

Local Government
Association of Queensland

Advocacy Action Plan 2021

Our priorities for stronger
local government and more
resilient local communities





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A MESSAGE FROM **LGAQ PRESIDENT, MAYOR MARK JAMIESON**

In 2020, the words 'unprecedented' and 'new normal' became part of our lexicon.

As councils, we were called upon to lead our communities through uncharted waters, navigating our way through a global pandemic with deep local impact.

Local leadership came to the fore as never before.

Faced with the magnitude of the economic challenge and the weight of the everyday impact of restrictions on Queenslanders, councils formed a united front on behalf of their communities.

It was the collective might of the sector that generated historic levels of State funding for local governments to roll out job-creating projects for their communities at a critical time in the COVID-19 health pandemic.

Under the LGAQ's Battleplan for Queensland Local Communities, shovel-ready projects helped bolster the construction, tourism, small business, agricultural and many other sectors of our communities.

Through our efforts in the lead up to the 2020 State Election, together we secured an additional \$920 million over two years to bolster our funding base, as well as a clear suite of commitments from the State Government in response to the LGAQ's State Election policy plan.

Stepping forward as a sector on the road out of COVID-19, it is clear the vital role of Queensland councils in creating more resilient local communities will continue to be of particular significance in 2021.

It has never been more important that our 40,000-strong workforce, our management of \$150 billion in community assets and our delivery of 280 unique community services across the state continue to power safe, healthy, liveable and productive Queensland communities.

In 2021, the LGAQ's Advocacy Action Plan represents a window into the needs of councils and their communities to ensure we continue to build back better across the state.

We take our position on the issues that matter most to Queensland councils and communities through an ongoing cycle of engagement with our members, which includes an Annual Conference where councils vote on significant policy issues they would like the LGAQ to drive on their behalf.

Each theme represents a program of work undertaken on your behalf, by your Association.

As custodians of the roads and bridges needed to keep Queensland moving, councils are the lynchpins of the physical connectivity needed to support regional economic development.

As providers of a number of services needed to help keep Queenslanders healthy and create sustainable environments, councils work every day to ensure our communities are safe, strong, diverse, and welcoming places to live and raise a family.

Our diversity is reflected in the unique needs of our rural and remote communities, as well as the intrinsic value to our state created by Queensland's 17 First Nation councils to the cultural history, present and future, that we all play a part of realising.

In 2021, we must continue to draw on our strength as a collective to ensure our shared priorities become a reality.

I encourage you to review the following priorities and partner with the LGAQ, your Policy Executive representatives and fellow councils, to highlight the benefits to our communities when the State and Federal governments work in partnership with councils.

I look forward to spending the year representing you, your council and your community as we work toward our shared goals.



Mayor Mark Jamieson

President, Local Government Association of Queensland
Mayor, Sunshine Coast Council





ABOUT THE **ADVOCACY ACTION PLAN**

The LGAQ is committed to member-led advocacy. Each of the Advocacy Action Plan (AAP) points stem from an Annual Conference resolution proposed by, voted on, and endorsed by Queensland's 77 councils, or endorsed as an advocacy priority by the LGAQ's Policy Executive members.

The AAP includes 130 different requests to be made to the State and Federal Government on behalf of our sector. These demonstrate both the extent of our sector's advocacy challenge and the critical role local government plays in every aspect of community life.

Throughout the year, the LGAQ's Advocacy team will work with members to progress AAP requests with the relevant level of government. We will do this through meetings, submissions, correspondence, working groups, forums and, potentially, public campaigns.

As the local government sector's peak organisation, we are committed to working with our members to build stronger, more resilient local communities through focussed and determined advocacy.

Should you wish to discuss any of the AAP points contained within this document, please contact Ms Alison Smith, Head of Advocate at:
alison_smith@lgaq.asn.au or 3000 2240.

HOW TO USE THE **AAP**

The AAP is produced annually to ensure members are fully informed about the LGAQ's advocacy efforts on their behalf. We recommend our members use the AAP in the following ways:

Build Awareness and Understanding

Simply being aware of the wide-ranging scope of our advocacy efforts can help to support your own council's or region's independent advocacy on issues of importance to your community. If, after reading the AAP, you identify an advocacy area your council might benefit from, please contact Ms Alison Smith to discuss how we can work together to achieve a positive outcome. Our advocacy campaigns are always stronger when our members speak with one voice.

Track Progress

Members can stay informed about our advocacy efforts on your behalf by visiting LG Online and checking the latest progress report. The online report provides an LGAQ contact for each AAP item, should you wish to discuss our progress at any time.

Develop and Advance Sector Priorities

Members are encouraged to refer to the AAP, and the progress of our advocacy efforts on each point, when developing 2021 Annual Conference motions. Consideration could be given as to whether AAP points should be continued or refocussed, or whether motions are needed to direct the LGAQ's advocacy efforts on issues not currently being progressed.

SUSTAINING LOCAL JOBS

Employing more than 294 different occupations, Queensland councils provide more than 40,000 jobs across the length and breadth of our state. As our diverse workforce evolves, our membership is asking the State and Federal governments to support our workforce and continue to build the partnership model essential for sustaining it.

**ON BEHALF OF OUR MEMBERS,
THE LGAQ IS ASKING:**

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO:

- 01** Restore Financial Assistance Grants (FAGs) to one percent of Commonwealth taxation revenue to support direct and indirect local government jobs, in staged increments that reflect Federal Government priorities.

THE STATE GOVERNMENT TO:

- 02** Support more than 4,000 local government jobs and deliver important community infrastructure by maintaining *Works for Queensland* funding at \$100 million per annum, indexed to the Council Cost Index.

“The regions are the backbone of the Queensland economy, which is why we need to keep investment flowing into their communities to enable them to grow, attract new industry, create jobs and improve their well-being and liveability.”

Mayor Paul McVeigh
Western Downs Regional Council
Policy Executive member
District 4 - Darling Downs

- 03** Make the Unite and Recover Community Economic Stimulus Program for South East Queensland permanent with funding of \$50 million per annum, indexed to the Council Cost Index, to create 2,000+ jobs in areas of socio-economic disadvantage and high unemployment in South East Queensland.



