



Media Release

Friday 27 July 2018

****embargoed until 12 noon Friday 27 July****

2018 Local Government Awards for Excellence

LGAT congratulates Brighton Council and Circular Head Council as the winners of the 2018 Local Government Awards for Excellence.

The annual Local Government Awards for Excellence, sponsored by MAV Insurance, aim to promote outstanding achievement and inspire leading practice and continuous improvement in Tasmanian councils. The Awards for Excellence (Awards) recognise and reward councils for their hard work benefiting local communities. The Awards were presented today by the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) President Councillor Mary Lalios as part of the 2018 LGAT Annual Conference.

This year, 18 nominations were received from 15 Tasmanian councils. LGAT President Mayor Doug Chipman congratulated all Awards nominees stating, "I am delighted to see such a strong field of nominations representing a large range of outstanding projects being implemented across Tasmania by the Local Government sector".

Brighton Council won the Delivering Excellence – Larger Councils (population over 15,000) Category for their innovative development of CouncilWise, a wholly council owned subsidiary to develop, integrate and market Council's in house developed software platform to Local Government customers.

Recognising a gap in the market for a specialised software product to manage the core functions of Local Government and the challenges associated with bringing an external provided up to speed on Local Government's specific needs, Brighton Council took the unusual step of supporting a staff member with programming experience to write a new solution. The result was a specialised Local Government user pays software program created under the Council owned subsidiary named Microwise.

Other councils in Tasmania, Australia and internationally quickly became interested in the product and it began generating significant revenue for Council. Brighton Council recognised the need to successfully market their product and created a second subsidiary CouncilWise. CouncilWise quickly gained clients in Tasmania, Australia and internationally.

In 2017 Brighton Council went entirely serverless, moving CouncilWise to the Cloud. Going cloud based meant reducing costs by removing server infrastructure and eliminating the risk of server crashes and the need to backup files. Excitingly, Council was then successful in negotiating an international business deal to develop and promote the CouncilWise product's deployment in the cloud with Microsoft in the Australasian region.

By forming a company and going to market with its software solution, Brighton Council went from being simply a consumer of Microsoft services to an actual commercial partner, and this is of greater benefit to ratepayers.

Circular Head Council won the Delivering Excellence – Smaller Councils (population under 15,000) Category for their inclusive Art About Town program

Art About Town is a month-long celebration of art and culture throughout Circular Head delivered in partnership between Council, the Circular Head Aboriginal Corporation, local artists, business owners, schools and community members. The Program aims to build community capacity, promote inclusion and encourage the community to embrace difference and celebrate diversity. It also brings many visitors to the region.

An 'art trail' with an annual theme created in the central Smithton area to increase the area's liveability and sense of belonging. Pop up art galleries are created in unused shops and buildings, along with street art and performance, mural decorate walls and the "Chartchibald" portraiture competition features portraits of local residents, displayed in the local café.

Voting cards during the month promotes physical activity through encouraging locals and visitors to walk between displays and vote on their favourite art piece. Council has adopted a continuous rotation replacement strategy for art displays in consultation with building owners and art works are replaced every five years to keep works at a high standard.

Long after the event, street art works are regularly visited, photographed and talked about by locals and tourists and shared on social media.

The Program build a sense of belonging and the art creates a unique reason to visit Smithton and is a permanent investment the community.

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