Thank you to our sponsors!
Local Government Association of Queensland Inc
113th Annual Conference

Host: Brisbane City Council

Official Opening
Ceremony

Tuesday 25 August 2009

Held at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre, Cnr Merivale and Glenelg Streets, South Bank, Brisbane

Commenced at 7.45am

With the Official Opening by

Her Excellency, Ms Penelope Wensley AO
Governor of Queensland
CONFERENCE PROGRAM

Sunday, 23 August 2009
12.00pm - 4.00pm  Registration
Delegates, Observers and Partners
Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre
Cnr Merivale and Glenelg Streets, South Bank, Brisbane

Monday, 24 August 2009
8.00am - 6.00pm  Registration
Delegates, Observers and Partners
Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre
Cnr Merivale and Glenelg Streets, South Bank, Brisbane

8.30am - 1.30pm  Executive Meeting

1.30pm - 2.00pm  Executive Lunch with LGMA (Qld) Board of Management

2.00pm - 3.30pm  Regional Road Group Assembly

2.00pm - 4.00pm  Optional Urban Renewal Study Tour
Hosted by Brisbane City Council

4.00pm - 4.30pm  Annual Conference Briefing for first time conference attendees

4.00pm - 4.30pm  Trade and Sponsor Briefing

5.30pm - 7.00pm  Welcoming Ceremony
Roma Street Parklands
Dress: (This is an outdoor function - Smart Casual, flat shoes and a jacket - could be cool!)
Hosted by King & Company

5.30pm  Welcome to Country
Nunukul Yuggera People

5.35pm  Welcome to Brisbane
The Rt Hon the Lord Mayor of Brisbane
Cr Campbell Newman

5.45pm  Response
Cr Paul Bell AM
President, LGAQ

5.50pm  Sponsors Address
Mr Tim Fynes-Clinton
Managing Partner
King & Company

7.00pm  Program concludes - FREE EVENING
Tuesday, 25 August 2009

7.45am  Registration
        Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre
        Cnr Merivale and Glenelg Streets, South Bank, Brisbane

8.15am  Call to Order by President

8.30am  Official Opening
        Her Excellency Ms Penelope Wensley AO
        Governor of Queensland

9.00am  Presidential Address
        Cr Paul Bell AM
        President
        LGAQ

9.30am  Keynote Address: “Local Agenda Global Outcome”
        Cr Shelley Carroll
        Toronto City Council, Canada

10.15am Morning Tea

10.45am Address: “State of the Economy”
        Dr Chris Caton
        Chief Economist of BT Financial Group

11.25am Debate

12.30pm Address: “State Government Update”
        Hon Desley Boyle MP
        Minister for Local Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait
        Islander Partnerships

1.00pm  Lunch

2.00pm  Address: “Long Term Community Plans”
        Mayor Philippa Barriball JP
        Thames-Coromandel District Council, New Zealand

2.30pm  Debate

3.30pm  Launch: “New world, New technologies, New ways”
        A New LG Online
        Mr Jock O’Keefe, Director, Optimacy Pty Ltd

4.00pm  Address: “Winning Against the Odds”
        Ms Tracey Bartram

4.45pm  Adjournment
Local Government Association of Queensland Inc
113th Annual Conference - PROCEEDINGS

6.30pm for 7.00pm
Gala Dinner - Plaza Ballroom, Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre
Hosted by Hastings Deering
(Dress: Coat and tie)
Long Service Certificate Presentations
11.30pm
Program concludes

Wednesday, 26 August 2009

8.25am
Conference Resumes - Housekeeping

8.30am
Address: “ALGA Update”
Cr Geoff Lake
President, ALGA

9.00am
Debate

10.45am
Launch: “Council Business Online - an Evolution”
Online Media Entrepreneur, previously CEO Ninemsn, Australian Founder and Vice President South Asia for Yahoo
Mr Tony Fauer

11.00am
Address: “Opposition Update”
Mr Howard Hobbs MP
Shadow Minister for Local Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships

11.30am
Address: “Asset Management”
Mr Stuart Gibson
Group General Manager Asset Management
Transfield Services

12.15pm
Address: “Remuneration Tribunal”
Mr Adrian Bloomfield
Chairman, Remuneration Tribunal

12.30pm
Lunch

1.30pm
Split Plenary

3.00pm
Afternoon Tea

3.30pm
Address: “Local State, Queensland Local Government 1985 - 15 March 2008”
Ms Gabrielle Walsh, Author
Prof John Martin
Director, Centre for Sustainable Regional Communities
La Trobe University
4.00pm  Address:  “Planning for Performance: Brisbane’s model for success”
Rt Hon Lord Mayor of Brisbane
Cr Campbell Newman

4.30pm  Address:  “Corporate Ethics and Social Responsibility”
Dr Attracta Lagan

5.15pm  Adjournment

7.00pm  Titanic Dinner
The Tivoli, 52 Costin Street, Fortitude Valley
Hosted by Jardine Lloyd Thompson
(Fancy Dress/Smart Casual Dress)

11.30pm  Program Concludes

Thursday, 27 August 2009

8.30am  Workshops

10.00am  Morning Tea

10.30am  Workshops Continued

12.00pm  Consideration of:
(a) Executive Report
(b) President’s Annual Address
(c) Hon Treasurer’s Report

12.30pm  Address:  “Slow Journey South”
Ms Paula Constant

1.05pm  Closing Ceremony

1.15pm  Lunch
‘A’ MOTIONS

Association Matters

NO.1 EXECUTIVE

RECEPTION OF PRESIDENT’S ANNUAL ADDRESS
MOVER: Cr L Tyrell (Townsville) SECONDER: Cr D Edwards (Quilpie)

The President’s Annual Address will be read on Tuesday morning 25th August 2009 and needs to be formally received prior to consideration latter in the Conference.

“That the President’s Annual Address for 2008-2009 be received.”

CARRIED

NO.1A EXECUTIVE

ADOPTION OF PRESIDENT’S ANNUAL ADDRESS
MOVED: Cr M de Wit (Brisbane) SECONDER: Cr D Edwards (Quilpie)

The President’s Annual Address remains before the Conference during proceedings and is considered on Thursday 27th August 2009.

“That the President’s Annual Address for 2008-2009 be adopted.”

CARRIED

NO.2 EXECUTIVE

RECEPTION OF THE 113TH ANNUAL REPORT BY THE EXECUTIVE
MOVER: Brunker (Whitsunday) SECONDER: Cr L Tyrell (Townsville)

The Annual Report of the Executive needs to be formally received prior to consideration later in the Conference.

“That the Annual Report of the Executive for 2008-2009 be received.”

CARRIED
NO. 2A
EXECUTIVE
ADOPTION OF THE EXECUTIVE REPORT
MOVER: Cr B Abbot (Sunshine Coast)  
SECONDER: Cr M de Wit (Brisbane)

The Executive’s Annual Report remains before the Conference during proceedings and is considered on Thursday 27th August 2009.

CARRIED

NO. 3
EXECUTIVE
RECEPTION OF THE ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND AUDITOR’S REPORT
MOVER: Cr G Belz (Rockhampton)  
SECONDER: Cr M de Wit (Brisbane)

The Annual Financial Statements and Auditor’s Report need to be formally received prior to consideration later in the Conference.

“That the Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 May 2009 and Auditor’s Report be received.”
CARRIED

NO. 3A
EXECUTIVE
ADOPTION OF THE ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND AUDITOR’S REPORT
MOVER: Cr B Abbot (Sunshine Coast)  
SECONDER: Cr M de Wit (Brisbane)

The Annual Financial Statements and Auditor’s Report remain before the Conference during proceedings and are considered on Thursday 27th August 2009.

“That the Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 May 2009 and Auditor’s Report be adopted.”
CARRIED

NO. 4
EXECUTIVE
ASSOCIATION RULES - ALTERATION - REGISTRATION OF LGAQ AS EMPLOYER ORGANISATION UNDER THE INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ACT 1999
MOVER: Cr M de Wit (Brisbane)  
SECONDER: Cr G Able (Logan)

“That the Constitution and Rules of the Local Government Association of Queensland Incorporated be amended by inserting into the rules the words highlighted in red below. The purpose of these
amendments is to enable the Association to seek registration as an employer organisation under the Industrial Relations Act 1999.”

(1) Preliminary - Registered Name and Address

A. The registered name of the Association, for the purpose of the Industrial Relations Act 1999, is “Local Government Association of Queensland (Incorporated)”.

B. The registered address of the Association, for the purpose of the Industrial Relations Act 1999, is 25 Evelyn Street, Newstead, Brisbane, Queensland.

(2) -Admission To Membership-

5. (a) All applications for membership must be in writing directed to the Executive Director.

(b) Upon receipt of an application for membership from a body referred to in Rule 4, and prior to admitting the body to membership, the Executive Director must, within 3 months of receipt of an application from an eligible body, advise it in writing of:

(i) a member’s financial obligations; and

(ii) how and when a member may resign from membership.

(c) Once the Executive Director has advised the applicant in accordance with Rule 5(b), the Executive Director must advise the applicant in writing, again within 3 months of receipt of the application, that it has been admitted as a Member.

(3) -End of Membership other than by Resignation-

6A. (a) A body’s membership ends if the body—

(i) owes the Association a membership subscription or levy; and

(ii) has owed the subscription or levy for 3 months.

(b) For subsection (a), a body is taken not to owe a subscription or levy if the body has—

(i) entered into an agreement with the Association to pay the subscription or levy; and

(ii) complied with, and continues to comply with, the agreement.
-Membership Register-

6B. The Association must, for each year, keep a written register of its members which records the following for each body that is or was a member of the body during the whole or part of the year for which the register is kept:

(a) the body’s name;
(b) the body’s business address;
(c) the day the body became a member; and
(d) if the body’s membership has ended, the day it ended.

(4) -Loans, Grants and Donations-

10A. The Association must not make donations, grants or loans totalling more than $1000 to the same person unless the Executive:

(a) has approved the payment; and
(b) is satisfied the payment is not otherwise prohibited by these Rules; and
(c) if the payment is a loan, it is made on satisfactory terms.

(5) Part 2A - Funds and Property

-Control of Funds and Property-

14A. Subject to any directions given or limitations imposed by resolution of a Conference or by these Rules, the Executive has the control of the Association’s property and funds and may exercise all powers which can be exercised by the Association for the purpose of investing the same.

(6) Part 4 - The Executive

-Composition-

34. There must be an Executive of the Association consisting of the President and District Representatives.
-General Qualification-

35.  (a) A person is qualified to become and remain President or a member of the Executive only if:

(i) that person is and remains a councillor of a Member; and

(ii) subject to paragraph 35(d), that person has not been convicted of a disqualifying offence as defined in the Industrial Relations Act 1999.

(b) A person holding office as President vacates that office forthwith (by operation of this Rule and without the need for any other action) upon his or her ceasing to be a councillor of a Member.

(c) A person holding office as a District Representative member of the Executive vacates that office forthwith (by operation of this Rule and without the need for any other action) upon:-

(i) his or her ceasing to be a councillor of a Member; or

(ii) the Council of which he or she is a councillor ceasing to be included in the District which he or she was elected to represent.

(d) A person convicted of a disqualifying offence as defined in the Industrial Relations Act 1999 may be qualified to become and remain President or a member of the Executive if the circumstances contained in section 517 of the Industrial Relations Act 1999 apply.

(e) A person holding office as President or as a member of the Executive ceases to hold office 28 days after that person is convicted of a disqualifying offence as defined in the Industrial Relations Act 1999 unless the person makes a successful leave application in accordance with sections 518 - 523 of the Industrial Relations Act 1999.

(7) -Powers And Duties Of Executive and Office Bearers-

43. Subject to any directions given or limitations imposed by a resolution of a conference or by these Rules, the Executive has the conduct and management of the whole of the business and affairs of the Association and may exercise all powers which can be exercised by the Association.

43A. In addition to the functions and powers of office-bearers generally as members of the Executive, the office bearers may take part in formulating strategy provided that such powers are limited to:
(a) the formulation of business strategy for presentation to the Executive for decision;
(b) review of business operations for report to the Executive for decision; or
(c) ensuring the Association is appropriately represented at civic or ceremonial functions.