BOTH LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT TO:

- 04** Continue to provide COVID-19 economic stimulus packages and implement the LGAQ's Battleplan for Queensland Local Communities over four years to support local jobs growth in all Queensland communities.
- 05** Implement programs to assist councils in ensuring apprentices and trainees constitute five per cent of their workforce.

STRENGTHENING OUR REGIONS

In Queensland, Australia's most decentralised state, councils are best placed to target and manage local economic stimulus, facilitate growth, innovate and adapt to unique regional circumstances and needs. Despite the leadership role councils play in regional economic development, local government has access to only three per cent of national government taxes – yet councils build and maintain one third of Australia's public infrastructure. Federal and State government funding is vital to build and maintain infrastructure such as critical road and transport networks.

ON BEHALF OF OUR MEMBERS, THE LGAQ IS ASKING:

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO:

- 06** Legislate to require telecommunication operators to provide competitors access to their mobile infrastructure in regional areas to enable roaming.
- 07** Fully implement recommendations of the Rural Telecommunications Independent Review Committee Report benefitting rural and First Nations councils.
- 08** Enact sole invitee status under the *Commonwealth National Land Transport Act 2014*.
- 09** Provide \$200 million per year for five years to fix 'first and last mile' issues impacting supply chains.
- 10** Provide \$800 million per year nationally for four years for the Roads to Recovery Program to support effective management of the local government road network.
- 11** Fund a permanent Bridges Renewal Program so councils can address freight and oversize, over mass access issues.

- 12** Establish a \$3 billion per year road safety fund as recommended by the Inquiry into the National Road Safety Strategy.
- 13** Introduce a 'per passenger charge' that spreads the costs of airport security nationally across the aviation sector, thereby providing a sustainable and equitable funding mechanism that supports regional airport operations.
- 14** Acknowledge that regional inequality still exists and commit to a consistent policy approach through all agencies to address this inequality in line with the Senate Committee Report into Regional Inequality delivered in December 2020.

THE STATE GOVERNMENT TO:

- 15** Fast track reliable digital connectivity throughout regional Queensland and ensure non-commercially viable black spots are addressed as a fundamental rights issue.
- 16** Establish a regional pensioner equalisation scheme to ensure pensioners in regional and rural areas receive similar financial concessions as those benefitting from the current Pensioner Rates Rebate Contribution.
- 17** Change the State Procurement Policy to enable streamlined access for local councils to state funded infrastructure/ construction projects where local workforce have the capability and capacity to complete works.
- 18** Engage regularly with councils on exploration and development of their region so they can work together to realise regional potential.



19 Provide \$50 million per year for four years to continue the successful Building Our Regions program which has already created more than 2,760 jobs across 264 projects and generated an additional \$538 million worth of investment in building infrastructure, and developing a pipeline of projects that support and diversify local economies.

20 Allocate \$50 million per year for four years to the Growing Tourism Infrastructure Fund and the Outback Tourism Infrastructure Fund to provide economic stimulus for rural, remote, and Indigenous communities. This will create 116 jobs and ensure we retain our premium tourism status globally.

21 Increase funding for the Transport and Infrastructure Development Scheme (TIDS) to \$100 million by 2024 to build safer road networks in regional communities, support 452 jobs and enhance flexibility to support rural communities.

22 Introduce statutory measures to require resource project proponents to compensate councils for their participation in Social Impact Assessments to ensure employment and business opportunities for resource communities can be progressed without impacting day-to-day council services.

BOTH LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT TO:

23 Provide additional funding to meaningfully address the digital connectivity issues across the state, particularly regional and rural Queensland.

24 Collaborate with local government and the private sector to find solutions, including digital connectivity solutions, to ensure the long-term sustainability for the provision of regional news.

“What we’re looking for is a level playing field. It shouldn’t matter where you live in Queensland, the opportunities should be the same. Councils are best placed to deliver local works to stimulate local economies. We need government to provide longer-term certainty around grants and boost digital connectivity.”

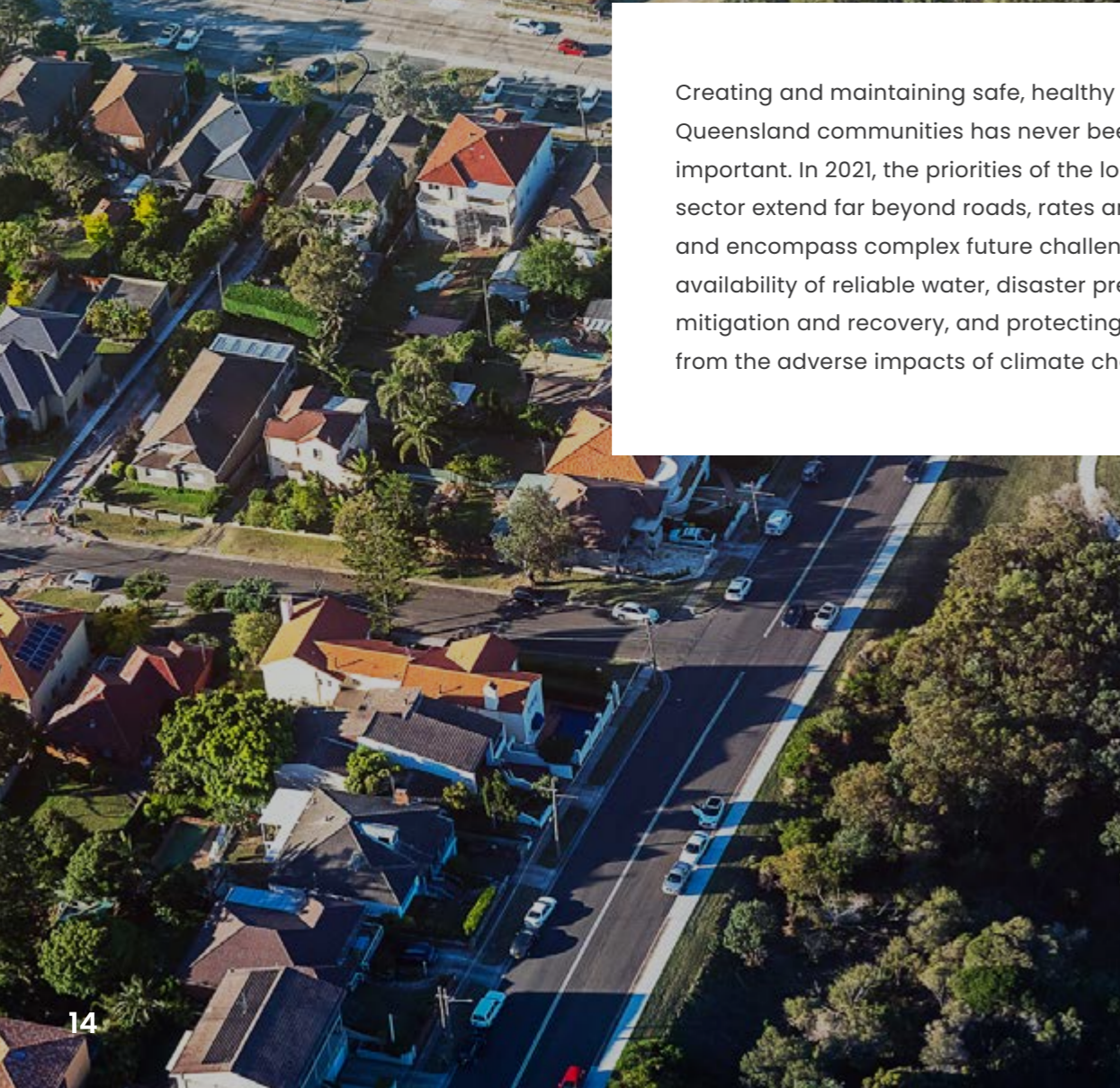
Mayor Jack Dempsey
Bundaberg Regional Council
Policy Executive member
District 3 - Wide Bay Burnett



