of:
- Determining Council's resource allocation priorities (7)
- Asset management (7)
- Governance and customer service (5)
- Strategic Planning (3)

25 Councils (89%) supported continuation of the statewide survey. Of these, 16 supported the survey being conducted every 2 years and 9 favoured an annual survey.

Most Councils agreed that it would be useful if a comparison was drawn between urban and rural Councils with respect to residents' expectations and priorities and Council performance.

Given the number of Councils who are now undertaking customer satisfaction surveys, the project has been successful in raising awareness of the use of such surveys.
Providing a ready-made survey form has been of great assistance, particularly to smaller Councils.

The asset management framework has been taken up by two councils with a third presently evaluating it in terms of benefits of introduction and compatibility with existing arrangements. The framework is in the process of being distributed to all councils for further consideration following recent discussions at the General Managers’ Workshop.

The second project that has been wound up involved funding provided through the Tasmanian Community Fund for the conduct of risk management workshops for not-for-profit (NFP) organisations.

A series of thirteen workshops were conducted throughout the state, together with two council-specific train-the-trainer workshops for council risk managers. The Association engaged a risk management consultant to assist in the adaptation of materials from the Municipal Association of Victoria and to deliver the NFP workshops. Civic Mutual Plus were engaged to deliver the workshops to council risk managers.

The workshops were well attended and delivered at a time when there was significant uncertainty in the insurance marketplace and widespread concern by community groups and councils in relation to access to insurance and rising premiums. It had been intended to do another round of workshops but advice received at the time from councils and peak community organisations was that there was insufficient latent demand to necessitate the conduct of another round.

Subsequently, the Association has been working with other insurance providers to the market with the view to having them address the previous market failure and is presently in the process of facilitating workshops via councils to access community groups that need additional/new support in relation to risk management and public liability insurance.

Not all the funding sought for the project was spent and arrangements are presently in train to return the unspent portion.

**Budget Implications**

Does not apply.

**Current Policy**

Does not apply.
4.4 SUBJECT: DATE OF NEXT MEETING & MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2004

That the Committee meet at 9.00am on Wednesday 18 August 2004 in Launceston prior to the General Meeting.

Background:
The Committee may review the meeting policy and dates at any time, along with any changes on the distribution, nature or extent of information provided to members and meetings of the Committee.

Dates for GMC and General Meetings are as follows:

12 May
   GMC Meeting
   Annual General Meeting
   General Meeting

18 August
   GMC Meeting
   General Meeting

29 November
   GMC Meeting
   General Meeting

4.5 SUBJECT: OTHER BUSINESS & CLOSE

GMC Elections
Mayor Edwards indicated that her Council was concerned at the issues relating to a nomination form for LGAT President that was not received at the Electoral Office by the nomination closing date. She advised that the matter was to be raised at Council’s next meeting and a formal resolution likely to be presented to the next LGAT General Meeting.

The President congratulated Mayor Cathy Edwards on her election to the General Management Committee and thanked Mayors Janie Dickenson and Terry Martin for their service on the Committee.

Mr Brian Inches and Mr Paul Arnold of LGMA and Mayor Darryl Gerrity were also thanked.

There being no further business, the President declared the meeting closed at 10.48am.