43B. The President shall:

(a) in all official relations of the Association, take precedence over all other Members;
(b) in relation to conferences, have the authority usually vested in a Chairman of a meeting and without limiting the foregoing shall:
   i) keep order;
   ii) direct the manner of debate upon all questions in accordance with Rule 29 and Schedule 1; and
   iii) otherwise act in accordance with Rule 27;
(c) in relation to meetings of the Executive, have the authority usually vested in the Chairman of a meeting, and without limiting the foregoing shall:
   i) keep order; and
   iv) otherwise act in accordance with Rules 48 and 50.

43C. The Senior Vice President, Junior Vice President and Treasurer shall, in the absence of the President, possess and exercise the rights, privileges and powers of the President in accordance with Rule 28 (for conferences) and Rules 48 and 50 (for meetings of the Executive).

(8) -Common Seal-

56. (a) The Executive Director has the custody of the Common Seal, which must be kept in such place as the Executive directs.

(b) The Common Seal must not be attached to any document except at the direction of the Executive or with the authority of a resolution of a conference, unless to authenticate any document, or to comply with the provisions of any Rule or law directing that the seal must be attached to any document.

(c) In every case where the Seal is attached to a document, the document must also be signed by the President (or in the case of the absence or illness of the President by two members of the Executive) and countersigned by the Executive Director.

(d) Subject to Rule 56(e), the Association may execute a document without using the Common Seal if the document is signed by:
(i) the Executive Director; or

(ii) the President; or

(iii) any person authorized in writing by the Executive Director or President to execute the document.

(e) Where a law requires the common seal to be affixed in a particular way, or that a document be signed in a particular way, the Association must affix the seal or execute the document in the way prescribed by that law even where the way prescribed is contrary to the requirements of this Rule 56.

Example: Rule 164(f) of the Industrial Relations (Tribunal) Rules 2000 requires an application for the Registrar’s approval under section 478 to “be under the organisation’s seal or be signed by 2 of the organisation’s officers authorized to sign the application”.

(9) Part 6 - Alteration of Rules

-Alteration Of Rules by Association-

57. (a) These Rules or any of them may be repealed, altered, amended or added to from time to time at a conference by resolution.

(b) A resolution referred to in Rule 57(a) must be passed by votes equal to at least two thirds of the total voting entitlement of all Members (whether present at the conference or not).

(c) Notice of the proposed repeal, alteration, amendment or addition must be given to the Executive Director 6 weeks prior to the date of the conference.

(d) If applicable, any alteration of these Rules must be approved under Chapter 12, Part 6, Division 2, Subdivision 1 or 2 of the Industrial Relations Act 1999.

(e) An alteration does not take effect until the Registrar has approved the alteration.

(10) Part 7 - Notice of Industrial Dispute

-Notice of Industrial Dispute-

57A. For the purpose of section 229 of the Industrial Relations Act 1999, the President is the authorized office holder required to give notice to the commission of the existence or likelihood of industrial disputes in the way required under that section.

CARRIED
**Governance**

**NO. 5**  
**NORTH BURNETT**

**ELECTORAL REPRESENTATION - REQUEST TO FUND PLEBISCITE ON METHODS OF REPRESENTATIONS**  
MOVED: Cr J Jensen (North Burnett)  
SECONDER: Cr F Whelan (North Burnett)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to the State Government to fund a plebiscite seeking the views of the community on appropriate methods of representation in each local government area.”

LOST

**NO. 6**  
**NQLGA/FLINDERS**

**ELECTORAL COMPOSITION - INCREASE COUNCILLOR NUMBERS, FROM FOUR TO SIX IN THE LARGE WESTERN COUNCILS**  
MOVED: Cr B McNamara (Flinders)  
SECONDER: Cr G Jones (Flinders)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to the Minister for Local Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships to increase councillor numbers at the next Local Government elections to a maximum of six in the large Western councils, where the councillors are not full-time. The option to increase the number of councillors would be at Council’s discretion.”

CARRIED

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**Finance and Administration**

**NO. 7**  
**EXECUTIVE**

**FUNDING - CUTS IN STATE CAPITAL WORKS SUBSIDIES**  
MOVED: Cr C Taylor (Toowoomba)  
SECONDER: Cr R Bellingham (Southern Downs)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland condemn the Queensland Government for its unilateral, unprecedented, untimely and unprincipled decision to abandon the Local Government Infrastructure and Subsidy program, and further that the Local Government Association of Queensland calls on the Queensland Government to honour the subsidy commitments withdrawn by the Government.”

CARRIED
STANDING ORDER
Proposal by Cr P Bell (President, Local Government Association of Queensland) to temporarily suspend debate on Conference Motions to allow for councils and councillors to share their experiences arising from the funding cuts to the Local Government Infrastructure and Subsidy program.

MOVER: Cr A Sutherland (Moreton Bay)  SECONDER: Cr B Abbot (Sunshine Coast)
“That Standing Orders be suspended.”  CARRIED

MOVER: Cr A Sutherland (Moreton Bay)  SECONDER: Cr B Abbot (Sunshine Coast)
“That Standing Orders be resumed.”  CARRIED

NO. 8  EXECUTIVE
CAPITAL WORKS SUBSIDY SCHEMES - PRINCIPLES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF NEW SCHEME
MOVER: Cr M de Wit (Brisbane)  SECONDER: Cr D Edwards (Quilpie)
“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to the State Government to adopt the following principles in the development of the new capital works subsidy scheme to replace the Local Infrastructure and Subsidy program abandoned in the 2009 State budget, namely:
- a capital works subsidy program be available to all councils for essential infrastructure, ie water and sewerage
- targeted funding schemes based on the strategic importance of infrastructure and the varying needs and capacity of local governments be maintained.”  CARRIED

NO. 9  BURDEKIN
STATE FUEL SUBSIDY - PROTEST AGAINST REMOVAL
MOVER: Cr L McLaughlin (Burdekin)  SECONDER: Cr R Lewis (Burdekin)
“That the Local Government Association of Queensland makes representations to the Premier protesting against the removal of the State’s fuel subsidy and requesting its reinstatement for the following reasons:
- increased fuel costs will add to the operational expenditure of local governments through increased costs of materials and services
- increased fuel costs will flow through to increased costs for all industry, business and residents, thereby having a detrimental effect on local economies and making it increasingly difficult for local government to raise additional revenue.”
AMENDMENT

To read as follows:
MOVER: Cr L McLaughlin (Burdekin) SECONDER: Cr R Lewis (Burdekin)

STATE FUEL SUBSIDY - PROTEST AGAINST REMOVAL

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland makes representations to the Premier protesting against the removal of the State's fuel subsidy and, in the event that the subsidy is not reinstated, request that funds raised with the removal of the fuel subsidy be quarantined and made available for roads and transport needs.”

CARRIED

NO. 10MORETON BAY

AMALGAMATED COUNCILS - AMENDMENT TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AND WORKFORCE TRANSITION CODE OF PRACTICE
MOVER: Cr A Sutherland (Moreton Bay) SECONDER: Cr G Chippendale (Moreton Bay)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to the Premier and Minister for Local Government to effect appropriate amendments to the Local Government Act 1993 and the Workforce Transition Code of Practice to give new councils the ability to realign their organisational structures to maintain an affordable workforce through the strategic use of a reasonable and appropriate Termination, Change and Redundancy strategy without risk of breaching the Act, the Code, or both.”

LOST

NO. 11WQLGA/BLACKALL-TAMBO/TABLELANDS

AMALGAMATION COSTS - FURTHER SUBMISSION TO BE RECEIVED
MOVER: Cr J Ross (Blackall-Tambo) SECONDER: Cr E Britton (Boulia)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to the Minister for Local Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Partnerships to accept future claims for amalgamation costs incurred by those councils subject to forced amalgamation on 17 March 2008.”

CARRIED

NO. 12MURWEH

MINISTERIAL MEETINGS - MINISTERS TO MEET WITH MAYORS
MOVER: Cr P Giandomenico (Hinchinbrook) SECONDER: Cr D Edwards (Quilpie)
“That the Local Government Association of Queensland lobby the Prime Minister and Premier to implement a cabinet policy that Ministers whenever possible make themselves available to receive deputations from Local Government Mayors.”

**AMENDMENT**

To add the words “and that councils be advised of Ministerial visits to their areas” to this motion, to read as follows:

MOVER: Cr P Giandomenico (Hinchinbrook)  
SECONDER: Cr D Edwards (Quilpie)

**MINISTERIAL MEETINGS - MINISTERS TO MEET WITH MAYORS**

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland lobby the Prime Minister and Premier to implement a cabinet policy that Ministers whenever possible make themselves available to receive deputations from Local Government Mayors and that councils be advised of Ministerial visits to their areas.”

CARRIED

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**NO. 13**

**TOOWOOMBA**

**DIMINUTION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT’S DECISION MAKING POWERS - GREATER INPUT SOUGHT INTO STATE GOVERNMENT DECISION MAKING**

MOVER: Cr C Taylor (Toowoomba)  
SECONDER: Cr G Lehmann (Somerset)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland lobby the Queensland Government to introduce a process to provide local governments with greater input into the State Government’s decision-making mechanism, affording the community the opportunity to express its views on such matters as:
- the establishment of brothels
- fluoridation of the water supply
- gaming machines applications
- extended trading hours
- assessment of mining developments.”

CARRIED

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**NO. 14**

**WQLGA/BOULIA**

**FUNDING PROGRAMS - COUNCILS WITH POPULATION OF 6000 OR LESS**

MOVER: Cr E Britton (Boulia)  
SECONDER: Cr A Clarke (Burke)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland lobby the State and Federal Governments to consider policies and funding guidelines specific to the needs of councils with a population of 6000 or less.”

CARRIED
NO. 15
FUNDING - NON PAYMENT OF HEAD WORKS
MOVER: Cr P Stephen (Torres)  
SECONDER: Joseph Elu (Northern Peninsula Area)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to the State Government seeking a review of revenue lost by smaller local governments through many Government departments not paying head works charges on subdivision developments.”

**AMENDMENT**

To add the words “and payment” and delete the word “smaller”, to read as follows:

MOVER: Cr P Stephen (Torres)  
SECONDER: Joseph Elu (Northern Peninsula Area)

FUNDING - NON PAYMENT OF HEAD WORKS

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to the State Government seeking a review of revenue and payment lost by local governments through many Government departments not paying head works charges on subdivision developments.”

CARRIED

NO. 16
FUNDING - RECURRENT EXPENDITURE OF MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE
MOVER: Cr P Stephen (Torres)  
SECONDER: Joseph Elu (Northern Peninsula Area)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland makes representation to the State Government to support the provision of adequate ongoing government funding to enable councils to adequately maintain and rehabilitate existing infrastructure.”

CARRIED

Environment and Health Services

NO. 17
CLIMATE CHANGE - STATE GOVERNMENT DEVELOPMENT OF FLOOD BENCHMARKING ALLOWANCE
MOVER: Cr D Edwards (Quilpie)  
SECONDER: Cr A Lancini (Hinchinbrook)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to the State Government calling for the establishment of a whole of government response in determining a benchmark figure or figures on a whole of state or regional basis for climate change allowance for rainfall intensity and flood events.”

CARRIED
NO. 18
MORETON BAY

CLIMATE CHANGE - COASTAL DEVELOPMENT LEVELS AND LIABILITY
MOVER: Cr G Chippendale (Moreton Bay)  SECONDER: Cr M Hobson (Redland)

“That the LGAQ make representation to the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning to immediately have prepared clear legislation that:

☐ Establishes a consistent approach to setting development levels in coastal areas below which development should not occur.
☐ Prevents any form of claim for compensation being taken against councils which have approved development in accordance with their planning schemes below those levels prior to the setting of such levels.”

CARRIED

NO. 19
WQLGA / BLACKALL-TAMBO

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION - ENVIRONMENTALLY RELEVANT ACTIVITIES ANNUAL FEES
MOVER: Cr J Ross (Blackall-Tambo)  SECONDER: Cr E Britton (Boulia)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make strenuous representations to the State Government to minimise the huge escalation in costs levied for Environmentally Relevant Activities (ERA) annual fees pertaining to waste and the management of waste, and/or give consideration on a sliding scale of fees due to the smaller businesses in the smaller towns and remote locations.”