KEEPING COMMUNITIES SAFE



Creating and maintaining safe, healthy and liveable Queensland communities has never been more important. In 2021, the priorities of the local government sector extend far beyond roads, rates and rubbish and encompass complex future challenges like the availability of reliable water, disaster preparedness, mitigation and recovery, and protecting Queenslanders from the adverse impacts of climate change.



**ON BEHALF OF OUR MEMBERS,
THE LGAQ IS ASKING:**

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO:

- 25** Establish a National Coastal Hazards Adaptation Framework to build resilience in communities most likely to be impacted and provide \$500 million per year for four years for the implementation of coastal hazard adaptation strategies.
- 26** Provide \$200 million for targeted disaster mitigation over four years and effective Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.
- 27** Ensure NBN communication services incorporate uninterruptable power supply to support emergency management.

THE STATE GOVERNMENT TO:

- 28** Provide dedicated funding for council-based community wellbeing and mental health services for regional communities to counter the cumulative impacts of COVID-19.
- 29** Accept responsibility for mitigating unreasonably high fuel loads on State Government-controlled land holdings by being proactive in planning, taking positive alleviation measures and allocating appropriate resources.
- 30** Release the final report reviewing the State Emergency Services (SES) to all local governments and implement all recommendations aimed at establishing greater equity in the allocation of the Emergency Management Levy, not only to Urban Fire but also Rural Fire and SES.
- 31** In consultation with local governments and the community, develop a compliance framework for buildings in bushfire-prone areas to ensure compliance is maintained with the identified Bushfire Attack Level for the life of the development.



- 32** Provide \$10 million to allow greater access to expert assistance, guidance, and ongoing support to assist local governments undertake local disaster risk assessments as guided by the Queensland Emergency Management Risk Framework (QEMRF).
- 33** Introduce statutory protections akin to section 733 of the *New South Wales Local Government Act 1993* to support council decision-making in relation to natural hazards and climate change.
- 34** Fully implement the commitments made in the 2011 Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry Final Report to investigate, in consultation with councils, the adequacy of the current compensation provisions under the *Planning Act 2016* and the viability of broader statutory immunity for local governments in planning for natural hazards.
- 35** Provide \$100 million per annum over five years (\$500 million in total) to support the LGAQ's Rural Water and Wastewater Guarantee designed to address ageing water and sewerage infrastructure (both in-ground and above ground) based on criticality, public health/environmental risk and regional prioritisation.
- 36** Adopt a policy that moderates costs and strengthens property rights in urban (town) water allocations and ensures equity in water allocations to local governments.

- 37** Provide \$2 million per year in permanent funding to extend the highly successful Queensland Water Regional Alliance Program (QWRAP).
- 38** Establish a transparent and sustainable pricing method for regional bulk water providers.
- 39** Establish clear per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) limits and methodology as part of the "End of Waste Code" for biosolids.
- 40** Accept responsibility for legacy issues of PFAS contamination arising from the historical operations of fire stations and take responsibility for the management of these issues.
- 41** Clarify the regulatory framework for clandestine laboratories.
- 42** Provide a Penalty Infringement Notice (PIN) for offences under s194 1(b), (c) and (d) and s195 1(b), (c) and (d) of the *Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008*.
- 43** Coordinate a legislative review of the *Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008*, Chapter 4 – Regulated Dogs, to strengthen the ability of local governments to investigate and effectively manage serious dog attacks and regulated dog offences to improve community safety.

- 44** Provide greater expertise and support to councils for the assessment of levee bank development applications and when preparing floodplain risk management plans in line with Queensland's levee regulatory framework.
- 45** Strengthen support provided to councils by the Queensland Building and Construction Commission (QBCC) to reduce non-compliance with Queensland's building and pool safety legislation, establish improved processes for complaint lodgement and increased training and support for building certifiers and pool safety inspectors.

BOTH LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT TO:

- 46** Accept responsibility and agree to reimburse local governments for the additional costs incurred during the ongoing operational response to COVID-19 in containing and controlling the virus within their respective areas.
- 47** Adopt a transparent funding methodology for local government disaster mitigation projects to improve resilience in the context of natural disaster events.
- 48** Modernise current disaster management legislation and regulations to reinforce the importance and authority of locally-led disaster responses and to improve transitional arrangements across council terms.

“Queensland local government today is about much more than roads, rates and rubbish collection. Maintaining the safety, health and liveability of our communities is a fundamental priority of your local council, especially in this age of great uncertainty.”

Mayor Peter Scott
Cook Shire Council
Policy Executive member
District 10 – Far North

- 49** Review funding and loan packages for business and industry to ensure they are tailored specifically to bushfire and other disasters as necessary and funds are delivered earlier.
- 50** Provide additional resourcing to State agencies to maintain support services locally for longer periods as required and to employ a full range of delivery mechanisms to enable more disaster impacted people to access assistance.
- 51** Adopt the Queensland Local Government Eight Point Drought Action Plan to ensure a systematic approach to the prevention of, preparation for, response to, and recovery from drought.

PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT

Queensland councils are at the forefront of building sustainable local communities and are leading the transformation to reduce waste across the state. They are also striving to achieve long-term environmental protection goals through best-practice natural asset management that links environmental sustainability to our future economic prosperity.

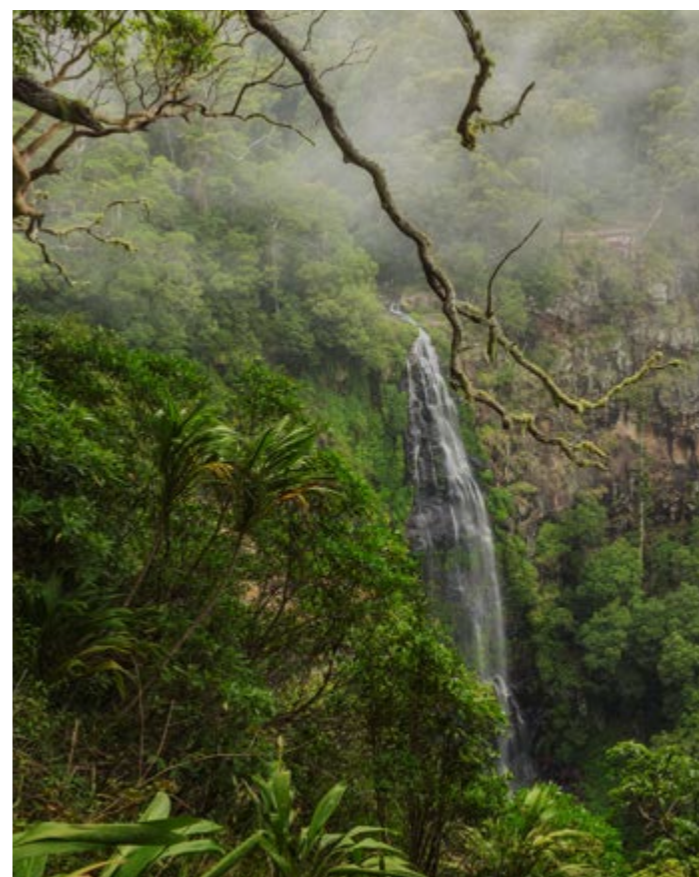
**ON BEHALF OF OUR MEMBERS,
THE LGAQ IS ASKING:**

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO:

- 52** Allocate \$9 million over three years to boost environmental biosecurity initiatives that will protect and maintain areas of local environmental significance.
- 53** Provide \$9 million annually to help eradicate weeds and feral animals in drought-affected areas and generate more than \$1.9 billion worth of direct agricultural production benefits.
- 54** Implement all recommendations from the House of Representatives Standing Committee on the Environment and Energy's Living with Fruit Bats Report to better support the 42 Queensland towns and suburbs significantly impacted by flying foxes.



- 55** Invest \$200 million over four years for climate adaptation initiatives.
- 56** Legislate on recycling stewardship to require greater consideration of how products can be recycled.
- 57** Impose a levy on all tyres – produced in Australia or imported – with funds directed to councils to assist them meet the cost of recycling or disposing of tyres under the State Government's waste management levy and waste reduction targets.



THE STATE GOVERNMENT TO:

- 58** Commit \$200 million per year for four years to a dedicated and quarantined Sustainability Fund for local government energy-from-waste facilities, resource recovery and recycling initiatives that covers both capital and operational expenses.
- 59** Commit 100 per cent of waste levy revenue to the funding of sustainable resource recovery, recycling infrastructure and programs to build a circular economy.

- 60** Commit \$6 million per year for four years to continue the regional recycling transport assistance program to ensure cost equalisation for regional councils in transporting recyclables.
- 61** Continue advance payments to councils for Municipal Solid Waste beyond 2022 – and for at least the current State Government term – to ensure Queensland households are not negatively impacted by the waste levy.
- 62** Fast track implementation of product stewardship programs which support the principles of a circular economy and reduce the cost of managing waste for councils.
- 63** Provide \$325,000 per year for two years to deliver two Natural Resource Management (NRM) governance pilot projects to improve NRM outcomes.
- 64** Commit \$1.5 million per year for four years to a flying fox research and grant program to improve management and mitigation, and reduce conflict between humans and wildlife.

65 Provide \$10 million per year over five years to support projects to protect koalas in Queensland.

66 Allocate \$8 million over three years to the Reef Council's Rescue Plan to significantly improve the quality of urban water flow to the reef by 2027.

67 Provide \$1.6 million over three years to accelerate delivery of on-ground actions to strategically adapt to climate risks and transition to a low carbon economy through the establishment of a regional Climate Resilience Alliance of local governments.

