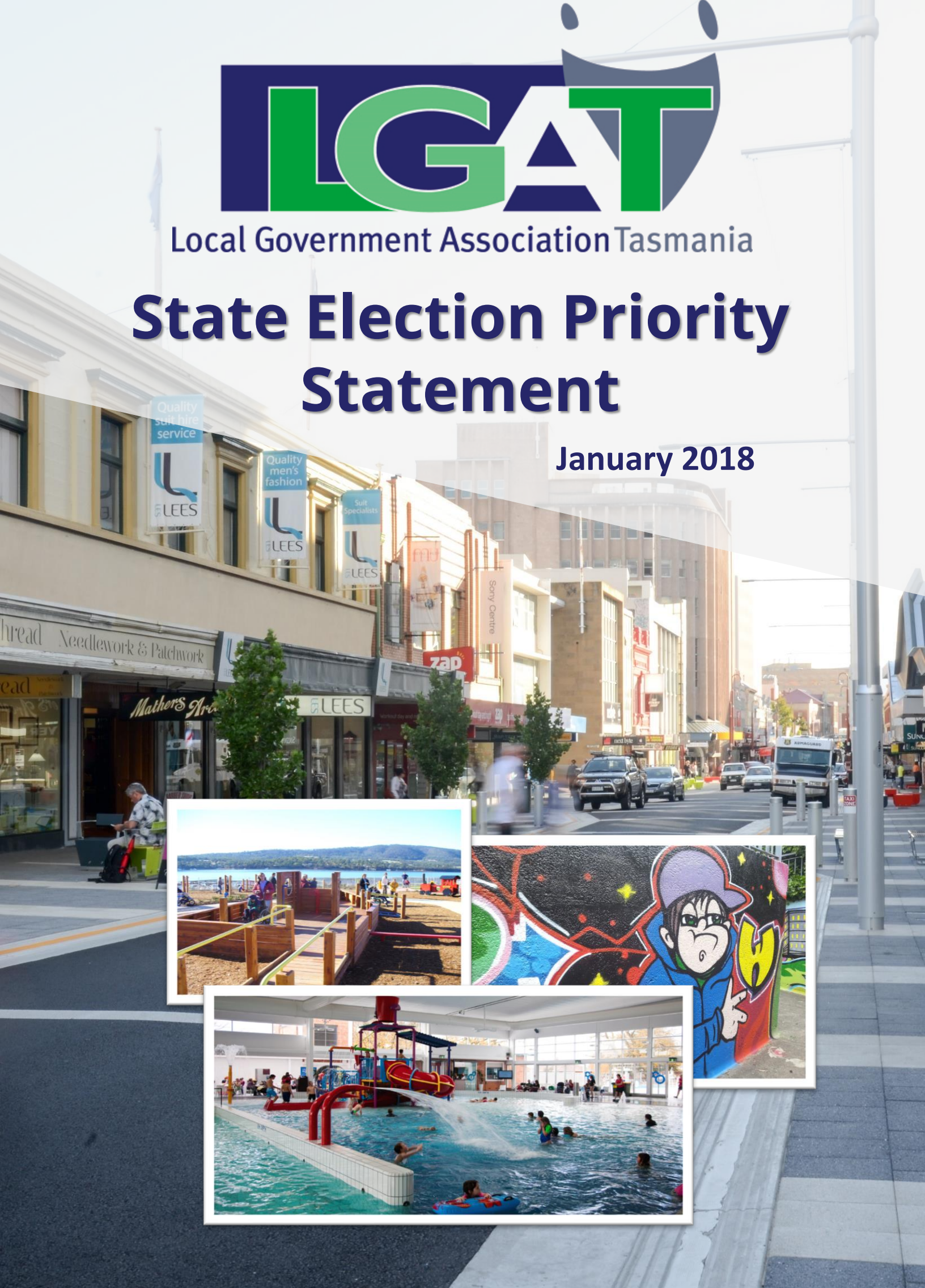




Local Government Association Tasmania

State Election Priority Statement

January 2018



Tasmania is a State with an abundance of opportunities and is becoming increasingly recognised as a valuable place for people to visit and live.

While opportunities present in this State, challenges also remain. Many and diverse parties share responsibility for how these opportunities and challenges might be addressed – Governments, non-government organisations, industry and local communities.

No single body operating alone can effectively influence necessary change. The best way to do this is together, in partnership, with each partner being clear about how they might best contribute to what is agreed as important.

Local Government is the closest sphere of government to the community and therefore has enormous potential to help make a positive difference.

While the specific focus of Local Government might be local and regional, these geographic areas represent the fundamental building blocks that make the State a great place to be.

Local Government delivers the services and infrastructure that shapes the daily experiences of every Tasmanian and are a major determinant of our community members' wellbeing.