CARRIED

NO. 20
IPSWICH

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION - RECOGNITION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN OFFSETS PROGRAM
MOVER: Cr P Tully (Ipswich)  SECONDER: Cr P Pisasale (Ipswich)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representation to the State Government requesting a review of policy/and regulations containing ‘offset’ provisions, that addresses two key areas:

☐ Recognition of local government through-out the policy application process.
☐ Ability for local government to apply ‘offset’ provisions through statutory planning schemes.”

CARRIED
NO. 21

ANIMAL MANAGEMENT - AMENDMENTS TO THE ANIMAL MANAGEMENT (CATS AND DOGS) ACT 2008
MOVER: Cr P Tully (Ipswich)  
SECONDER: Cr P Pisasale (Ipswich)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to the Minister for Local Government, the Honourable Desley Boyle MP, and the Department of Infrastructure and Planning to amend the Animal Management (Cats & Dogs) Act 2008 and/or the Animal Management (Cats & Dogs) Regulation 2009 to:

☐ Include provisions to allow Local Governments to refuse, revoke or cancel a registration.
☐ Include the ability to issue an infringement notice for the offence of a dog causing fear.
☐ Amend the requirement to issue a ‘registration notice’ to an owner who registers a cat or dog with a Local Government in accordance with section 49 of the Animal Management (Cats & Dogs) Act 2008 from “must” to “may”.
☐ Include the ability to issue a compliance notice or written direction to a person found not complying with the Animal Management (Cats & Dogs) Act 2008 and to further provide provisions should a person not comply with a compliance notice.”

CARRIED

NO. 22

WEED MANAGEMENT - TIMELY ASSESSMENT AND DECLARATION OF NEW AND EMERGING WEED SPECIES
MOVER: Cr T Bowler (Redland)  
SECONDER: Cr J Brent (Scenic Rim)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to the Minister responsible for Biosecurity Queensland, the Honourable Tim Mulherin MP, to request that Weed Risk Assessments (WRAs) are undertaken on Barleria prioriitis (Baleria or Porcupine Flower), Brallantaisa lamium (Brallantaisia or Tropical Giant Salvia), Dyschoriste depressa, Thalia geniculata (Fireflag or Dwarf Arrowhead), Laburnum anagyroides (Golden Chain Tree), Hiptage benghalensis (Hiptage), Triadica sebifera (Chinese Tallow) and Pitheoctenum crucigerum (Monkey’s Comb) as a matter of urgency.”

CARRIED

NO. 23

NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT - LACK OF ON-GROUND EXTENSION OFFICERS IN RURAL AREAS
MOVER: Cr P Giandomenico (Hinchinbrook)  
SECONDER: Cr A Lancini (Hinchinbrook)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representation to the State Government expressing its concern at the lack of on-ground extension officers in rural areas to assist land managers implement best land management practices and natural resource management principles.”

CARRIED
Planning and Development

NO. 24

MINERALS AND PETROLEUM RESOURCES EXPLORATION AND EXTRACTION - REVIEW OF LEGISLATION TO MINIMISE NEGATIVE ECONOMIC, ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL IMPACTS ON COMMUNITIES
MOVER: Cr E Britton (Boulia)  
SECONDER: Cr D Edwards (Quilpie)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to the State Government to undertake a review of legislation controlling the exploration and extraction of minerals and petroleum resources, including coal and gas, to ensure the legislation provides for the appropriate balance between economic, environmental and social impacts in affected communities and minimises inherent disadvantage. The review should consider provisions for consultation with local government in the granting and assessment of exploration and extraction related leases and compensatory measures regarding impacts on local government managed infrastructure, facilities and services.”

CARRIED

NO. 25

PLANNING SCHEMES - MASTER PLANNED AREAS - NO NEED FOR CONSENT OF OWNERS TO PREPARE A MASTER PLAN
MOVER: Cr P Tully (Ipswich)  
SECONDER: Cr P Pisasale (Ipswich)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to the State Government to remove the requirement under section 2.5B of the Integrated Planning Act (IPA) for the consent of land owners to prepare a master plan.”

CARRIED

NO. 26

PLANNING SCHEMES - MASTER PLANNED AREAS - NO NEED FOR APPLICANT APPEAL RIGHTS
MOVER: Cr P Tully (Ipswich)  
SECONDER: Cr P Pisasale (Ipswich)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to the State Government to remove applicant appeal rights for master plans prepared under section 2.5B of the Integrated Planning Act.”

CARRIED
NO. 27  

**BRISBANE**

**PLANNING APPROVALS - LOCAL GOVERNMENT PRIORITY IN APPROVAL PROCESSES FOR SIGNIFICANT LAND USES REFERRED TO THE STATE GOVERNMENT**

MOVER: Cr D Edwards (Quilpie)  
SECONDER: Cr J Brent (Scenic Rim)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning for increased priority and streamlined approval processes for major council projects involving significant land uses referred to state agencies for approval, eg CityCat terminals and koala habitats.”

CARRIED

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NO. 28  

**NORTH BURNETT**

**PLANNING POLICY - REVIEW OF MINIMUM AREA FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

MOVER: Cr P Lobegeier (North Burnett)  
SECONDER: Cr P Huth (North Burnett)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to the State Government to review the minimum requirement for 200ha for Rural Zone Development.”

CARRIED

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NO. 29  

**NQLGA/BURKE**

**DIGITAL TELEVISION - TRANSMISSION TO REMOTE AREAS**

MOVER: Cr A Clarke (Burke)  
SECONDER: Cr E Britton (Boulia)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to the Federal Government supporting the provision of individual household satellite dishes and decoders in lieu of the current community self help retransmission system in the roll out of digital television in remote areas. Further, that the encoders provided allow for multiple televisions in households and the viewing of different channels on different televisions in the household concurrently as is currently available via the community self help broadcasting system.”

**AMENDMENTS**

To read as follows:  
MOVER: Cr A Clarke (Burke)  
SECONDER: Cr E Britton (Boulia)

**DIGITAL TELEVISION - TRANSMISSION TO REMOTE AREAS**

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland call on the Australia Government to ensure that in the switch from analogue to digital television programming that, where councils re-broadcast these television services, they be enabled to do so in the same manner as television network broadcasters; that is, full high definition digital television with full interactive capability.”

CARRIED
Road, Transport and Infrastructure

NO. 30  
ROADS - DAMAGE TO ROADS - MANAGING IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH INDUSTRY ACTIVITY ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT ROADS  
MOVER: Cr L Tyrell (Townsville)  
SECONDER: Cr B Hewett (Townsville)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) make representations to the State Government to:

- review the Policy for Dealing with Road Damage from Industry Development Activities (Dec 99)
- seek amendments to relevant legislation and regulations
- develop new policies where appropriate

to assist councils better manage the social, environmental and economic impacts associated with intensive traffic activities on local government roads.”

CARRIED

NO. 31  
ROADS - RECOVERY OF ROAD DAMAGE COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH CARTAGE OF MATERIALS  
MOVER: Cr C Meng (Mackay)  
SECONDER: Cr K Casey (Mackay)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to the Minister for Local Government to include provisions in the regulations to the Local Government Act 2009 enabling councils to recover road damage costs on local government roads from activities associated with the quarrying, mining or extraction and transportation of materials from natural deposits.”

CARRIED

NO. 32  
LEVEL CROSSINGS - INCREASE IN STATE FUNDING  
MOVER: Cr C Taylor (Toowoomba)  
SECONDER: Cr M Hobson (Redland)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to the State Government to increase funding for open level crossings, both on safety and traffic congestion reduction grounds, to give greater priority to this area of government expenditure.”

CARRIED
NO. 33

ACTIVE TRANSPORT ALTERNATIVES - MANDATORY PROVISIONS FOR STATE AND FEDERAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS
MOVER: Cr C Taylor (Toowoomba)  
Cr T Bowler (Redland)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to the State and Federal Government that their infrastructure projects include mandatory provisions ensuring fit-for-purpose pedestrian ways and bikeways are included as part of the final project scope of works.”

CARRIED

Community Development and Human Service

NO. 34

SOCIAL HOUSING - REVIEW OF ALLOCATION METHODOLOGY
MOVER: Cr J Ross (Blackall-Tambo)  
SECONDER: Cr I Groves (Barcoo)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to the State Government calling for an urgent review of the current system for allocating Social Housing.”

CARRIED

NO. 35

KINDERGARTEN AND DAY CARE FACILITIES - CONSTRUCTION IN RURAL AND REMOTE AREAS
MOVER: Cr R Chandler (Barcaldine)  
SECONDER: Cr A Clarke (Burke)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland lobby the State and Federal Governments to fund the building of kindergarten and limited hours day care facilities including staffing in rural and remote communities, and that parents of children accessing these facilities be eligible for Child Care Benefits and Child Care Tax Rebates.”

CARRIED
‘B’ MOTIONS

Governance

NO. 36  WQLGA/BLEACKALL-TAMBO

COUNCIL MEETINGS - PARTICIPATION BY TELECONFERENCE
MOVER: Cr J Ross (Blackall-Tambo)  SECONDER: Cr E Britton (Boulia)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland makes strong representation to the Minister for Local Government to provide appropriate legislation that will allow elected members to participate in Council meetings via other means such as video conferencing/teleconferencing when extraordinary circumstances prevent the Councillor or Councillors attending the meeting in person.”

CARRIED

Finance and Administration

NO. 37  GLADSTONE

RATING EXEMPTION - COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT COMMERCIAL LEASED PROPERTY
MOVER: Cr G Creed (Gladstone)  SECONDER: Cr G Able (Logan)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland makes representations to the relevant State and Commonwealth Departments to rectify a situation whereby a commercially leased property for a resort from the Commonwealth is exempt from general rates when other resorts operating in the same environment are required to pay general rates.”

CARRIED

NO. 38  NQLGA/COOK

RATING - COMPENSATION TO COUNCILS FOR THE LOSS OF RATEABLE LAND IN THE CREATION OF NATIONAL PARKS AND ABORIGINAL FREEHOLD
MOVER: Cr P Scott (Cook)  SECONDER: Cr C Burns (Cook)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to the Minister for Local Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, the Honourable Desley Boyle MP, and the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and Minister for Trade, the Honourable Stephen Robertson MP, to compensate councils for the loss of rateable land that has or will occur in the creation of National Parks and Aboriginal freehold from previous pastoral and agricultural properties.”

CARRIED
NO. 39  WQLGA/BLACKALL-TAMBO

VALUATION OF LAND - REVIEW OF METHODOLOGY
MOVER: Cr J Ross (Blackall-Tambo)  SECONDER: Cr J Palmer (Longreach)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representation to the State Government seeking an urgent review to improve the methodology used in the assessment of the unimproved value of pastoral lands, to minimise the number of successful challenges by landholders.”

CARRIED

NO. 40  WQLGA/LONGREACH

VALUATION OF LAND - EXPEDITE DECISION ON OBJECTIONS TO RURAL VALUATIONS
MOVER: Mrs M McFadyen (Longreach)  SECONDER: Cr J Ross (Blackall-Tambo)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland lobby the State Government to speed up the decision making process with regard to rural land valuation objections.”

CARRIED

NO. 41  IPSWICH

STATE LAND SALES - REINVESTMENT OF PROCEEDS INTO COMMUNITY FACILITIES
MOVER: Cr P Tully (Ipswich)  SECONDER: Cr G Able (Logan)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland lobby the State Government to introduce a policy that any funds raised through the disposal of state owned land where local government is the trustee for community purposes should be invested in community facilities in the surrounding local area.”

CARRIED

NO. 42  WQLGA/BLACKALL-TAMBO

AUDITING COSTS - REDUCTION SOUGHT IN QUEENSLAND AUDIT OFFICE CHARGES
MOVER: Cr J Ross (Blackall-Tambo)  SECONDER: Mrs M McFadyen (Longreach)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make strenuous representations to the Queensland Audit Office to have the recent cost increases for Compulsory Financial Audits reduced to a reasonable amount.”

CARRIED
NO. 43

WESTERN DOWNNS

COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUNDS (GAMBLING AND JUPITERS CASINO) - LAND TENURE REQUIREMENTS - FUNDING APPLICATIONS
MOVER: Cr R Brown (Western Downs) SECONDER: Cr M Cosgrove (Western Downs)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to State Government strongly supporting the current review of the land tenure requirements associated with applications to the Jupiter’s Community Benefit Fund and the Community Benefit Fund for facilities development grants and calls for an outcome from such review which will allow applications from small community based organisations which occupy Council controlled land under less formal tenure arrangements such as a licence or hire agreement.”