68 Endorse and implement the recommendations of the *Biosecurity Act 2014* review.

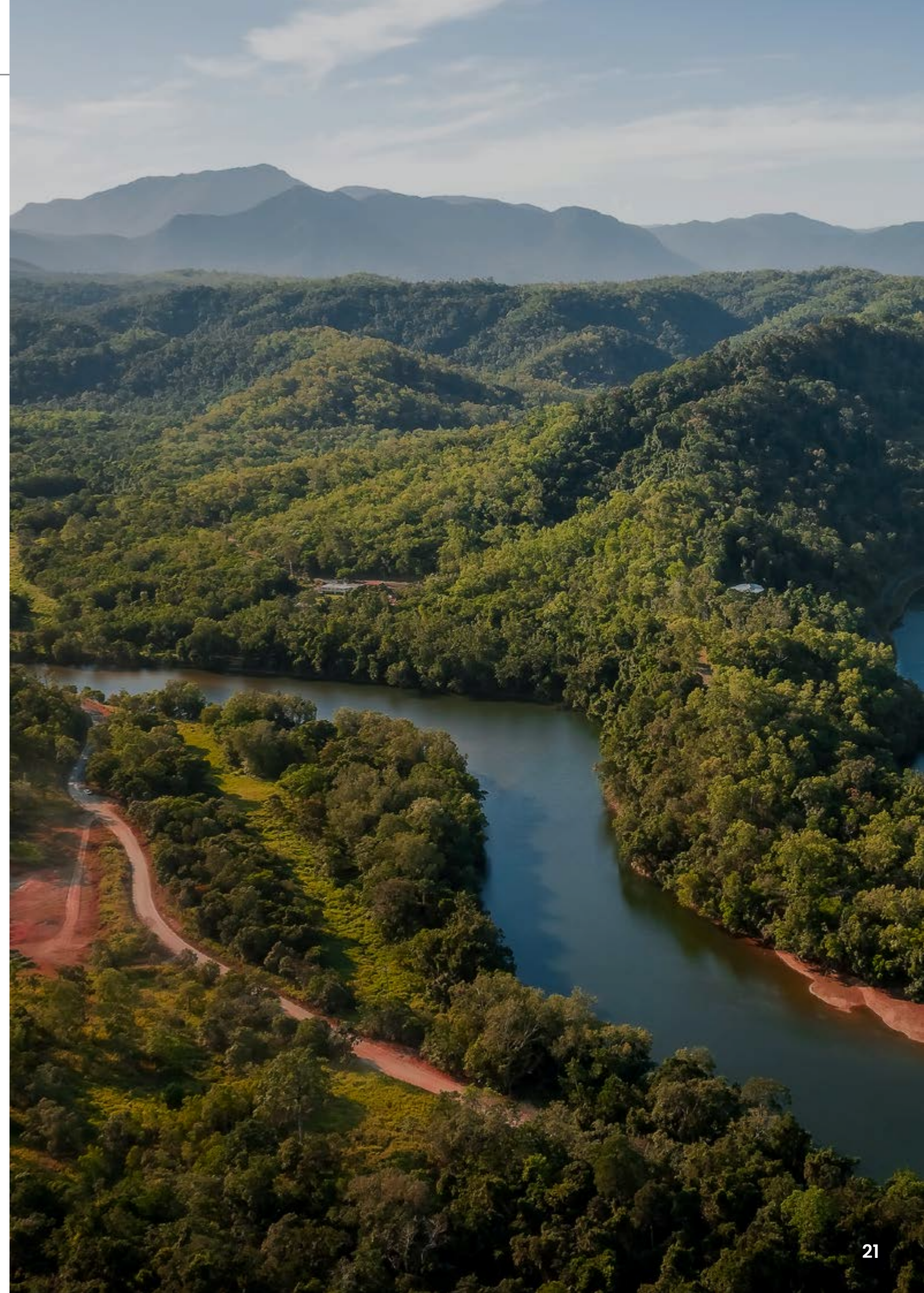
69 Source and supply chemicals to local governments to treat fire ants and increase resources and community awareness campaigns to combat the spread of invasive ant species in Queensland.

BOTH LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT TO:

70 Invest \$200 million per year for five years to match local government spending on the Great Barrier Reef and deliver the Reef 2050 Plan so the Reef can maintain its \$6 billion economic and environmental asset value for the state and national economies.

“By ensuring sensible land use and development, councils have an important role to play in protecting and enhancing our environment and leading their communities towards a more sustainable and prosperous future.”

Mayor Jason Woibo
Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council
Policy Executive member
District 12 – Aboriginal and Island councils



SUPPORTING RURAL AND REMOTE COMMUNITIES

Queensland's rural and remote councils face unique challenges in supporting their communities to thrive and prosper. Large geographic land areas, small and widely dispersed populations and limited own-source revenues test their capacity to deliver essential services, support critical industries and attract and retain skilled staff. Despite these challenges, our rural and remote councils often step in to deliver services outside the traditional remit of local government. Federal and State Government policies and funding decisions must recognise these unique circumstances and support rural and remote communities to build thriving communities for future generations.

**ON BEHALF OF OUR MEMBERS,
THE LGAQ IS ASKING:**

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO:

- 71** Establish a system of aged care service provision for ageing Australians in rural and remote areas so that residents can remain within their community.
- 72** Support economic and community recovery from drought by continuing to provide funding under the Drought Communities Program Extension to drought-declared councils, up to and including two years following the lifting of a drought declaration.

“The financial reality facing Queensland’s rural and remote councils is that their rate bases are invariably small. As a result, many of these councils are barely able to raise enough revenue to cover less than 10 per cent of their total expenditure needs. That’s why continued funding support from other levels of government is essential for these councils if they are to deliver the infrastructure and services necessary for their communities.”

Mayor Robert Dare
Diamantina Shire Council
Policy Executive member
District 8 - Central West

THE STATE GOVERNMENT TO:

- 73** Sign a Rural and Remote Councils Compact that seeks to reflect their unique challenges and opportunities and facilitates policy development, resource allocation and reporting to ensure these communities are not being left behind.
- 74** Amend relevant legislation (including the *Planning Regulation 2017*) to provide exemptions for the clearing of vegetation for the purpose of boundary fencing for agricultural purposes.
- 75** Provide a continued supply of 1080 poison to local governments at no cost to support the ongoing operation of co-ordinated baiting programs across Queensland.
- 76** Waive permit fees for owners seeking to graze their stock on the stock route adjacent to their properties during a declared drought.
- 77** Release the Queensland Stock Route Network Strategy and review the stock route management legislation to establish a user-pays system.
- 78** Ensure no changes are made to the future management of the Lake Eyre Basin without a Regulatory Impact Statement and consultation with local government.
- 79** Review the Darling Downs–Moreton Rabbit Board Land Protection Fund payment area and the methodology used for the Wild Dog Barrier Fence.
- 80** Provide \$5 million per year over four years to fund cluster fencing and extend the Queensland Feral Pest Initiative for weed and feral animal control and support 200+ jobs.
- 81** Reinstate the Western Roads Upgrade Program with \$25 million per year for four years to sustain 119 local government jobs in rural and remote communities.
- 82** Work with the LGAQ to develop innovative and fit for purpose strategies to effectively address housing supply issues in Queensland’s rural communities to support regional growth and investment, improve liveability and grow stronger and more diverse local communities.
- 83** Provide \$200,000 to investigate the socio-economic impacts of carbon farming on rural communities and identify measures to mitigate impacts on communities and local government.

