



Queensland Local Government

Advocacy Action Plan



#backalocalfuture

2019



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President
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Queensland local councils have played a pivotal role in the State's development since 1859. The local government sector's diversity and breadth is a fundamental contributor to Queensland's political, social and economic history. The work of councils in serving their local communities, driving regional economies and helping to implement the State and Federal Governments' public policy direction ensure Queensland's continued well-being and prosperity.

Queensland's 77 local councils employ nearly 40,000 people and manage public assets worth a combined \$155 billion but raise only 3% of all government taxes. Queenslanders rely on their local council for a vast range of services, from rubbish collection to pet registration. Councils build the roads and bridges that keep the State's economy moving, maintain the libraries that help boost children's literacy and help eradicate the pests and weeds that pose a threat to Queensland's agricultural industry.

They also stand tall in times of natural disaster and hold communities together during times of growth and decline.

The LGAQ is proud to be the peak body for a thriving, innovative and vital sector of government that contributes every day to the health of Queenslanders and our economy. Local government is much more than just another stakeholder. It stands ready to be a powerful partner of both the State and Federal Governments in ensuring Queensland continues to take full advantage of its potential.

The Advocacy Action Plan is a guide to understanding the issues and policy positions we believe are important to ensuring that partnership thrives.

Local government is about people

Councils are the level of government closest to the community, strong local employers and constant and reliable drivers of regional economies. They make a real difference, and so are partners in government rather than simply stakeholders. Only through productive partnerships with both state and federal governments can they improve the opportunities and prosperity for their communities.



01

Execute a new Partners in Government Agreement with the State Government, including the preparation of a local government budget statement and mechanisms to support whole of government engagement on matters relevant to local government.

02

Federal and State Governments to develop a bipartisan and co-ordinated drought response between all levels of government to address the impacts of drought in Queensland communities.

03

Federal and State Government funding of drought impacted local governments to invest in initiatives that support community sustainability and resilience.

04

Federal and State Government employment programs to support local governments achieve a 5% workforce target for apprentices and trainees.

05

State Government funding program to support local governments provide digital training for older workers.

06

Contemporary Industrial relations system including Award coverage that empowers councils, provides fair and equitable conditions for valued local government employees and promotes a sustainable local workforce.

Local government is open, transparent and accountable

07

State Government to implement remaining Belcarra integrity reforms and recommendations relating to the conduct of elections to ensure clarity, consistency and a level playing field.

09

State Government to revise the conflict of interest provisions, including for councils with groups.

08

State Government to legislate a practical definition of what constitutes a gift from a prohibited donor.

10

State Government to legislate to make it an offence to publicise complaints in the three months leading up to local government elections as recommended by the Crime and Corruption Commission.

