



MEDIA RELEASE

Strictly embargoed until 9.30pm
Thursday, 21 July 2016

Stalwarts Honoured for Service to Local Government

Two General Managers of Tasmanian councils, who between them have served Local Government for more than 50 years, and a long serving Central Highlands Mayor have been honoured tonight at the LGAT Annual Conference Dinner, held at Wrest Point, Hobart.

Ian Pearce, the General Manager of West Tamar Council, was presented an *Outstanding Achievement Award*, while Greg Preece, General Manager of Meander Valley Council, and Central Highlands Mayor Deirdre Flint each received an *Outstanding Commitment and Service to Local Government Award*, based on their personal commitment, eminent service and contribution to the whole of Local Government.

A qualified accountant, **Ian Pearce** started his career in Local Government in 1995 when he was appointed to the role of Financial Services Manager at West Tamar Council. After four years, he became General Manager, a position he has held for 17 years, taking his total time at Council to 21 years.

Highlights of his time include maintaining a strong and sustainable financial position for Council, the establishment of the Windsor Community Health and Wellbeing Centre, and playing a pivotal part in the planning for the Legana Structure Plan and the Exeter Structure Plan. Ian Pearce retires in August.

“Ian is held in very high regard among his peers with his strategic thinking and willingness to assist other councils in resource-sharing arrangements, as well as his approach to financial management,” West Tamar Mayor Christina Holmdahl said.

“His contributions go far beyond the West Tamar municipality throughout Northern Tasmania,” she said.

Greg Preece commenced his career in Local Government in 1985, when he was appointed to the role of Manager of Construction at the Launceston City Council. With qualifications in civil engineering, Mr Preece introduced a number of innovative work practices to help improve efficiencies and productivity. After 10 years, he was appointed to the Executive Team at Council. He left in 1999 to take up the General Manager role of Dorset Council where he embarked on a debt reduction and 10-year financial management plan. Six years later, in 2005, Greg was appointed as General Manager of Meander Valley Council, taking his total service to Local Government to 31 years. Greg also retires next month.

Meander Valley Mayor Craig Perkins says a feature of Greg's leadership has been the creation of a 'can do' culture, empowering people to make decisions on significant issues.

"Greg has been a great leader and mentor, and a true innovator in Local Government," Mayor Perkins said.

"He has also made a substantial contribution to Local Government through his participation in many supporting organisations, groups and committees, and has received numerous awards."

LGAT President, Mayor Doug Chipman said, "Both Ian and Greg are exemplars of the skills and dedication that we see all across the Local Government sector. I congratulate them on their distinguished careers."

Deirdre Flint, OA, has served tirelessly as Mayor of Central Highlands for the past 14 years and on the Council since 1996. She has also been a long serving member of the LGAT General Management Committee, served as Vice President, and as an Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) Board Member from 2010-2012.

Mayor Flint was the Local Government representative on the first five-year-plan on positive ageing, on the Rural Doctor's Workforce Council and also the Building Appeals Board. She was awarded the Order of Australia in 2010.

LGAT President Doug Chipman described Mayor Flint as a "humble, gracious, energetic and diminutive woman with a great commitment to the Central Highlands and to Tasmania. She is an inspiration and leads by example."

Ends....

*Background summaries on each of the recipients are attached for more career highlights.

**For media interviews or photographs, please contact
Keryn Nylander on 0418 996 536**