BOTH LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT TO:

ADVANCING FIRST NATIONS COUNCILS



Queensland's local government sector recognises the significant challenges encountered by our First Australians and stands with our 17 First Nations councils and their communities in working towards Closing the Gap targets. Our state's First Nations council leaders have identified housing, financial sustainability, land tenure and connectivity as key priorities for their communities. The State and Federal governments must acknowledge and respond to these priorities and work to ensure Queensland's rich and unique Indigenous culture and communities can thrive.

THE STATE GOVERNMENT TO:

- 85 Review the *Electoral and Other Legislation (Accountability, Integrity and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2020* subsequent to the Crime and Corruption Commission's Operation Belcarra to ensure it correctly addresses any conflict with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lore.
- 86 Increase State Government Financial Aid (SGFA) by 10 per cent to recognise significant increases in labour costs and assist councils in retaining workers.

- 87 Allocate \$650,000 to develop four regional infrastructure plans in line with the Queensland Indigenous Waste Strategy.
- 88 Extend the Indigenous Councils Critical Infrastructure Program by providing \$30 million per year for four years to deliver regional solutions for waste management and related essential service activities.
- 89 Review the Thriving Communities Program by July 2021 to ensure it aligns with and delivers the desired outcomes and recommendations made by the Queensland Productivity Commission report on service delivery in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander remote and discrete communities.
- 90 Allocate an additional \$2.5 million per year over four years to establish Indigenous Knowledge Centres to upskill Indigenous communities and provide essential community learning hubs for their children.

“First Nations councils wanting to build their community, know they must empower and support people first. Building strong leadership across local government will help establish a foundation for a sustainable future. The more leaders we have throughout the community, the better chance we have of addressing our challenges.”

Mayor Wayne Butcher
Lockhart River Aboriginal Shire Council
Policy Executive member
District 12 - Aboriginal and Island Councils

BOTH LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT TO:

- 91 Collaborate with the LGAQ and member councils in reviewing revenue opportunities for councils, including land leasing costs.
- 92 Collaborate with the LGAQ and member councils in reviewing current land tenure issues detrimentally affecting a council's capacity to deliver vital infrastructure for the wellbeing of their community.
- 93 Provide funding to ensure remote and discrete First Nation communities have the digital connectivity necessary to provide the same level of services available to other communities across Australia.

**ON BEHALF OF OUR MEMBERS,
THE LGAQ IS ASKING:**

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO:

- 84 Allocate \$100 million per year for five years to increase housing supply in remote and discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to reduce overcrowding and help close the gap across education, health, incarceration and employment.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Queensland councils are responsible for determining how their communities grow and for ensuring our cities, towns and regions remain places where people want to live, work, play, learn and invest. Our local governments are dedicated to growing globally connected and entrepreneurial communities that are strong and resilient, able to face any challenge head on and come out stronger. When the Federal and State governments support councils in progressing these objectives, all Queenslanders benefit.

**ON BEHALF OF OUR MEMBERS,
THE LGAQ IS ASKING:**

THE STATE GOVERNMENT TO:

- 94** Provide \$2 million per year for three years for council-led planning innovation and improvement projects to drive leading practice in strategic land-use planning and development assessment.
- 95** Commit to preserving the autonomy of local government in land-use planning and development by ensuring that mandatory, externally-appointed development assessment panels are not introduced in Queensland.



- 96** Review the application and scope of State Agency and Referral Agency (SARA) fees and charges on councils delivering services and infrastructure to the community to reduce costs and red tape.
- 97** Amend the Development Assessment Rules under the *Planning Act 2016* to include 'stop the clock' provisions for local government assessment managers, similar to the process already provided for applicants.

- 98** Review and amend the current cost provisions under the *Planning and Environment Court Act 2016* to enable the court to award costs in circumstances where a development proposal is found to significantly conflict with a local government planning scheme.
- 99** Support the use of prescriptive standards and assessment benchmarks in local government planning schemes, where appropriate, to provide certainty of development outcomes.
- 100** Initiate a broad community awareness and education campaign to explain performance-based planning, the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders under the *Planning Act 2016* and opportunities for community involvement in the planning and development process.
- 101** Commit to greater co-ordination between state agencies, consultation with local government and resolution of any conflicts, prior to the release of State Government mapping overlays used in planning and development.
- 102** Amend the State Planning Policy to assist councils to manage land-use conflicts between high quality agricultural land and renewable energy projects.

“As the mayor of a remote and rural council, I see the real work that is done at a community grass roots level by our local council. Local governments are an integral part of our communities and, in most cases, the major employer within our shires. Therefore, we are best equipped to know what our people need to operate in a sustainable and responsible manner and provide the needs of our communities.”

Mayor Jane McNamara
Flinders Shire Council
Policy Executive member
District 11 - North West



103 Establish a state-wide data sharing system and code of conduct for the short-term letting of residential properties, so councils can appropriately manage this use and the impact on local communities.

104 Articulate a prioritised list of key infrastructure projects in the State Infrastructure Plan to better inform statutory regional plans and planning schemes and align with state and local planning horizons.

105 Commit to reducing the funding gap for trunk infrastructure that currently exists under Queensland's capped infrastructure charging regime.

106 Work with local governments to review and streamline the process for making or amending a local government infrastructure plan.

107 Amend the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971 (QLD)* to require development to be subject to the same or similar assessment requirements as development under the *Planning Act 2016*, including public notification.

108 Review the *State Penalties Enforcement Regulation 2014* in respect of who can issue an infringement notice for an offence against the *Building Act 1975* to align with who can prosecute the offence.

109 Work in partnership with councils and the QBCC to clarify processes for conducting investigations into building related complaints, including clearer demarcation of the role and responsibilities of local government and QBCC in the process.