AMENDMENT

To insert the words “and other”, to read as follows:

MOVER: Cr R Brown (Western Downs) SECONDER: Cr M Cosgrove (Western Downs)

COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUNDS (GAMBLING AND JUPITERS CASINO) - LAND TENURE REQUIREMENTS - FUNDING APPLICATIONS

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to State Government strongly supporting the current review of the land tenure requirements associated with applications to the Jupiter’s Community Benefit Fund and the Community Benefit Fund for facilities development grants and calls for an outcome from such review which will allow applications from small community based organisations which occupy Council controlled and other land under less formal tenure arrangements such as a licence or hire agreement.”

CARRIED

Environment and Health Services

NO. 44

NQLGA/FLINDERS

NATIONAL PARKS - INCREASED FUNDING FOR MAINTENANCE AND DEVELOPMENT
MOVER: Cr B McNamara (Flinders) SECONDER: Cr G Jones (Flinders)

“That the Local Government Association on Queensland lobby the Minister for Climate Change to ensure that adequate funding is allocated for the maintenance and development of existing National Parks. The funding of existing National Parks should be a priority before any further land is purchased for National Parks.”

CARRIED
NO. 45  
WEED MANAGEMENT - MAINTENANCE OF STATE LANDS FOR INVASIVE SPECIES  
MOVER: Cr N Johnston (Brisbane)  
SECONDER: Cr D Edwards (Quilpie)  

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to the Minister responsible for Biosecurity Queensland, the Honourable Tim Mulherin MP, to request that the Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002 is amended to require all State departments responsible for the management of land to prepare Pest Management Plans in consultation with relevant local governments.”  

CARRIED

NO. 46  
WEED MANAGEMENT - GIANT RATS TAIL GRASS  
MOVER: Cr T Perrett (Gympie)  
SECONDER: Cr D Neilson (Gympie)  

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to both Federal and State Governments that Giants Rats Tail Grass be added to the Weeds of National Significance list (WONS) as a priority.”  

CARRIED

NO. 47  
ADMINISTRATION FEE - SERVING NOTICES ON OVERGROWN ALLOTMENTS  
MOVER: Cr A Lancini (Hinchinbrook)  
SECONDER: Cr G Lehmann (Somerset)  

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland support and lobby for councils to have legal authority to levy an administrative fee for serving notices on overgrown allotments.”  

CARRIED

NO. 48  
PEST MANAGEMENT - WILD DOG CONTROL  
MOVER: Cr J Ross (Blackall-Tambo)  
SECONDER: Cr R Chandler (Barcaldine)  

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make strong representations to the State Government to provide funding to enable councils to continue to undertake wild dog control.”  

CARRIED
NO. 49  NQLGA/BURDEKIN

PEST MANAGEMENT - WILD DOG (DINGO) BAITING IN QUEENSLAND - COMPULSORY FOR ALL RURAL LANDHOLDERS
MOVER: Cr R Lewis (Burdekin)  SECONDER: Cr B McNamara (Flinders)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to the State Government to take forward the implementation of the Kenny Report and Local Government be given a framework for a baiting program for wild dogs.”

AMENDMENT
To delete the words “- COMPULSORY FOR ALL RURAL LANDHOLDERS”, to read as follows:
MOVER: Cr R Lewis (Burdekin)  SECONDER: Cr B McNamara (Flinders)

PEST MANAGEMENT - WILD DOG (DINGO) BAITING IN QUEENSLAND

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to the State Government to take forward the implementation of the Kenny Report and Local Government be given a framework for a baiting program for wild dogs.”

CARRIED

NO. 50  MORETON BAY

CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA DAY - CHANGE OF DATE
MOVER: Cr A Sutherland (Moreton Bay)  SECONDER: Cr A Raedel (Moreton Bay)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to the Australian Co-ordinating Committee for Clean Up Australia requesting that consideration be given to altering the date for the clean up in Queensland from its present date until some time later in the year when the weather is cooler and more settled.”

CARRIED

Planning and Development

NO. 51  REDLAND/IPSWICH

FUNDING OF INFRASTRUCTURE EXTERNAL TO STATE GOVERNMENT FACILITIES - RENEGOTIATION OF GUIDELINES
MOVER: Cr M Hobson (Redland)  SECONDER: Cr G Able (Logan)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to the Queensland Government to review their policy on funding requirements for external infrastructure to State
Government sites and non-State schools and to renegotiate in good faith the scope and terms of the ‘Guidelines On Arrangements For Infrastructure External To State Government Sites And Non-State Schools’.”

CARRIED

NO. 52

SUSTAINABLE POPULATION GROWTH
MOVER: Cr M Hobson (Redland)
SECONDER: Cr T Bowler (Redland)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland acknowledges the imperatives of sustainable population growth and, from a statewide perspective, commits to research and advocacy at State and National levels to ensure that population growth and distribution is planned in accordance with the State’s natural resources and environment.”

CARRIED

NO. 53

PLANNING POWERS - STATE GOVERNMENT PUBLIC HOUSING SHOULD COMPLY WITH COUNCIL PLANNING SCHEMES
MOVER: Cr R Bellingham (Southern Downs)
SECONDER: Cr P Blundell (Southern Downs)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to the State Government calling for public housing constructed by the state to comply with council planning schemes.”

CARRIED

Road, Transport and Infrastructure

NO. 54

SCHOOL CAR PARKS AND TRAFFIC FACILITIES - REVIEW OF ONGOING MAINTENANCE COSTS
MOVER: Cr G Able (Logan)
SECONDER: Cr N Johnston (Brisbane)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to the State Government to review the current inequitable arrangement whereby the funding for ongoing maintenance of car parking and other associated traffic facilities at schools is borne entirely by the relevant Local Government.”

CARRIED
‘C’ MOTIONS

Environment and Health Services

NO. 55 IPSWICH

NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT - SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS
MOVER: Cr P Tully (Ipswich) SECONDER: Cr G Able (Logan)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to the State Government urging them to finalise the South East Queensland Natural Resource Management Plan, commit all State agencies and departments to achieving the plan and begin implementation of priorities through collaborating with key agents such as Local Government.”

CARRIED

Planning and Development

NO. 56 BRISBANE

PLANNING POWERS - DEVELOPMENT ON FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENT LAND TO COMPLY WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT PLANNING SCHEMES AND CONDITIONS
MOVER: Cr N Johnston (Brisbane) SECONDER: Cr G Able (Logan)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to the Federal and State Governments that development on land under their control should be subject to Local Government planning laws and conditions.”

CARRIED
‘LATE’ MOTIONS

NO. L/M1

PEST MANAGEMENT - PRECEPTS PAID UNDER LAND PROTECTION ACT
MOVER: Cr R Bellingham (Southern Downs)  
SECONDER: Cr G Able (Logan)

“That the Local Government Association of Queensland make representations to the Minister for Employment, Economic Development and Innovation requesting that if his Department continues to expect local government to pay precepts under the Land Protection Act, that he at least ensures Departmental service levels are maintained or that he reduce the precepts where service levels have been reduced.”

CARRIED
ADDRESSES

Opening Address

*Her Excellency Ms Penelope Wensley AO*
*Governor of Queensland*

A copy of the Governor’s speech will be available on [www.govhouse.qld.gov.au](http://www.govhouse.qld.gov.au) in due course.

Presidential Address

*Cr Paul Bell AM*
*President of LGAQ*

Her Excellency the Governor of Queensland, Penelope Wensley AO, The Right Hon Lord Mayor of Brisbane Cr Campbell Newman, Ministers, other members of parliament, ladies and gentlemen; welcome all to Conference 2009. A special thanks to Her Excellency for gracing us with her presence. We look forward to a long and rewarding relationship with you, Governor.

Thanks again to the Lord Mayor and Brisbane City Council for hosting this year’s conference.

Normally, I would spend the next 20 minutes talking to you about the new Local Government or Sustainable Planning Acts, but I won’t. We have had two gatherings of the Local Government clan to discuss those important pieces of legislation and fought the good fight, and rightly or wrongly they have now passed into law. This morning I will talk about more important issues.

Our world has changed, our world has changed, our world has changed. And for those of you who missed it the first three times, our world has changed.

It’s never been clearer to me than over the past few months that the environment in which Local Government exists and operates has forever changed. I’m not just talking about amalgamation or changed boundaries.

Local Government - more specifically amalgamated councils - are being battered in the community attitude polls. It’s not only these polls - we’re being slagged financially, and this has a major impact on the lives of elected members and council employees.

The most recent LGAQ/Fred Rogers Memorial Research Foundation Community Attitude Survey, the results of which were released last Sunday, show conclusively that our citizens are offside and angry with amalgamated councils, but reasonably happy with the non-amalgamated variety. This survey produced our worst results of all seven surveys conducted over the last 12 years.

There is no getting away from the disillusionment and sullenness in some of our communities. Councils are doing it tough. So are our ratepayers and residents.

In the Local Government of today, there are a number of self-evident truths emerging.
Firstly, the Queensland Government has walked away entirely from the State’s large urban councils. It has left them to their own devices.

The bulk of the $1 billion which is being cut from State grants and subsidies over the next decade will come from these large urban councils.

So much for the implied teaser and carrot put about in 2007 by the State Government, and even by some in our ranks, that “after the amalgamation revolution, when there are less ratty little councils, the larger councils will get more of the funding cake”.

Well, that is one cake story which has now become a pikelet - minus the cream and jam.

It was galling that the State Government brazenly broke its pre-State election commitment to councils and the LGAQ (made just three days before the election), where they quite plainly stated that: “I can confirm that a re-elected Bligh Government is committed to continuation of the Local Government Infrastructure and Subsidy Program beyond 2011. We intend to maintain current levels of funding for the programs”, etc, etc. **But now**, we are - - or will be - free of the dead weight of the state bureaucracy, come 2011.

No more dictating terms, endless form-filling and acquittal processes, interminable hold-ups because of whatever lame excuse, jumping over ridiculous hurdles, joint openings of infrastructure and that is just the start of the list.

Colleagues, the State has run out of carrots to dangle in front of large councils.

As painful as missing out on a thousand million dollars in capital subsidies is, especially for first home owners, who will now have to wear at least an additional $5,000 a block in headworks charges from 2011 onwards, really innovative programs can now occur free of the dead hand of the State Government.

We can be our own masters.

For the best part of three years, the LGAQ, through Local Government Infrastructure Services, has wanted to build the next 100 sewerage treatment plant upgrades across Queensland in one or two packages of work saving approximately 30 per cent on both the capital and recurrent outlays. The Queensland Government stymied that program again and again and again, because they couldn’t front the subsidy.

Well colleagues, those days are over. We will need all the savings LGIS can generate to make up for the loss of capital subsidy.

I can’t let the opportunity pass to reflect, with a little black Irish humour - that the State Government found a really innovative way to deal with the Department of Local Government’s inept administration of the capital subsidy program.

Largely, the government simply abolished the program - problem solved.

That’s the ultimate rough justice, following the Public Sector Efficiency Commission report, snuck out under the cover of the January school holidays last year, giving the department a “one-out- of-five” for its stewardship of our capital subsidy program.
I am not proposing we take a “dog in the manger” to the State Government going forward. Rather, we will only participate in joint initiatives where it’s good for councils and the communities we serve. But the fads and whims of this and future State Governments will be treated for what they’re worth - nought!

Most assuredly, there will be no intergovernmental protocols while I’m President - there’s no point in flogging a dead horse.

The second, self-evident truth, folks, is that, financially, the states (with the exception of Victoria) are stuffed and broke and incapable of providing meaningful financial support to councils - their day in the sun has been and is fast fading.

We can rant and rave at George Street for years to come. However, we would be joining a long queue of disgruntled parties. You can’t get blood out of a stone.

Historically, the states are at their lowest point financially since the 1920s. They can’t even borrow in the open bond markets without an explicit Commonwealth guarantee of their debt. They raise less than half of their revenue and have resorted to flogging off bits of the farm to pay off the bankcard.

Worse still, barring a very large cut in the State Public Sector, Queensland finances won’t recover for decades, if at all.

Fiscally, Local Government’s future lies in Canberra - nothing is more certain. After years of strategic lobbying, ALGA and LGAQ have been able to secure around an additional billion dollars in annual federal funding for our sphere of government - most of it through an expanded Roads to Recovery program, and the new Community Infrastructure Program.