11

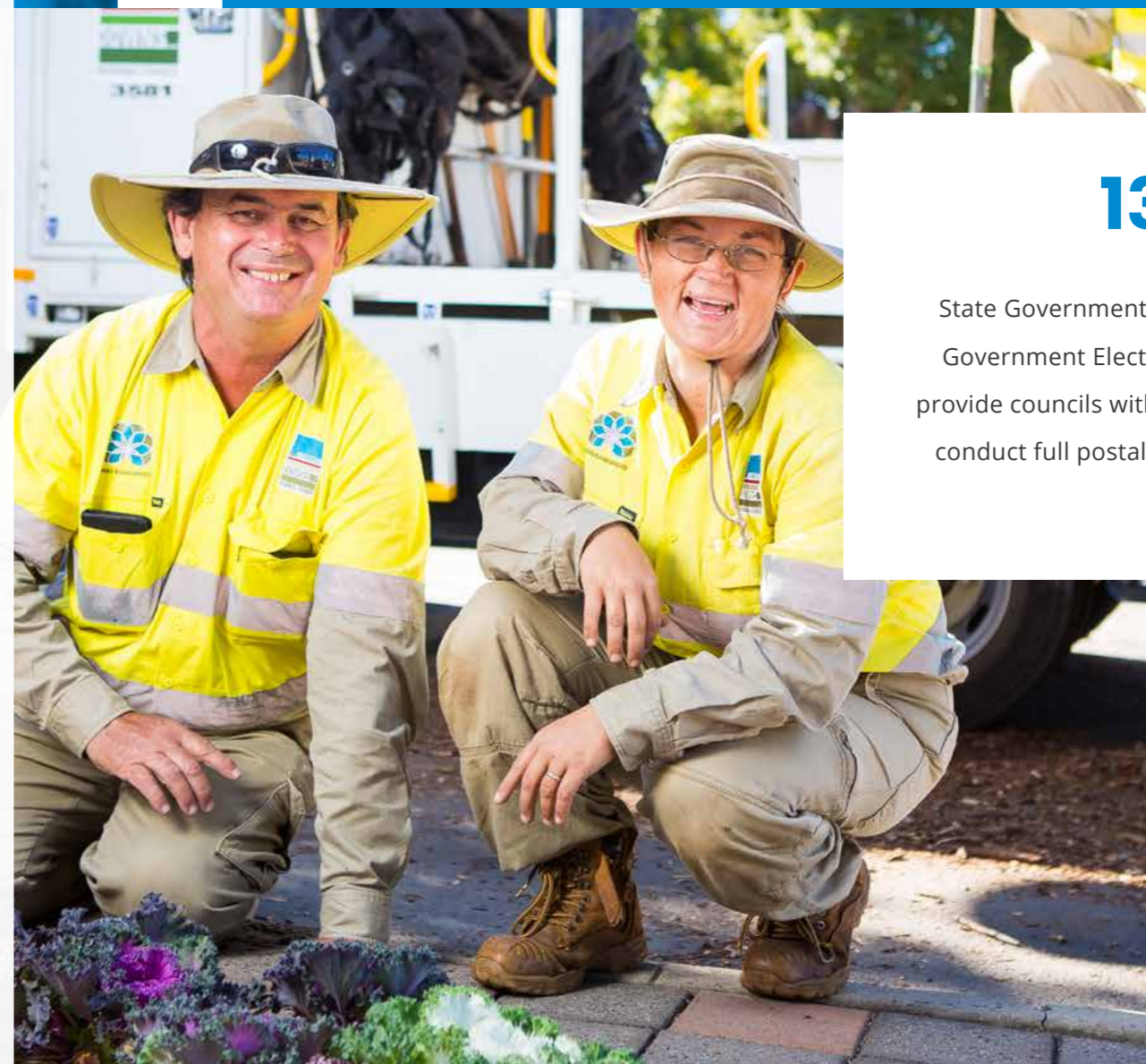
State Government to review councillor complaints system and procedures and provide mechanisms to respond to improvements identified by councils, Independent Assessor or Local Government Liaison Group.

12

Establish an Electoral Monitor to improve the quality, transparency and accountability of local government election campaigns.

13

State Government to amend Local Government Electoral Act 2011 to provide councils with the discretion to conduct full postal ballot elections.



Local government is financially responsible

Councils raise just three per cent of the nation's taxes but are responsible for 33% of public infrastructure. They have little choice but to be vigilant in their long-term financial management. Councils are the providers of last resort and communities rely on their support for essential public infrastructure and services when no other is available. This is why they will protect at all costs their autonomy to set rates and charges and seek a fair share of State and Federal taxes for their communities.

15

Federal and State Government to ensure annual indexation of all local government grant and subsidy programs.

14

Federal Government to restore Commonwealth Financial Assistance Grants to at least 1 per cent of Commonwealth taxation revenue.

16

State Government to implement the recommendations of the Grants Review project.

17

State Government funding to establish a strategic approach and regional support network for councils to sustain local assets and services.

19

State Government funding to deliver an investment attraction education program for local governments.

21

Federal and State Governments to develop a national framework for addressing the emerging issue of native title compensation and implications for all levels of government.