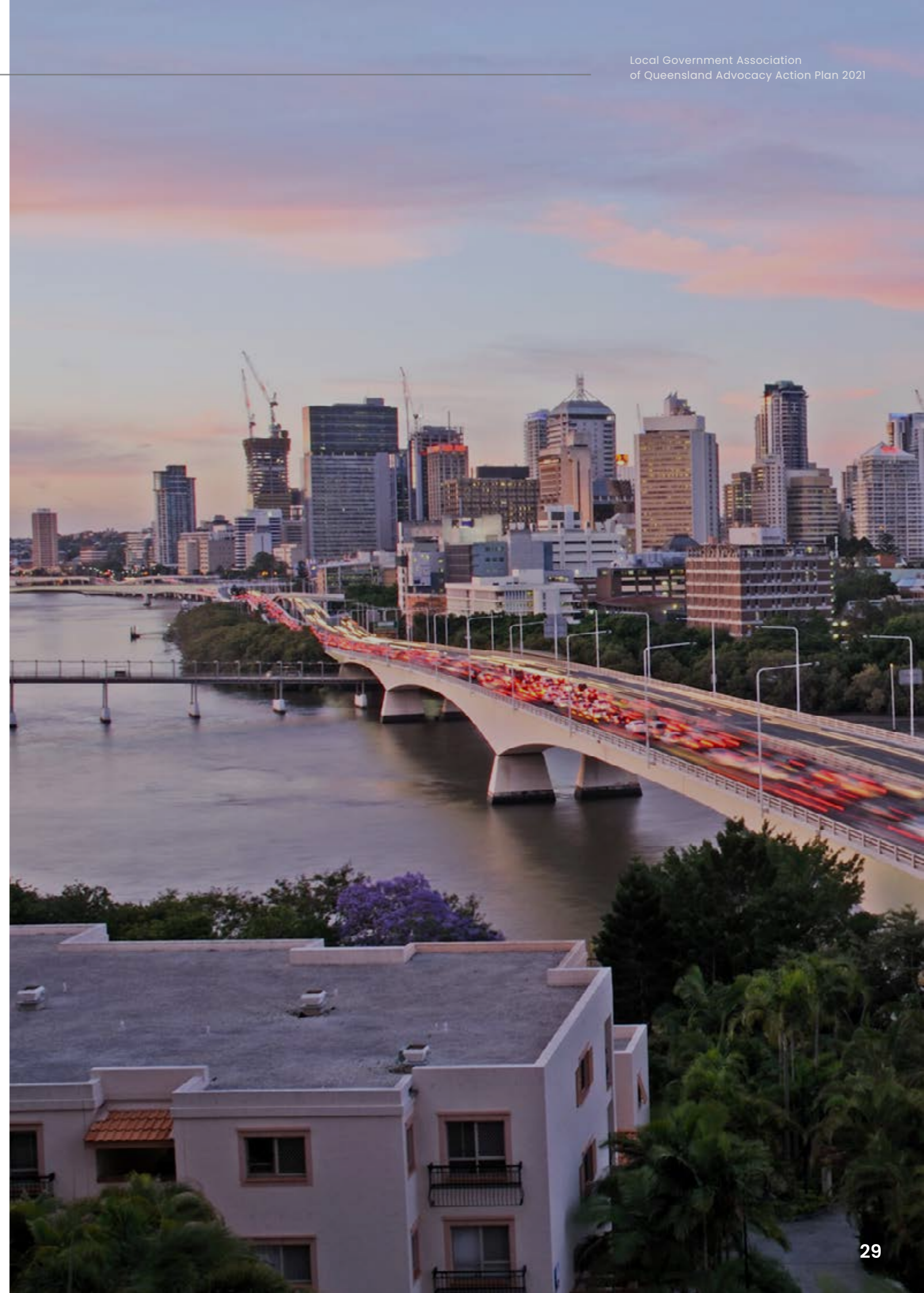
110 Increase funding for the provision of social housing under the Queensland Housing Strategy 2017–2027 to meet the needs and demand for accommodation from people experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness.

111 Reinstate Heritage Assessment Officers throughout regional Queensland to support improved heritage conservation outcomes.

112 Accelerate the removal of open level crossings in response to higher frequency rail services.

BOTH LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT TO:

113 Establish an Access and Inclusion Fund to provide dedicated funding to support local government upgrades to public buildings to meet current accessibility standards.



AN EFFECTIVE, EFFICIENT, AND FINANCIALLY RESPONSIBLE LOCAL GOVERNMENT SECTOR

Communities need their councils to work effectively and efficiently on their behalf. As a sector, we understand local government must continue to improve if it is to meet the expectations of local communities – and continue to strive to serve the people of Queensland with honesty and integrity. State and Federal governments need to assist the work of councils in delivering outcomes on the ground by empowering local government in national decision-making, instead of tying us up with unnecessary red tape.

ON BEHALF OF OUR MEMBERS, THE LGAQ IS ASKING:

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO:

- 114** Restore local government's critical role in national decision-making, including participation in National Cabinet.
- 115** Ensure local government interests are protected in response to recent court rulings on financial compensation and native title.
- 116** Provide \$100 million nationally per year for a smart communities' program to support councils delivering innovative technology-based solutions to urban challenges that improve the liveability, productivity and sustainability of Queensland's cities, towns and regions – while creating 700 new jobs and a \$242 million increase to GDP.

THE STATE GOVERNMENT TO:

- 117** Monitor, review and support the implementation of all integrity reforms to ensure they lead to increased transparency and accountability in practice, are proportional to the issues to be addressed and maintain local government as a high-functioning, responsive and flexible system of government that reflects the diversity of council operations and communities of interest.
- 118** Work in close consultation with the LGAQ to develop and implement specific and targeted amendments to the *Local Government Act 2009* and the *Local Government Regulation 2012* to clarify councillors' conflict-of interest obligations in "informal" meetings.
- 119** Increased funding for the Office of the Independent Assessor, Integrity Commissioner and Queensland Ombudsman to ensure timely outcomes for communities.
- 120** Implement electronic (scanned) counting practices for the 2024 local government elections.
- 121** Invest \$100 million to support local governments to develop best practice data and systems protection measures in line with the Federal Government's Cyber Security Strategy 2020.
- 122** Allocate \$1 million to develop a digital training and upskilling program for older workers and provide \$500,000 per year for three years to roll out training across all local governments.
- 123** Maintain council autonomy in financial management, including the choice to convene an external audit committee.
- 124** Implement grant program arrangements consistent with the 2017 KPMG/AEC review of State Government grants to provide funding certainty to councils and support long-term planning, improved asset management and financial sustainability.