Quite obviously, we need more funding from our Federal Government to close the $14 billion Infrastructure gap backlog. It’s a goal we will continue to pursue relentlessly.

Local Government does have the ear of the Prime Minister, an annual-high level forum between the Prime Minister, his Cabinet and Mayors and the offer of $25 million to fix up our Asset Management systems so we can properly make our case - based on robust, consistent empirical data on the state of the assets we own.

The stars in Canberra have never been in better alignment. It’s up to us to grasp the nettle and fashion a new intergovernmental financial compact with the feds.

The ALGA President, Cr Geoff Lake, will fill you in further on those matters and our quest for Constitutional Recognition when he speaks on Wednesday morning.

The next truth is that without funding as the glue, the relationship with the State Government will gradually change from one of partnership and regulator to largely regulator and the regulated. Clearly, that is an upcoming situation which won’t be without its trials and tribulations. We at the LGAQ are on high alert for an outbreak of cost shifting by the State Government.

Colleagues, it’s also as plain as the nose on my face that going forward, if we don’t spend whatever State money we continue to receive, we will lose it.
Heed this message - if you want your Council to continue to receive TIDS money, spend what you have got and quickly. The State Government - version 2009 - is not in the mood to take prisoners.

Equally, offering the “dog ate my homework” won’t suffice as an excuse for not delivering on State Government-sanctioned timelines, especially those around Priority Infrastructure Plans and Online Development Assessment Tracking. Life has just got a lot tougher for us.

I have to be abundantly honest and upfront with you, as unpleasant as it is. If we do not perform in the planning arena, especially development assessment, we will lose control of that function.

It’s happened in South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales and it can and will happen here. The Property Development lobby is relentless in its pursuit of that outcome and through sheer weight of political donations to both sides of politics, usually wins the day. Only sheer determination by the LGAQ has stopped that happening here to date. Let’s redouble our efforts and meet the timelines and not give the State Government the reason to again do the developers’ bidding.

However, it’s interesting to note the preponderance of developers in the recently-published lists of political donors - and the imminence of the upcoming CMC inquiry. If we get through all of the motions before the end of scheduled debate on Wednesday, I am proposing we have a discussion on a possible local government response to the Premier’s recently released accountability green paper - see how we go.

I know how tough it is to find planners, how difficult amalgamation is proving, the pressure from growth and development and the thousand and one things we all have to do. As Deputy Mayor of Central Highlands, I encounter those challenges every day. But, as I said at the outset - the game has changed, the game has changed - its plan, perform or perish.

The final, self-evident truth is that, most of the answers to our future lie with us, certainly not George Street or even Canberra. We, as a sphere of government, have to substantially remake the way we do business by adopting new approaches that attack our cost structures and close the gap between our own sourced revenue and expenditure. The community will not wear 10 per cent pay rises ad infinitum. Just look at the Community Attitude Survey results.

In truth, friends, Councils have struggled with implementing Shared Services and bulk procurement of infrastructure in good times, but now - during the economic downturn and following the loss of State subsidy funding - these reforms are imperative. It’s not an option to sit on our hands.

Quite simply, if we don’t attack our cost structures, our ratepayers will be faced with endless rate rises and will rebel. I can’t be any clearer - amalgamation didn’t solve our financial problems, it’s added to them, at least in the short term, and any potential gains in efficiency are still some years away. We are hamstrung by the laws governing the transition to new workforce structure and numbers - our hands have been tied through to 2011.

What then is LGAQ’s response to these seismic shifts in the inter-governmental tectonic plates? It is to help Local Government change itself, to adapt to the new external environment, to get even closer to our members and equip ourselves with new tools of trade.

I can absolutely give you the mail that the LGAQ and your Executive is not in retreat, but going forward boldly. We have the capability and the answers, not to mention the courage and determination to tackle the new world order in partnership with you, our members.
At our June Executive meeting the Executive established the LGAQ Fighting Fund. It has an opening balance of $600,000.

Your Executive has decided to invest $100,000 of annual operating expenditure into the fund in all future budgets.

It will grow to a multi-million fund over the next five or so years and become a sizeable deterrent to capricious or unconscionable behaviour towards Queensland Councils by the current or any future State Government.

Only the full Executive will be able to authorise the Fighting Fund’s use. That said, approvals can be gained by electronic means in hours, and action commenced on the same day if need be.

This fund will be used for the major battles affecting all of Local Government, not for local minor skirmishes.

Going forward and on behalf of you, our members, we are going to give as good as we get in the future. We won’t be outspent or outmuscled.

There are those among us who would say we should be building bridges with State Government.

I ask you - why?

Each time the State breaks a promise to us, lies or makes excuses smothered in PR spin, I ask you - do we lie down for another flogging?

I say most assuredly, no. It’s difficult to trust the State Government now - as a columnist in The Courier-Mail claimed recently - now our trust is truly trashed.

Local Government is gaining momentum throughout Australian politics because of its honest, straightforward approach. We are the polly - waffle free level of government.

The LGAQ has also embarked on the Member Connect Program, headed up by Professor Peter Wilton from the University of California's Berkley campus. Peter Wilton is a recognised world leader in customer value and has worked with organisations like AusTrade, Ergon Energy and Queensland Treasury Corporation in this country and produced results for them.

The LGAQ Executive and senior management are on a journey to make your Association the best imaginable organisation it can be in meeting your needs. Hopefully, this journey will take us from good to great over the next few years.

As you know, every two years, LGAQ surveys 600 Mayors, councillors, CEOs, senior managers and other stakeholders about our direction, performance and style. The most recent survey was just three months ago where LGAQ scored just under 80 percent for its overall performance. That’s good, but not great and that’s where we want to be in the future.

A number of you will be talking to Peter over the next three days, so don’t hold back, tell him what your best imaginable Association would look like.

Following the March 2008 elections, the Association set about renewing its Reference Groups - the advisory bodies consisting of elected members and officers representing the diverse make up of
Queensland councils. The reference groups advise the Executive on Association policy, program and priority issues across the areas of Environmental Health, Finance and Governance, Human Resources, Indigenous Councils, Natural Resources and Climate Change, Planning and Development, Regional Development and Relationships, Roads, Transport and Infrastructure and Social Policy.

There are 100 representatives across these nine reference groups from 36 councils, consisting of 36 mayors and councillors and 64 officers. The Executive and I greatly appreciate the contributions made by these people to ensuring the Association is well grounded in its understanding of the issues faced by councils and the advocacy required on their behalf of the Association.

In addition, over the past year the LGAQ has been involved in:
- The innovative and challenging Sustainable Resource Communities Partnership between the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation, the Queensland Resources Council and the LGAQ to guide development in the Bowen, Galilee and Surat Basins.
- The Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative, Experience Pays - Mature-Aged Worker Employment Strategy, Industry Engagement Strategy, and School Based Traineeship Strategy, - the first of these commencing over 11 years ago and run in conjunction with the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation and the Department of Education and Training.

I am also delighted to be in a position to formally announce that the LGAQ has been successful in securing just over $2.55 million dollars worth of Productivity Places Funding, to support the skilling needs of existing workers at the para professional level. Under this arrangement Councils will be required to contribute only up to 15% - I emphasise only 15% - of the cost of training delivery taking the overall leveraged amount of training for councils to $3 M in the 2009/10 financial year.

This is a unique program, in that each participating Council has identified the qualifications they require and selected their preferred training provider. Whilst this has resulted in a very complex brokerage model for LGAQ to manage, it is the first step towards a truly demand driven VET system and I acknowledge the State Government for their initiative and support for this new direction.

PPP has been the “missing link” in our funding model and complements nicely the Queensland’s Government’s First Start New Entrant Traineeship Employment initiative. Combined this means the LGAQ will have secured around $9 M this financial year to support Council workforce needs.

Everyone in business knows that, in the field of workplace relations, the last three years has seen some of the most tumultuous and significant industrial relations reforms for more than 30 years.

During this time, the LGAQ has remained steadfast in its resolve to advance the best interests of local government, despite the challenges and pressures of unsympathetic and deficient federal legislation, a hostile and well-resourced union movement and an unsupportive and self-serving state government.

In 2003, we articulated our vision for the ideal industrial relations regime - Local Government covered by a single jurisdiction (preferably the State) with employees captured by a single dedicated local government award. Everybody - including the State and the unions - indicated it could not be done.

Well, ladies and gentlemen, today we are in a single jurisdiction (the State, currently) and along with the NSW Local Government Association, we have led the charge towards achieving a single, modern federal local government award. This goal is now only a stone’s throw away.
It’s an achievement which will not only influence the award system covering local government in the state system, but more importantly, ensure an appropriate Local Government-oriented system exists if and when Local Government in Queensland moves to the federal system.

Further, acting off the back of the current action of union’s manoeuvring for further pay increases for Local Government staff, the LGAQ has set its sights on a single award for local government in the State system. There is still a way to go, but we have proven we are ahead of the game in having the right vision and more importantly, we have the energy and resolve to rigorously pursue and deliver that vision.

The LGAQ has continued to innovate and lead over the past year. Our new “LG Online – first to help, first to know” will be launched on Tuesday and it’s a bobby dazzler!

On Wednesday, Resolute Technology, LGAQ’s wholly-owned subsidiary will be launching the “Online Council Business Centre”, an Australian first.

The Association has been very active in seeking to assist councils through the Global Financial Crisis. Together with the Queensland Treasury Corporation, we ran workshops over the length and breadth of the State on strategies councils can employ.

The LGAQ has also funded and initiated the monthly Regional Unemployment Index, in conjunction with Australian Development Strategies - the so-called RUIN Report - giving councils an important tracking tool and talking point to help and assist their communities through the economic downturn.

LGAQ and LGIS have been at the forefront in assisting councils meet their requirements under the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme and related Emissions Trading Scheme. We can help with the carbon footprint measurement, emissions trading, carbon offsets and waste to energy solutions.

The Association has also funded a six-month major project addressing the needs of non-amalgamated councils. The results of that exercise will be discussed in the split plenary session on Wednesday afternoon.

All this can be summed up in our responses to any new development which poses challenges to our members: The LGAQ is on to it and developing the solutions to assist you.

Finally, I can’t go without reflecting that LGAQ’s training arm - which has Registered Training Organisation status - has now qualified 867 elected members and council officers at diploma or certified level in a broad range of critical council functions. It’s an achievement in an area dear to my heart - councils growing their own capacities.

I have one last piece of business. As you know, courtesy of the State Government, the LGAQ will cease to be incorporated under the Local Government Act come 30 June next year. It will require us to corporatise before then.

Work is well advanced. Early next year our members will have to vote on a new constitution and corporate structure under the federal companies’ code. I’m proposing we do that by postal ballot, saving you a special conference. There is one potential snag - stamp duty on the transaction. While we’ve had verbal promises for relief, if it doesn’t happen, the LGAQ would have no alternative to levying around $1.4m additionally on its members.
I want to thank my fellow LGAQ Office Bearers, Bob Abbot, Margaret de Wit and Brendan McNamara for their hard work and wise counsel. Thanks also to the other members of the Executive for their diligence and commitment to the cause. Not to forget the hardworking Association staff efforts on all of our behalf.

Colleagues, the next two and a half days should be both challenging and rewarding. Dive in to it head first, immerse yourself in the process, learn from our expert speakers, workshops and each other.

It really is about, Planning and Performing - the theme of our Conference.

As I said at the outset - OUR WORLD HAS CHANGED.

Thank you.
Keynote Address “Local Agenda Global Outcome”

Cr Shelley Carroll
Toronto City Council, Canada

Good morning. I am a little embarrassed by that introduction; I am wondering if you are sitting there wondering what is left for the Mayor of the city to do given the list in my introduction. Ironically it was written by a member of the Mayor’s staff.

I have a prepared speech, but I have to say before I go on Mr President, if a speech like yours was delivered by the Association of Municipalities of the Provincial Government in the Province where Toronto presides, we would probably still be members of that Association.

You are going to hear more about the Federation of the Canadian Municipalities. The problems we face are so stunningly similar, I feel like I am in a superman comic in a parallel universe. That kind of powerful address does not come from our organisation and it is going to have to before we rejoin. I will begin and I too want to add my welcome and hope I get a chance to meet members of your State Government at lunch time.