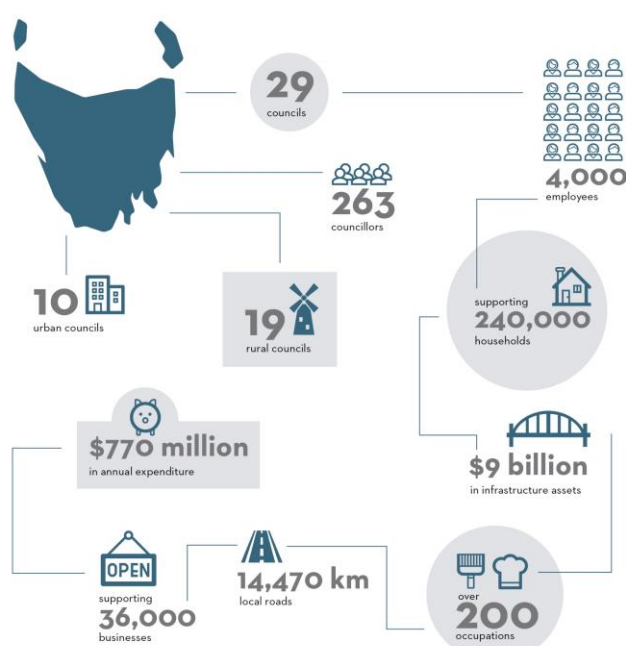
The Local Government sector must be considered a crucial partner in any attempts to effect, economic, social and cultural change and to promote strong, healthy, liveable, viable, sustainable communities. It is not a secondary stakeholder.

Investments into communities through councils are an investment in the well-being of every Tasmanian and the communities in which they live.

It is understood that a range of priorities exist specific to local communities, however, some priorities cross all Local Government areas. This Statement presents the current key high-level priorities for this sector in Tasmania.

Local Government encourages all political parties to commit to working in true partnership with this vital sector over the coming years.

With that approach, a range of agreed initiatives that serve to benefit the State, including the priorities contained in this Statement will have the best chance of being delivered.



Tasmanian Local Government:
Sector by the Numbers

PLANNING

INFRASTRUCTURE

TasWater



Local Governments make decisions daily that influence how local communities are planned and developed.

Over the past few years a significant planning reform agenda has been developed and is in the process of being implemented. Much has taken place, but there is still more to do to ensure the reforms are appropriately supported and that the critical missing pieces are put in place.

The Local Government focus for the next few years is that our planning system provides stability and certainty and not the continual disruptive changes many in the community have become accustomed to.

To achieve this, we believe the following actions are necessary:

- Development of the Tasmanian Planning Policies in partnership with Local Government.
- Improvements to the governance and appropriate resourcing of the updating of the regional land use strategies.
- Implementation of the Tasmanian Planning Commission's priority recommendations contained in their report on the State Planning Provisions, particularly the review of residential development standards.
- A review and consolidation of the various legislative provisions related to land subdivision.



The Local Government sector in Tasmania remains committed to the current ownership model for TasWater. It is our sector's view that a council owned entity, governed by a skilled board, under the oversight of an independent regulator, is the approach that delivers the best outcomes for customers and local communities.

Over the next few years there needs to be a careful and sensitive balance between working to improve TasWater assets, while at the same time, considering the potential impact on cost of living for Tasmanian residents.

TasWater has strong plans for how this will be achieved. The plans are aimed variously at looking after the needs of individuals, businesses, local communities, regions and ultimately the State.

A small number of significant water and sewerage initiatives have been identified in recent times that have the potential to provide broad shared benefits at a regional level. Benefits such as community sustainability and growth in business, tourism and associated jobs - ultimately leading to comprehensive social/cultural and economic change.

While worthy, these initiatives are complex and high cost and outside the ordinary business of TasWater.

They would be most reasonably addressed by Local Government and TasWater working in close partnership with the Federal and State Governments along with the business sector; so that the costs are not disproportionately borne by Tasmanian households.

Local Government is seeking a joint focus on the continued delivery of TasWater's 10-year capital plan, now shifting into the sewerage asset renewal phase.

To achieve this, we believe the following actions are necessary:

- No further action by State Government with respect to ownership.
- Collaboration between State Government, TasWater and Council Owners to prioritise those major water and sewerage initiatives that have the potential to provide significant shared benefits at a regional level.

Roads



Local Government plans, develops and maintains key infrastructure which includes roads, bridges and footpaths, giving local residents access to home, work, school, health and wellbeing services and other community structures.

Local infrastructure is part of a bigger infrastructure network that is funded by the Federal and State Governments. Improved collaboration and

coordination between the State and councils will create seamless maintenance delivery and service provision for our communities.

The way we plan and develop infrastructure is influenced by changing social, economic, climatic and political conditions.

In the future, a key influence for governments - including Local Government, will be the shift to electric vehicles and in particular, electric powered autonomous vehicles.

While not commonplace in Tasmania yet, there is no doubt that there will be an increasing expectation that electric vehicles will be provided for effectively in future. Road infrastructure needs to respond in a timely way to the changing expectations.