- 125 Request the Queensland Local Government Grants Commission review the Financial Assistance Grants (FAGs) allocation methodology for the distribution of grants at the earliest opportunity to bring it up to date with councils' current responsibilities.
- 126 Review the indicative threshold for the Asset Sustainability Ratio and all other sustainability measures to establish differential thresholds to reflect growth and scale characteristics of the council, and to include the Asset Renewal Funding Ratio as a measure of sustainability that is reported on in addition to the Asset Sustainability Ratio.
- 127 Legislate to address the impasse between local government and body corporates that inhibits positive action to recover both rates and body corporate fees.
- 128 Support modernisation of employment conditions for trainees and apprentices, and variation of current awards, to better harmonise employment conditions of local government employees.
- 129 Review the requirements imposed on local governments regarding the publishing of notices in newspapers and consider alternatives, including publishing notices online.

BOTH LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT TO:

- 130 Increase flexibility for project expenditure timeframes for small and remote councils to allow adequate time to deliver COVID-19 economic stimulus projects and to support the on-going employment of council workforces and council financial sustainability.

“Queenslanders rightly expect their councils to achieve best value when delivering services and improving local infrastructure but to do this, we need the State and Federal governments to empower us so we can apply appropriate solutions locally without unnecessary rules and regulation.”

Mayor Karen Williams
Redland City Council
Policy Executive member
District 2 - SEQ (Southern)



THE POLICY EXECUTIVE



Cr Peter Matic
Brisbane City Council
District 1 - Brisbane City Council



Mayor Peter Flannery
Mortten Bay Regional Council
District 2 - SEQ (Northern)



Mayor Karen Williams
Redland City Council
District 2 - SEQ (Southern)



Cr Paul Tully
Ipswich City Council
District 2 - SEQ (Western)



Mayor Jack Dempsey
Bundaberg Regional Council
District 3 - Wide Bay Burnett



Mayor Paul McVeigh
Western Downs Regional Council
District 4 - Darling Downs



Cr Robyn Fuhrmeister
Balonne Shire Council
District 5 - South West



Mayor Matt Burnett
Gladstone Regional Council
District 6 - Central Queensland



Mayor Andrew Willcox
Whitsunday Regional Council
District 7 - Whitsunday



Mayor Robert Dare
Diamantina Shire Council
District 8 - Central West



Mayor Jenny Hill
Townsville City Council
District 9 - Northern



Mayor Peter Scott
Cook Shire Council
District 10 - Far North



Mayor Jane McNamara
Flinders Shire Council
District 11 - North West



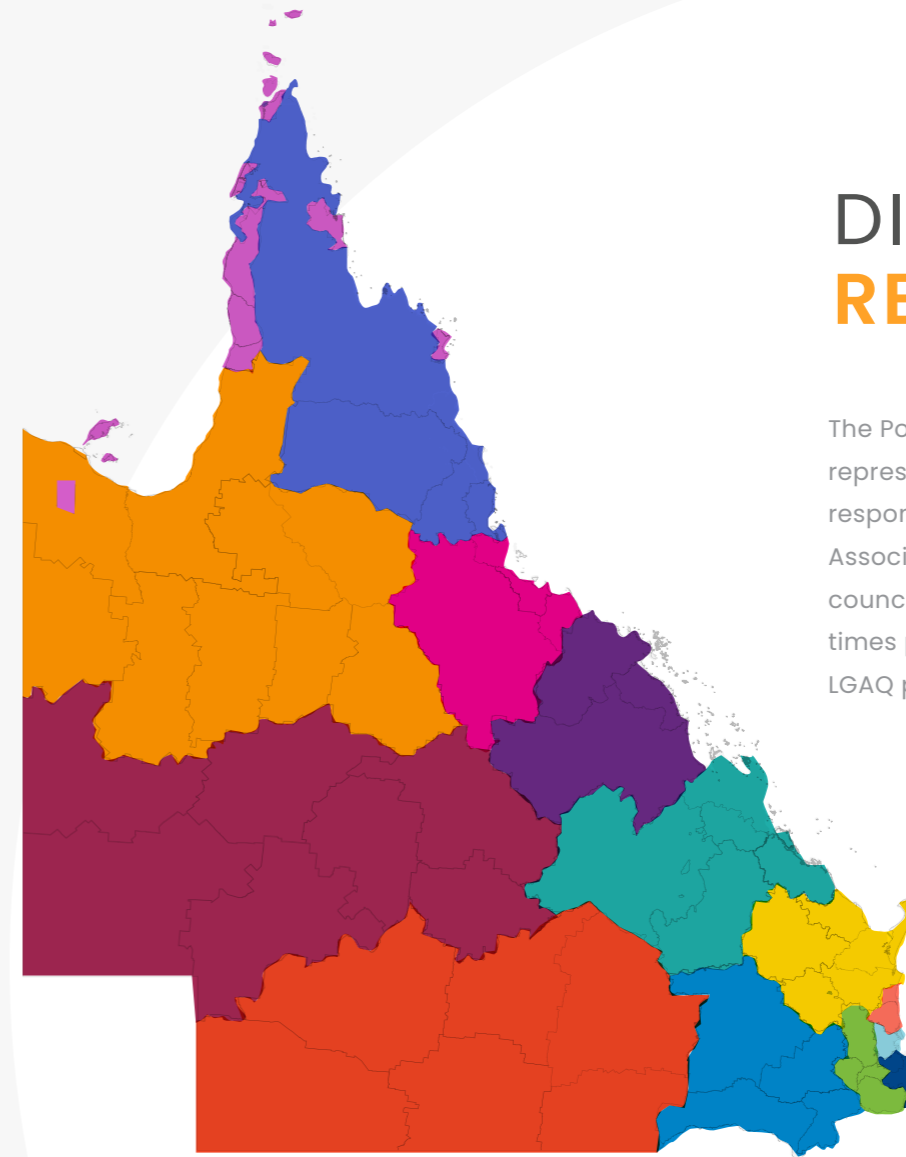
Mayor Jason Woibo
Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council
District 12 - Aboriginal and Island Councils



Mayor Wayne Butcher
Lockhart River Aboriginal Shire Council
District 12 - Aboriginal and Island Councils

DISTRICT REGIONS

The Policy Executive consists of 15 district representatives and the President, and is responsible for the determination of the Association's policy on behalf of member councils. The Policy Executive meets six times per year to discuss and determine LGAQ policy.



LEGEND KEY:

- District 1
- District 3
- District 7
- District 11
- District 2 North
- District 4
- District 8
- District 12
- District 2 South
- District 5
- District 9
- District 2 West
- District 6
- District 10



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