I most of all want to thank your President, Cr Paul Bell and your LGAQ Executive Director Greg Hallam for inviting me to be here. After our meeting in Sydney, Greg Hallam and I first met at the World Association of Major Metropolises in Sydney last fall. I was very happy to be invited back to Brisbane to continue the dialogue that we began there. I bring greetings from the Mayor of Toronto, David Miller and from Toronto City’s forty four councillors.

The LGAQ delegation that visited us recently in Toronto will be very happy to hear that our challenges with industrial relations at that time are now over, for the time being in any case - it is a three year contract. We are back to facing recessionary challenges, as I am sure all of you are large, medium and small municipalities.

Like Australia, Canada is viewed as being comparatively stable economically. In Toronto we are impacted by the financial crisis. Jobs continue to be shed in the big city and our welfare roles continue to climb. A role we are financially responsible for this time due to our amalgamation. Though some of the strategies that other orders of Government have employed are starting to kick in and the rise in unemployment is beginning to slow. Our financial sector shows signs of stabilizing and our Toronto real estate market is curiously buoyant. The real estate salesmen themselves are scratching their heads.

As Local Government members though, we know that a recession can be very short in duration. But it is our services on which the demand will be placed. Those that have been cast into poverty by recession require the services that we deliver locally. Much longer, much after the recession is done and so that is the task before us.

Toronto has other things in common with all the Local Governments in your state as well. All of these will sound familiar to you: Amalgamation (in Toronto’s case six municipalities coming together to form on); Climate change planning; Long term fiscal planning, going from that five year capital plan to ten and taking operating budgets to three year outlooks. All of these have dominated city politics for ten years.
As for amalgamation the Ontario Provincial Government of the day back in 1995 imposed amalgamation on the six municipalities. It was in place by law in 1998. It was a change that might have happened in any case I must admit. But this one was ordered very hurriedly and for the wrong reason.

The Premier at that time assured the public that he was going to affect massive downsizing and this would bring immediate property tax relief. But rather than real downsizing, we know that the same services need to be delivered even after you group the cities together. The Premier embarked on a massive downloading of social services without of course transferring the income based taxes to pay for those social services.

So the result in the city of Toronto was a population of almost 2.6 million people left disgruntled by chance and generally skeptical of all governments. The resulting municipal public service! Though grateful those who were still with us to survive any downsizing that did result from harmonization of city functions were also left very disgruntled by change and very disheartened and distrustful of the Governments that ran them. They were especially disheartened because it was they who have the daily interactions with that public who are now so skeptical.

Amalgamation is still forming the backdrop of Toronto City politics ten years on. But in the six years since David Miller was elected Mayor of the City of Toronto, the first who was not a Mayor of any of the legacy cities, our city has become a recognised world leader in climate change mitigation and adaptation planning. Our long term plan called ‘Changes in the Air’, Toronto’s climate change, clean air and sustainable energy action plan was unanimously endorsed by Council in 2007.

I am going to leave one slide up throughout my talk this morning. That is the glossy picture that goes out to the public. That is how we sell the plan. Selling plans, creating them, putting them on glossy paper, putting them in power points, putting them out there to the public is something we excel at. I know that you do too because I have been through my conference package.

Unfortunately we have to rush this plan along, we can’t just make it glossy, and it has to happen. The extreme weather changes, the burden on our infrastructure, the things that are happening in the city prove to us that all the effects of climate change are well under way. As they are for you here, I have been monitoring Australia having had to travel here twice in one year. I know that you have the same imperative that we have. The climate change plan at this point having been adopted unanimously by a council that does have an opposition, in July 2007 is in its development.

Many of these tasks are already done. It now permeates every facet of the cities vision and planning process as well as its day to day operations. It is the central component of my budget process for the city. Scads and scads of local actions that once demonstrated and replicated city by city, town to town will actually affect a global outcome that we have been unable to get from other orders of government until now.

So how does all this come about? Against such a backdrop of negativity, I have already told you how cranky our residents are. We local politicians promote our local plans but today we have got to have the dialogue about how you execute the plan. That is the dialogue that cities need to be engaged in now. Cities are learning now to work within their own reach to make change. If they don’t have the resources they get them. If they don’t have the powers they must get them. This required a cultural shift for you, but mostly for your city staff and for your communities. Mayors and councillors have to step out of their traditional roles as pot hole fixers and city boosters and become leaders and agents of change.

There are four needs that have emerged for us in Toronto when we embark on these paths of change. We applied these changing needs to the overarching climate change assignment but one can even apply
them to deal with today’s financial crisis. You especially need to do this if you are going to listen to the words of urban thinker and philosopher Richard Florida who has recently moved to Toronto. He has made it very clear in a recent publication that will be extended to a book that you have got to stop using the term economic crisis. He says that those cities that will fair the best and will be the top ten cities at the end of this crisis are those that refuse to call it a crisis but instead called it an economic re-set and set about doing exactly that.

Something to think about, because you can apply these principals. The needs we need to effect this change are first of all the need to identify the problem and identify the opportunities it presents your city. There is the need to have the tools to act and that is the interaction that you have between your other orders of Government. Notice with Municipalities, they never call them higher orders of Government. We have a rule-they are other orders of Government. There is also the need to lead the public. Fourth and perhaps the most crucial and this is the conversation we had in most details in Sydney, there is the need to lead the public service because it is a new way of functioning.

Number one is helped along by the fact that climate change mitigation and adaptation has really always been identified as a problem but lately it has become main stream. An interesting publication is ‘The Politics of Climate Change’ by Anthony Giddens which outlines how it became mainstream. It is interesting reading for any municipal politician.

In 2003 Mayor Miller made climate change a major plank in his campaign platform. It carried along his base, who were very much the down town more highly educated green community. The momentum of his campaign and the degree to which his campaign succeeded out in the suburbs, which is an area I represent, was a very early indicator in North America that climate change had in fact extended out to those people in the suburbs. That it was main stream, that the electorate in general saw it as a need and it was much covered throughout North America at that moment.

It became clear to us that in the term from 2003 to 2006 we had better use the whole mandate as a communications platform to set the foundation for change. This would be a different change than amalgamation, more meaningful to the quality of our residents’ life. To communicate the opportunities for the city to act we delivered a steady diet. This happened in every town hall in every media interview, and these were the messages.

Fist of all making sure that they understood that much of the worlds emissions are coming from cities, cities like ours. That federal and state government cannot and are not moving fast enough. It is cities that build and implement and deliver. It is cities that provide the hard services and infrastructure that are the heart of the problem. So it is cities that must act. Our cities can make themselves more livable and more sustainable through positive change. Climate change mitigation by its very nature is an opportunity, while you are mitigating to build a better community. We will need other orders of government to work with us, to give us the powers to act. That last sentence in the message was one that we delivered to the public and to the staff as often as we could because we wanted them to have a thirst for making a change to those powers we needed to act.

It was key that they be asking the other representatives in those other orders of government, because municipal politicians as we know can ask until the cows come home. It is really when it starts to well up from the electorate that the other orders of government have to say ‘well we better give those to Municipal Governments or there is going to be a backlash for us’.

The Mayor used the power of associations with other municipalities to spread the demand as well. Resources for community to build green infrastructure and green economies could not be dismissed as the whining of the larger cities in Canada. David Miller became a huge presence at the Annual
Convention of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. He would stay the entire length of the convention; he would be on the floor throughout the convention, which was an unprecedented gesture. The Mayors from the largest cities in Canada generally drive by, did a speech and then they got out of there, so David Miller had quite an impact.

He also began to chair their caucus of big city Mayors. It was the ten largest cities in Canada. Again, historically the Mayor of Toronto would send a representative to sit in his seat. He suddenly went from the former Mayor and all those before him, putting a representative in the seat of that group that met offside at FCM to chairing it. With this Association we really began to create an awakening in the other orders of Government. If these municipalities are going to all start singing from the same song sheet, so I guess we had better crack open the books and figure out what it is they are on about.

We also began an association with international cities. Largely in partnership with Ken Livingstone in the City of London. Starting C20 was womens work. The Deputy Mayor of London, Nicky Gavron and I sat together at C20 and bought cities together. We said ‘maybe we all share our strategies and how we begin to work cooperatively with other orders of Government’. Once we set it in place Bill Clinton came to the table and then the Mayors came to the table as well and there was Mr Livingstone, Mayor Bloomfield and Mr Miller who held the next conference. C20 became C40, they last met in Seoul. It is a very action oriented group. It is the Mayors only that go, they commit to actions and on the basis of when they are going to do an actual thing. There is of course money involved out of the Clinton climate initiative fund. So there will be much from that in the future.

Out of all of these actions the second need was really getting hard to ignore, the need to have the tools to act. Within the same month that Toronto got its new Mayor the Province got a new Premier. The post amalgamation Premier we call Dalton McGinty. He was responsive to that message that was going out there. The Provincial and Federal Governments can’t act fast enough on this issue. He was also worn down by very regular visits from the Mayor. His staff began to be worn down because we had them subjected to regular visits from our senior bureaucrats. It was the senior bureaucrats who were going in weekly and insisting that we need new regulatory powers to change behaviors in our city, to change the city full stop. It was those bureaucratic visits scripted in concert with the Mayor and those working on the file. Those we acknowledged today had an even greater impact because it is through your ministry staff that the real policy work will get done.

Near the end of 2004 having been completely worn down the Premier made a very public speech in which he said, and I quote “compared to all other cities of its size in North America, the City of Toronto is currently living in a legislative straight jacket that would baffle Houdini”. It is the Premier who said this, not a Mayor, not a Municipality of any kind; it was the Premier who said it. We truly had worn him down. He put policy staff in a room with our policy staff and eighteen months later the ‘City of Toronto Act’ was delivered.

On the premise that we will take this large city that can gather some large resources of its own, add to those resources some targeted new revenue tools and regulatory powers and they can lead the way. What they can do in climate change, they can replicate throughout the province and hopefully throughout the nation.

We are still legislatively speaking a creature of the province like all Municipalities in Ontario. But we are seen as one columnist put it ‘as old enough to be trusted to regulate ourselves, just so much that we won’t embarrass Dad’. By 2006 when the Act became law a number of things began to happen and very quickly. Some you see up on the slide, some I am going to add too.
Solid waste management for instance was pulled off the property tax base because we now had the power to do it and is now billed as a utility based on volume per household. High rise residents will be added to this new program and begin their own source separation of organics in high rise apartment units in a world first. Over half of Toronto’s residents live in high rise so they’re very much a part of the diversion target.

Plastic bags have now been regulated at the point of sale when retailers must charge five cents per bag. Our right to rate a pesticide bylaw over and above the province had to be fought, but it was fought and it was won all the way to the Supreme Court. All the things that you see on the slide behind me are in process are past the council process and making progress or they’re done. All before the city and province have had a chance to sit down to do the first three year review of the City of Toronto Act. It is a lot of change for a population and as I told you, they were cranky to begin with.

That leads us to the most important need. The need to lead the public! This was a more constructed program of change to improve our environment. The need to lead the public through it was ever present. It requires a great deal of courage and risk taking on the part of the Mayor and his like minded Councillors. If you are looking for votes you don’t want to say ‘you are now going to pay $150.00 for your garbage bin’ and then try to explain the complicated unraveling of property tax rebates that makes that not such a bad thing.

We are up against our own political process. While the Mayor has the power to create an executive branch of council to get this done to a point, all the committee chairs will do the heavy lifting. The council is still a one member, one vote, non party system. This means leading change while dealing with a vocal opposition spouting off at will in the media. Our best defense and coincidentally the best way to lead the messaging war, one that basically is the messaging rules of Barack Obama today on a larger scale, are simple; express a simple clear vision repeatedly. Show the benefit of that vision simply and repeatedly and be very visible in your leadership, day after day after day.

To some extent those of us who lead certain files, the Chair of Works that followed after me, leading the hardest part of the file, changing if off the property tax base is somewhat of a media celebrity. We have now taken to calling him PT Barnham because he is trying to turn it into a humorous circus to get people through it and oddly it is working.

I will give you two quick examples that are grand scale things. You see a picture of a great big street car here, well, that is Transit City. It was launched in the minds of the public with a big splash as a completed plan with a benefit that stretches to every corner of the city limits and potentially beyond. It was fully branded from the beginning with interactive web site, buttons, posters, not a single staff member involved in it was over thirty I should add. A tip for you, nobody brands better. It had everything going for it from the day it was launched in 2006 except of course any funding of any kind. We just launched it!