18

State Government to review the current financial sustainability ratios and corresponding 'target ranges' in the Local Government Regulation 2012 to reflect diversity in local governments' own source revenue raising capacity.

20

State Government funding to develop investment attraction collateral, digital and online toolkits and dashboards.

22

State Government to review current requirements placed on local government to use depreciation and fair value accounting for long-life infrastructure assets, including evaluating the suitability of alternative approaches to depreciation and valuation such as renewals annuity.

Local government plans for strong and sustainable communities

Council decisions reflect how people want their communities to develop. They are on the front line in determining the shape, size and liveability of the places in which people live, work, play, learn and invest.



23

State Government funding for planning innovation and improvement projects to drive leading practice in strategic land use planning and development assessment.

24

Legislate an exemption for local government from liability, for advice given or acts done in good faith when managing the risk associated with natural hazards.

25

State Government to review the Local Government Infrastructure Plan process to remove red tape and inequities that shift the cost burden onto councils and the community.

26

State Government to develop guidelines to enable equitable arrangements for planning and funding of new infrastructure designations, including schools.

27

State Government to establish a state-wide data-sharing system and Code of Conduct to support councils to identify and appropriately manage the use of residential properties for short-term letting, where facilitated by on-line booking agencies.

28

Legislate to transfer assessment manager responsibilities for assessable levee bank development applications from local to State Government.

29

State Government to develop a partnership approach to access education facilities for community sporting clubs outside normal school hours.

30

State Government to review planning laws to assist councils to manage land use conflicts between agricultural land and renewable energy projects.

31

State Government to review the Land Sales Act 1984 to ensure vendor obligations for disclosure statements align with legislative requirements in other jurisdictions regarding the provision of information such as natural or human-made constraints on land.

32

State Government to establish a formal partnership framework with key stakeholders to oversee the implementation of the Strong and Sustainable Resource Communities Act 2017.

33

Recognition and meaningful engagement with councils in the assessment and management of resource projects, including financial support for participation in Environmental Impact Statement and Social Impact Assessment processes.



Local government delivers essential public infrastructure

Councils are custodians of the built environment and provide their communities with the basics that go into creating quality places to live: a safe, reliable water supply, a network able to move people and goods around safely and efficiently.

34

Establish a Regional Water Quality and Wastewater Protection Fund to protect public health and address the imminent water and waste water infrastructure funding shortfall.

37

State Government funding to local government to implement dam safety standards.

35

State Government funding for Queensland Water Regional Alliance Program (QWRAP) to support its expansion across additional regions.

38

Consistent guidance and communication from the State Government concerning public health standards – specifically drinking water quality issues such as PFAS contamination.

36

Transparent and sustainable pricing by regional bulk water providers.

39

State Government to develop an 'End of Waste Code' for biosolids that enables the effective reuse of biosolids.

40

Recognition of the importance of local government-controlled roads and transport infrastructure in the new National Freight and Supply Chain Strategy, supported by a new federally funded program to address first and last mile constraints on the local government road network.

43

Execute State and Federal Government partnership arrangements and funding programs to support local governments address road safety issues.

46

State Government to review long-distance passenger and freight services for rural and regional Queensland.

41

Federal Government funding for the Roads to Recovery Program that allows for more sustainable management of the local government road network.

44

Federal Government to work towards establishing a \$3 billion per year road safety fund as per recommendation number three of the Inquiry into the National Road Safety Strategy.

47

State Government funding to expand the Western Roads Upgrade Program to support local governments sustain workforces in drought declared communities.

42

Federal Government funding for a permanent Bridges Renewal Program that allows for improved freight and oversize overmass access.

45

Release the Senate Inquiry report into the Operation, regulation and funding of air route service delivery to rural, regional and remote communities.

48

Release guidelines for the School Transport Infrastructure Program.

Local government cares for the environment and creates healthy communities

Councils are custodians of significant natural assets, protective of the environment and look to create sustainable communities through waste management, public health initiatives, adapting to climate change and managing the opportunities and impacts of resource projects.