The Local Government focus for the next few years is to:

- Work with relevant partners to access real time transport data, so that travel behaviour modelling can inform future planning
- Understand opportunities for improved infrastructure funding models, particularly user pays systems for continual funding of road and stormwater infrastructure maintenance
- Participate in trial programs for electric powered autonomous vehicles and road infrastructure that responds effectively to potential vehicle increase
- Be engaged in the development of a fast charging network for electric vehicles
- Encourage the development of a Tasmanian Government Fleet Strategy aimed at reducing carbon emissions that includes (or considers) Local Government fleets
- Support an increase in the share of electric vehicles in Local Government fleets.

LGAT seeks the support of State Government in collaboratively progressing these focus areas.

WASTE



Tasmania lags well behind most other jurisdictions when it comes to percentage of material we divert from landfill. This equates to not only very poor resource recovery, but also a significant lost opportunity for Tasmania.

Our poor waste management practices negatively impact on public health, the environment and our tourism branding. However, if we embrace the concept of a circular economy (where materials are kept in circulation through reuse and recycling), and other efforts to divert materials from landfill, there will be direct job and investment benefits for our economy.

The Local Government focus for the next few years is on regional collaboration, optimization of kerbside systems, best practice resource recovery facilities and the progressive introduction of organics processing infrastructure.

To achieve this, State and Local Government need to work together on:

- Leadership and governance to deliver a new state waste strategy.
- Additional policy levers and signals, such as a statewide waste levy and alignment of state policy with national policies and product stewardship scheme.
- Development of an evidence base to inform decision making and infrastructure planning.
- Working with industry and the community to generate less and recover more waste.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Smart Cities and Regions



As is occurring in other States and Territories in Australia, there has been a shift in Tasmania away from what might be considered traditional industries, towards tourism, service and knowledge based businesses.

Improvements in technology have contributed to this change, but there is a great deal more that can be done to allow Tasmania to really benefit at an urban, regional and local level.

A collective focus on supporting connectivity and digital transformation will allow quality information collection and distribution. In turn, this will allow for more effective tourism, services and infrastructure planning, and will lift the capacity to offer new and expanding employment opportunities in the State.

However, digital lead transformation must not be urban centric. We must not forget our rural and regional communities.

The Local Government focus for the next few years is on understanding what opportunities exist for our specific local communities from the Smart Cities And Regions agenda. To achieve this, we need:

- Additional funding and commitment to support connectivity and digital transformation across the State.
- Support from the State Government to scale responses so that they suit both large urban areas and smaller regional locations.

Place Based Initiatives

The greater Tasmanian community and its associated economy must, more than ever, be thought of as resulting from the combination of connected and interdependent smaller local areas.

We must focus locally to effect positive social and economic change at the regional and State level. It is imperative for our State's future success, it is imperative that we ensure that there are opportunities for all, and that no community is left behind.

To address specific priorities that exist at a local community level, flexible service delivery and funding models are often required for effective results.

Where a range of State Government services are directed at addressing local demand, the approach that Local Government will support will be one where the various programs and services work closely together as partners; with a long-term focus and where responses are grounded in the specific local requirements and opportunities of the area.

The Local Government focus for the next few years is to continue and increase the co-design of place based initiatives with communities that are targeted at growing local economies.

To achieve this, we need:

- A coordinated approach to locally based initiatives – via establishment of regionally based community infrastructure leadership roles.
- The development of a high-level State Government infrastructure framework that sets out a long-term plan for the State.
- Support, through Skills Tasmania, to build the capability of councils in economic development.



Communities in Tasmania are profoundly impacted by natural disasters and need appropriate and adequate relief and support to recover from these events.

Local Government has been a strong supporter of the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) which are vital to assisting councils and communities to recover from major natural disasters.

In the face of an increase in extreme weather events, the capacity of communities to identify, mitigate and respond to natural disasters is critical. Local Government believes that building community resilience, preparing for and mitigating the impacts of natural disasters must feature higher in the State Government's priorities for disaster management.

A small additional investment in these areas will save 100s of millions of dollars in years to come by ensuring that communities and infrastructure is prepared to withstand our future extreme weather realities.

The Local Government focus for the next few years is to build our communities understanding of risk and resilience to the specific natural disasters each community may be exposed to.

To achieve this, we need:

- Additional mitigation funding to build resilience within our communities
- Re-establishment of more equitable funding models for mitigation projects to councils (that is, a return to one third contribution from each of Local, State and Federal Governments)
- Working with state agencies and not-for-profit organisations to build communities understanding of their risk and build resilience.

PARTNERSHIPS

The State Government is most likely to achieve desired community based outcomes if it engages and works in true partnership with Local Government.

To achieve this, Local Government seeks:

- Genuine consultation and engagement at the State and local level and a “no surprise” culture in State Government.
- A greater focus on appropriately resourced partnership agreements with Local Government.
- Increased focus on building the capacity of councils through guidance, resources and training, in partnership with the LGAT.

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