The council opposition paid little attention to it therefore. Why bother poking at Transit City. It is a vision, it has hope, but it has got no funding. But the public was lead straight into a thirst to see it happen. In 2007 the very next year, the Premier looking to run for re-election knew all he had to do was promise to build Transit City and it would push him ahead several points and it did. Our Mayor was reelected and today after only three short years the entire plan is funded. The shovel is going in the ground shortly after I return back to Toronto and I will be cutting a ribbon on the Shepherd LRT Live.

That is the largest transit expansion in one program ever executed in North America, the States or Canada and the shortest amount of time used in which to pull together the funding. That one was an easy one and it was very much making maximum use of communication tools.
Again, let’s think about a parallel to that and the use of a very young staff member using all of the cutting edge technology available. I think it is the guy who has been elected President, Barack Obama’s ‘Yes we Can’ speech which was written by a twenty six year old. For Transit City it was that generation we needed to be saying, ‘I want this’, to get it from other orders of Government, so that is who was allowed to design it.

I will give you an example that did not go so well. One that was a little bit harder. That was using some of the new powers for revenue. We were given the powers, not to create a Municipal Sales Tax when we should have, but instead we were given the power to institute a Land Transfer Tax, so long as we didn’t begin to charge more than the Provinces themselves charged and we were given the municipal power to introduce a personal vehicle tax. The rationale being, yes we already charge them but you charge one too because you’re focus in climate change mitigation is density planning and rapid transit - Personal Vehicle Tax correlates: go ahead, go your best Municipality. It was very unpopular and it was very difficult to lead the public through.

We learned about the incredible data basing skills and communication powers of your local realtor. Are they community organisers? And so there was a viral propaganda war that the world would end if we had Land Transfer Tax. That property values would plummet in Toronto and never return. But we were armed, our city staff went out and I said “don’t just model what will happen and what is based on our market, land transfer taxes existed municipally in American cities since the depression”. It was my job as budget chief to talk to them about how we were going to sell it, where the money focus is in this particular Municipality.

I told the consultants to go out and check some history and you have to tell consultants to do this; they don’t go looking for history because it is a time consuming thing and they are getting bang for their buck in the contract. We asked them to go back to the depression and find out as best they could what happened. Every time it was a case of yes it does go wonky. The real estate in that jurisdiction does go wonky for six to twelve months and then it is over.

The CFO of our city was then adamant about it and said “I trust their research, they are absolutely right, that is as far as it goes”. Armed with that we stood up to the public and said you have to trust us on this. Imagine our hearts sinking when the global financial crisis arrived two months after we had implemented the tax. We told them everything would be all right in six months and now there is foreclosure boat tours going up and down the coast of California and the impact is reaching us here in Canada. Goodness knows what is going to happen to the statistics. Armed with the regulatory financial sector which was relatively safe, only two of our major banks were heavily invested in ABCP, we are stable and the real estate market is indicating it as well.

Having nursed the public through it and promised them, these are the two things that you need to know and they are all you need to know: that we must in the city of Toronto diversify our revenue streams in order to create the city you want. A city of quality, prosperity and livability for all. We don’t need to tell you specifically what we will spend it on, but let’s face it, if you affect a climate change plan, a green economy and a green infrastructure; you have got a quality prosperity and livability for all.

We told them this over and over again and for those who thought the world was going to end because the real estate salesman was telling them we would all pay this tax, we just had to keep saying the same sentence over and over again. The Mayor and all the councillors were supporting him and getting it through - we need some revenue that we collect only from those who can afford it, only when they can afford it, that is when you have made a capital gain. We just kept saying that sentence over and
over again calmly and today, just as the CFO predicted, our calm cool Cam Weldon, the real estate market has righted itself in less than twelve months.

While the US housing market continues to tank, Toronto housing sales transactions were up twenty seven percent in July over July of last year, pre crisis. The housing crisis, while you would have expected them to fall in that period of time they have risen by four percent. That messaging got them through to the other end of the tunnel and on we go.

Lastly, but most importantly there is the messaging that must go out to the public service to enact plans this huge. They are a hundred other actions that are happening internally and externally. There is a need to lead your public service and I apologise as I know there are some bureaucrats in the audience. Stick with me I am going to say something nice at the end.

I was elected to council in 2003 coming from the School Board and we had been dealing with amalgamation. We had to work closely with our staff. I didn’t know anything about city staff. David Miller was elected Mayor out of council. He knew them well, he had already learned much about them as he had been a councillor for about a dozen years. He knew that in the legacy city of Toronto - Do you notice I don’t say for amalgamated municipalities? - We have learned that we don’t depress our residents anymore - we never call ourselves former cities. I don’t represent a ward in the former city of North York, it is a legacy city. It is our legacy that it used to be the city of North York and now it is part of Toronto. I came in from a legacy city.

In the legacy city of Toronto, the downtown core staff had a twenty year history of turning out climate change related show pieces covered all over the world. The Toronto Atmospheric Fund or Energy Efficiency Office, all of these fit with their traditional role in the city at that time. They would continue to run a thirty thousand strong public service which it takes to provide the services to a couple of million people. They would oversee the employees, now 32,000 that deliver services from arms like commissions, over 60,000 all together and this was their prime responsibility above and beyond. Producing boutique accomplishments that conform to the platform of the latest political administration was a little speciality of theirs. It was part of the balancing act. They were something to impress the latest Mayor.

We wanted measurable change, measurable climate change plan outcomes and meaningful progress such that other cities would want to replicate it all across the globe. This required bureaucrats that wanted to make a global impact, not just impress that latest Mayor for job insurance. This was a considerable task for the Mayor because that was our staff culture at that time.

It is a culture that can establish quite quickly during amalgamation periods because in the first few years there may be a lot of coming and going. There are those who you thought would be the leader who decides not to run, there is a lot of change. That staff culture can develop very quickly. David knew he needed to create in his Boardroom a new atmosphere of mutual respect, one of cooperative and creative problem solving. It needed to happen in his boardroom more often, more oversight and once that respect was understood then he would be able to be very, very demanding. To say, don’t report back to me after you have talked to legal and this is why you can’t do it, always come to me and tell me how I can do it. What do I have to do to do it, how hard is it going to be and how can I legally be allowed to do it. That was a big change for them.

Climate change policy implementation requires long time servants to accept a new paradigm. The concept of I build a city service and the public uses it, the public pays for it, we have got to figure out how much we have got to charge, then the city grows, then I build more is the way most of our senior
staff moved into city governance. It is the way cities ran and it is what they understood. When they
began their careers that was the best way to get ahead.

If we are to be leaders and agents of change Local Government need to be hands on in their oversight
of staff and staff hiring to build a new understanding. One just can’t design a plan of intensive action
and far reaching effects that span over twelve years and then hit the links in the afternoon.

Transit City for instance took dozens of hour long interdepartmental meetings before the launch could
even take place and take the community by surprise. Making all those changes to solid waste
management and all those targets is a constant ticking clock for us because we have been ordered not
to send even a drop of waste to the United States or Michigan even though Michigan would very much
like to process it. We have been ordered out of there by 2010. Interdepartmental meetings happen
there weekly, they happen in the Mayor’s boardroom because the public service and the political
messengers have to be in lock step. Those interdepartmental meetings are happening in new rooms, all
of these are meetings in the Boardroom so that the report is homed there. In the end each component
of the Climate Change Plan if at all possible makes one trip to council.

The report can bounce around committees; everyone can have a crack at it on committees. But the
axiom, ‘one trip to council’ has been driven home to staff. This is another paradigm for our senior
team, another shift for them to make. The practice had been and this is true of all the legacy cities,
had been to break every big political request, every big change, down into stages and bring it to council
in chunks to get the approval in chunks all the way to implementation.

Pre-amalgamation it was a pretty effective way of nursing a change through the smaller and more
suburban legacy communities. In the bigger city media fish bowl things changed, an adjustment had to
be made amongst staff as well as amongst politicians. Multiple visits to council are multiple new cycles,
are multiple confusions and really begin to wear down and stop you from making change. We had media
training for staff members as well as for councils. They had to understand the general director of solid
waste, a man who began by managing a solid waste yard in the smaller municipality never in a million
years expected to have a jurisdiction that is sending a million tons a year to Michigan and he has to
solve that problem. He now needs to be media savvy because when it comes to council he wants to
come on time. The person who has to allay all the confusion is probably going to be that staff member.
So he has to become a messenger just as we have our politicians come simply by learning it through the
campaign.

We have also had to create a discipline in our budget process. We have had to expose the historical
practice of saying yes to the little things, to individual councillors who need a ward fix. Money is tight
when you are trying to change the world. So, when you are fixing a water fountain in a park, I have to
build that into the budget. That is a discretionary thing you have got to be able to do.

Creating a $160,000 staircase from a new condominium down to a ravine because ‘I promised to my
community that it would happen in 2009 so could you just figure out a way to do that’ and the staff
member does it because ‘it seems like career insurance to me if I make that happen’. That is a practice
that we just can’t abide if we are going to have a twenty five billion dollar capital plan. If we are going
to make our way through a financial crisis, that can’t happen any more. Here is the reverse promise: If
a staff member is not allowed to placate individual councillors and make that happen, the Mayor is not
allowed to placate councillors to get some votes.

It is a hard discipline and a bit of a paradigm shift as well. It was one that we had to insist on. We were
asked to be very, very disciplined in the budget process and so I got to pull rank. I got to pull rank and
say I am going to be tough on staff, but David I am going to have to be tough on you too. So far so good. Bureaucrats in the audience will be happy to hear that the Mayor is keeping his part of that bargain too.

You will find also in amalgamation that staff can become quite mobile after the first decade of amalgamation. We are going through a wave of that now, ten years on. Talented folks from small municipalities get a chance to expand their talents in the newly formed city. They start doing big stuff and then before you know it they can make up their CV and someone who is a middle manager, or an upper middle manager suddenly thrust into this larger jurisdiction, quickly builds the skills that he can take out into the hinterland and become the chief bureaucrat in a lovely mid sized municipality which is family oriented. You have to motivate them to stay. You have to make this a passion of labour and love. Not only demand success of them, but celebrate every success. Make them a part of the message when you pull it off or you will find them shuffling like decks of cards across the state after amalgamation. It creates a new opportunity for them.

The chief bureaucrat becomes very important to you. He has got to have a great relationship with his staff. He has got to have a constant relationship with the Mayor so that he is able to tell the Mayor ‘I want you to go down by such and such a yard and while you are driving by it say great job guys’. That kind of interplay we have just begun to recognise in the last couple of years will get the Climate Change Plan done and keep the passion for getting it done because a lot of it is heavy lifting. But it has also begun to change the human resources post amalgamation. Some new hires will be a necessity for sure because there is still going to be that movement, but, every day when you arrive at town hall you have got to lead. To effect what ever changes in these ten year plans you have got to create, you have got to remember who your public service is.

A perfect public service has some men and women who have seen a government through a recession or two that is great knowledge and skill to have right now. It has to have some men and women who have run smooth operations, who have served our community in a way that makes you proud and have done so for a long time. So that in a time of change you have got servants out there who have a level of trust with the community.

It also has to have a new crop that brings all the energy and cutting edge new science that every city needs to take out of the academic and research world. You have got to bring them in. The trick is getting them to marry their new skills with all of that great veteran knowledge that already exists in your city. It is those two things put together that make it possible to take the running of a city and turn it all into the green running of a city. You need those two things together.

Our experience in the last couple of years is to get from those new hires along with the disgruntled pre-amalgamation staff you are dealing with now, to all be rowing in the same direction to create this. It is the politicians who have to be out there constantly motivating, constantly appreciating and pushing them to come together. If you do that my friends you will inspire a fine public service and you will execute the glossy plan that you pass out in the conference packages.

Thank you

**Question:** Cr Brad Carter, Rockhampton Regional Council: Shelley, I was very impressed with your description of the relationship between your political representatives and your staff. I was just having a quick look through your CV and I was just curious to know what your previous experience was before you entered the world of politics?
Answer: I thought I would just been seen as a Mother Bear Councillor who stumbles from the Parent Association, onto the School Board and goes from there. You really should, if you are going to do anything in NGO’s, never mention to anybody that you were in banking.