- 49** Develop a framework to ensure State Government agencies comply with local government biosecurity plans.
- 50** Continuation of natural resource management funding including a dedicated stream to local government and increased National Landcare Programme funding.
- 51** State Government to support a pilot of revised local government regional natural resource management governance arrangements.
- 52** State and Federal Government funding to support the management of flying fox colonies.
- 53** Funding for local government weed and feral animal programs with a focus on environmental biosecurity.
- 54** State Government to commit to a review of the Darling Downs Moreton Rabbit Board Land Protection Fund payment area and fund 50% of the Board's activities.
- 55** Federal and State Government to commit to an investment model for the Great Barrier Reef that is proportionate to its economic and environmental asset value and the quantum of effort required by 2050 to meet the vision of the Plan.

- 56** Federal and State Government to invest \$57 million over 7 years in the Reef Councils Major Integrated Projects proposal.
- 57** Delivery of climate change information and products tailored for local government use.
- 58** State Government funding to extend the QCoast2100 Program to ensure all Queensland coastal councils have access to funds to prepare a Coastal Hazard Adaptation Strategy for effectively addressing the impacts of climate change.
- 59** Federal and State Governments to work with coastal councils to establish a range of government and other investment avenues for the implementation of Coastal Hazard Adaptation Strategies.
- 60** State Government to develop a strategy to advance a zero-waste future by no later than 2035 in partnership with local government, including an Energy from Waste (EFW) policy.
- 61** State Government commitment that the waste levy does not impact on Queensland households and that funds generated are fully returned to create sustainable resource recovery and recycling initiatives and a circular economy.
- 62** State Government to review impacts on council operations from the introduction of the Container Refund Scheme on 1 November 2018.
- 63** State Government to develop an equalization subsidy scheme to offset the differential costs associated with the transport of recyclables for processing from regional and rural communities.
- 64** State Government support for management, education and enforcement of littering and illegal dumping activities caused by the commencement of the waste levy.
- 65** State Government to review the current mental health funding and programs to develop more appropriate and responsive service delivery outcomes in rural and remote communities.

Local government is representative of all communities

Councils are the most effective, cost efficient bodies to meet the challenges encountered by local communities, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities by directing support to closing the gap for first Australians.

66

Federal and State Government investment in housing in discrete indigenous communities for 5 years to reduce overcrowding and maintain the existing level of employment on housing construction in the communities.

67

State Government strategy and funding to upskill local people in higher skilled roles in indigenous communities.

68

Implementation of the 2019 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander remote and discrete communities Waste Strategy.

69

State Government to develop an Action Plan to advance the Queensland Productivity Commission report into service delivery in remote and discrete indigenous communities.

70

State Government to finalise the review into Alcohol Management Plans in indigenous communities.

71

State Government to decriminalise breaches of Alcohol Management Plans operating in remote and discrete indigenous communities.

72

Federal and State Government to grant opportunities in remote and discrete indigenous communities where practicable to local indigenous businesses.



Local government is on the ground before, during and after disasters

Councils are there for their communities before, during and after the advent of natural disasters. They play an invaluable role in keeping their communities informed and safe during and after these events.



73

Federal Government to remove from the new Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements the clause seeking to exclude some essential public infrastructure from the definition of an 'eligible undertaking'.

74

Federal Government to commit \$200 million over 4 years for targeted disaster mitigation.



75

State Government to develop a Queensland Disaster Resilience and Mitigation Investment Framework that is aligned to the principles of local government funding reform.

76

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services to develop a transition plan to achieve a State Emergency Service that is wholly funded and managed by the State Government.

Local government is innovative and connected

Councils hold the key to engendering an entrepreneurial and globally connected community. Councils also play a key role in identifying the opportunities that will lead to a more prosperous future for their communities.



77

State Government funding for a targeted indigenous digital inclusion program.

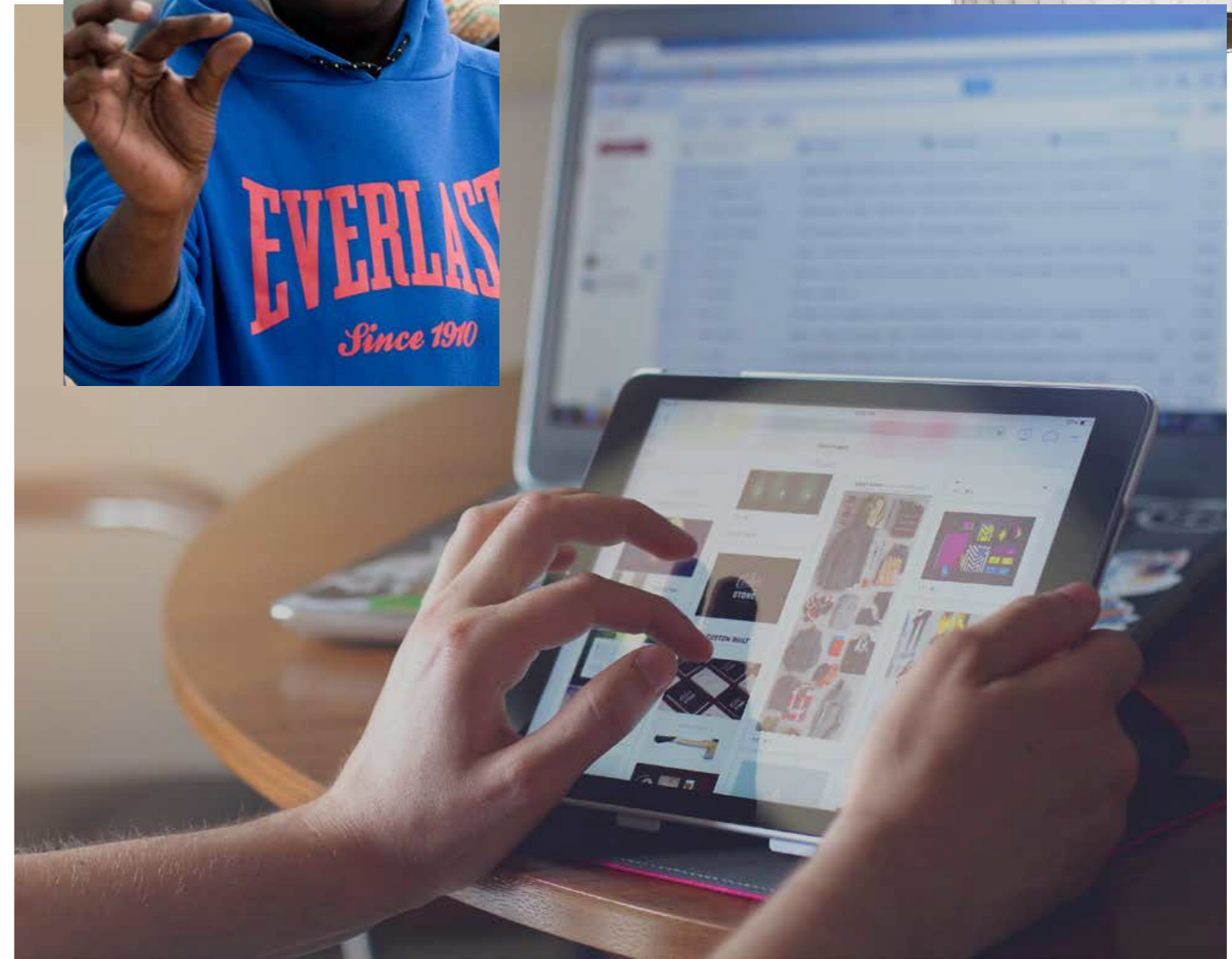


78

All recommendations from the Rural Telecommunications Independent Review Committee Report to be adopted because of the benefits to rural and indigenous councils in areas of infrastructure investment, service commitments, digital skills and awareness.

79

Federal and State Government support for programs that support awareness and understanding of best practice regarding the management of data and cyber security.





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