I stayed home for a decade, I have a daughter with special needs, but prior to that it was in the world of banking. Not high level money markets, but very low level. I chose to stay home with Martha and while you are home and you have been that busy, you get involved in all sorts of NGO’s and things. Eventually then I would stumble on - Oh would you be treasurer, oh, would you be treasurer.

When I joined the school board we had just been amalgamated and the funding was uploaded to the province and inadequately handed back down of course. That is the same old story. About a billion dollars was cut and immediately, two more across the Province in the space of four years. Oddly because the Premier of the day had read a book about New Zealand! While they were correcting, he was implementing what they were correcting. So, I got in there and they said ‘could you build an alternative budget’?

I had worked in banking, but I had never built a budget. But we assembled the staff and we just went in through the bureaucracy of the School Board and looked for the staff that were really outraged by this, would give us a little bit of their pro bono time and built an alternative budget. When I ran for Council, I made a mental note of - if I win, don’t tell anybody of your background. It got out there and the morning after I was elected the phone rang at 8.30 in the morning and David Miller called and said I need you to be on the Budget Committee.

Question: Cr Bob Abbot, Sunshine Coast Council: You talked many times during your speech about leadership. Can you just spread out a bit on leadership and what you think is leadership, how it should be delivered and the sorts of values you think are important in this Municipal sort of process?

Answer: Well, in our system which I think will change very soon, the initial change of amalgamation was about all the public could bear. The change that will come I think, is a change to a party system, but there isn’t one right now. The first thing a leader needs is a thick skin, because the opposition is quite random and scattered, so it is a constant attack. But also you have to have that ability to not only be thick skinned about it, but to move beyond it. Ultimately something this big and this costly - the Climate Change Plan - was not going to happen unless we had unanimous support and we needed it even from the opposition. First you have a thick skin about what they are saying, but then you step over it and go back to them and say - ok what is it going to take to bring you on board? Let’s talk about this.

We didn’t want the former culture of swapping pet projects to get things done. I think that is ultimately what the public mistrusts about Municipal Governments more than others. It had to be about - If I do this and you go along with it, I have got to find a way for me to message it that works for me. But can I also help you; find a way to sell it in your community in a way that sounds as though it is coming from your politics. That more than anything has really helped.

So, a leader can come with a conviction and a party leaning and all the rest, but he has to be able to open up and understand that everyone is coming form a different place. How can I link into that? That has been the most important quality, not only for the Mayor, but he has demonstrated it so many times that those of us who are chairing committees underneath him, have begun to do that as well. That has helped make it so we are confusing the public far less than we used to. We are far more consistent about what we are asking of staff. It has been the most important thing and I can honestly say that, I learned only after we got onto this Council and embarked on this.
Address “State of the Economy”

Dr Chris Caton
Chief Economist of BT Financial Group
Courtesy of Saxtons Speakers Bureau

Due to copyright laws this speech was unable to be published.

Address “State Government Update”

Hon Desley Boyle MP
Minister for Local Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships

It is my pleasure to join you today. In the present circumstances, I was thinking as I was walking in, it is about 21 years that I have been coming to the LGAQ’s Annual Conference. I missed a few there while I was busy with those other portfolios, but this is territory I have enjoyed from your point of view over many years.

It is indeed a pleasure to address you also as the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy. There has never been a better time in Queensland for our Aboriginal people than there is now and we aim through our government generally, but particularly in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships to make it so, just as fast and just as hard as we can.

I recognise therefore the traditional owners on the land on which we are gathered and pause to pay my respects to the elders past and present. I recognise also some of our colleagues from aboriginal governments here with us today. I haven’t spotted any of the Torres Strait Islanders yet, though I haven’t got my glasses on, so my apologies if I am not seeing you. I see Peter Scott from Cook Shire Council and you probably don’t know because you’re preoccupied with your own council areas what tremendous leadership he, and supported I might say by Val Scheir in Cairns, are showing working with the Aboriginal Councils in the Cape. There are some splendid things happening.

Particularly I am of course going to talk to you about Local Government matters as they affect all of Local Government across Queensland today, and I have to say to you that these are in the words of Dickens, the best of times and the worst of times. I am well aware that you have had it put to you this morning fairly directly, “the worst of times” and they are very hard times indeed, you have no argument from me. You may or may not agree with the perspective on why they are in some ways the worst of times. I am going to come back to the best of times a bit later on and I hope glimpse from my chair what I see as good thing which are happening. But let’s talk first about the worst of times.

The Global Financial Crisis is the worst of times. The impact of that is all over Australia and it is particularly bad in Queensland and affects all levels of Government. Our State Government has had in the context of a fourteen billion dollar hole and I say it slowly because if you roll it off the tongue really fast, it can sound like it is just the trouble you are having finding half a million. Fourteen Billion, a big hole!
In the context of that hole we have had to take some decisions that are not easily taken by a Labor Government. We are being, for those decisions, very widely criticised. Not just by those who would be the alternative government, those from conservative political parties or even independents, but of course by some in our own party and by a good number in the union movements. I mention that to let you know that we have not taken these decisions lightly, they are very difficult decisions. They are taken however very clearly and reiterated daily, several times daily by our Premier that our number one policy position in the hard times is the protection of jobs. Jobs first! The Premier today is actually launching a summary discussion paper about our job situation in Queensland and with that launching a couple of additional programs the State are going to undertake to address several of the issues in private sector employment.

Can I tell you that just since March in Queensland we have lost fifteen thousand jobs! Over the last year the number of apprenticeships that would have been commenced that have not been commenced is ten thousand, primarily in the construction industry, but also in engineering and related trades and also in the utilities sector. That is going to leave a very big gap in the tradesmen available to us with qualifications some four years from now as the economy gets better.

Not only is that a tragic and serious concern for all those young people who could have relied on those apprenticeships over the next years ahead, it is a serious worry for the future of Queensland in terms of our capacity to revive. These are the sorts of circumstances for why we have stuck by our eighteen billion dollar infrastructure program. Why we have set in place that program that constitutes some 127,000 jobs. We will stand by therefore, the commitment we have made to workers in Local Government.

I was sorry, I have to say, to read that a motion is before you to vary the workforce transition code. That code which was agreed at the time between the Transitions Committee, the LGQA a part of it, the LGMA and the unions. Yes they were much better economic times than we are facing now. Quite frankly I want to put to you that it is in these hard times that all levels of Government need to maintain jobs. Do the best we can to keep our communities working and that the leadership of Local Government should be the same as the leadership of the State Government in terms of maintaining jobs. There will therefore be no change to the Workforce Transition Code, which is a regulation that was introduced to Parliament by my predecessor. A change to the code to give you the choice as single Local Governments to fire or to force redundancies, would require an Act within Parliament and I will not be taking that forward.

Let’s talk about the grants and subsidies and from your point of view, the dreadful news that has come upon you. It could have been worse news, I say to you. We could have done it to you straight away and dropped all of our commitments, and we dropped no commitments to you so that for the next two years you have some $435 million dollars in terms of projects that were approved and that will proceed, $435 million that is pretty substantial funding for council projects. That is just my departments’ contribution to council projects, which is not more broadly across State Government. They are our commitments and we will stick to them.

There have been none the less a good number of projects, a large number of projects that have lapsed. Some of these were projects that had been approved over three years ago and about which we had had no communication at all from the council. I ask those of you who are in that category to consider whether you would do similarly for community groups, whether you would keep funding available, particularly in these difficult times? There were some of the projects that have lapsed, and I have spoken with several councils about some of these this morning, where that is not the circumstance however. Where work was being done behind the scenes by the council to get it up and running, where maybe the approval that was given by the state some years ago was really dependent on waiting for the
opportunity to get some substantial matching funds from the Federal Government and that hadn’t been obtained. There were very good reasons in the case of many of those lapsed projects as to why they hadn’t been proceeded. But I have to say this to you, many of the councils who have written to us, given us the reasons and asked for an extension of time, got that. Those that had not communicated with us are the projects that have lapsed.

The really bad news that we have given you is that we are honoring our commitments under the present five year program, that was $700 million, though we are spending some $850 million instead - so that surely can’t be a matter for complaint. The hard part of the news is that we have given you two years warning about the grants that are changing, going, and probably going forever. Your President said to you this morning that the times have changed and that there will be no going back. In terms of the grants and subsidies and the arrangements that have been, I think he is probably right even though that is not the way we have made the decision. We have given you two years warning that on our present budgeting, what we will have available for local government without yet deciding who exactly, which councils and on what terms, the funds that will be available is $45 million dollars per year.

So far as how that money will be spent, we have signalled to you that it will be councils most in need. Let’s talk about Local Government reform and stepping up to the mark. There are a number of things that were said to you by your President in his address this morning with which I agree. He said, and I think it is a phrase that was well used, “that for Local Governments this is the time to plan, to perform, or perish’ and it is exactly so.

We know and have known for some time, and I don’t understand that there has been any argument about it, that financial sustainability in Local Government is indeed a difficult issue. Some of the financial management practices of the past, as well intentioned as they may have been are not the standards that can take Local Government into the future. That is why surely the previous Federal Government began the National Financial Sustainability Standard Program across Australia. They are, as was told to me by the Parliamentary Secretary last week proceeding slowly in other states. It is Queensland that deserves the credit and the LGAQ was part of that, for taking the bull by the horns. By having a look at our financial management and recognising that there is much improvement to be done.

The Asset Management stage, the first stage in the roll out of the new financial standard framework has shown us all some things that haven’t been very pleasant. There are as many as eighteen classes of assets that councils might have. The general number of asset classes that councils have I am told is thirteen. Many councils have Asset Management Plans for two or three of those classes and there are some who have none. There is a lot of work to be done over the years ahead in terms of those Asset Management Plans. Work is at pace with my department, with Queensland Treasury Corporation and with the Federal Government who have some money on the table. Though they have not yet announced how they are going to spend that for us to provide the support that we can to you. Particularly in assisting you with doing those first couple of Asset Management Plans in a way that will build the capability within your council to do other Asset Management Plans.

This is not a simple outsourcing to GHD kind of project. It is a capability that needs to be built within your councils. There are other stages then in the sustainability and reform process focusing on community engagement, on governance, and on long term financial planning. Recognition of that is in the new Local Government Act, particularly so far as community engagement and long term community planning is concerned. So it is for all these reasons that I say to you that it is indeed the hardest of times, though we should be careful as to whether the hardest of times is necessarily the worst of times.

I had planned my speech to you ten days or so ago as an outline so that the department could fill me in some dot points. I was starting a speech with congratulations and talking to you about the great things
that I am seeing since I am back in the chair as Local Government Minister and I intend still to talk to you about those. But in the way has come some other news that is not so good, that is mentioned through the survey by LGAQ about Local Government performance. Through your office Greg, a copy was given to me yesterday and I have had a glance at it. I don’t think it is that bad, I have to say to you. Maybe that comes from the perspective of a member of a State Government that has been beaten up every day of our lives in a very loud and blunt way by pretty much everybody in sight, so you could say that I have a jaundiced perspective.

There are some serious bits in there that I think you should ponder over. While I am talking on the topic of finances, what does it mean that you have got the worst gap that you have had since 2003? Your residents rating financial performances are important. It is good that your communities are realising financial management these days, for your level of government as with other levels has to be a top priority. It is not nice that the gap in terms of their perspective on how well you are doing is as big as it is. I would want to put to you that the results of the survey do need to be taken in the context that people out there are not happy at the moment. There are many people being badly impacted already. In my family there is one amongst us who has been unemployed as a consequence of the Global Financial Crisis. We are getting to a point where there are many people who have to say the same. There are lots of businesses that have gone bust.

There are lots of businesses that are not out of the woods yet. The construction sector in Cairns has disappeared. Unemployment in Cairns in the far north has increased the worst in any region in the state, in fact in the country. We have seen up close the kind of impacts there are. In that context your constituents are not going to be looking fondly at you. They are going to be taking it out on you too. At the same time they are worried and they know people who are out of work, and that you are raising their rates. That is one of the congratulation I have to offer you. I think you have done a spectacular job to keep most of the rate increases around six and seven percent and under eight percent. The great majority of you have been able to do that and this should be a matter of congratulations to you. Of course you would understand that isn’t the perspective of residents, where money is tight and they are worried about every dollar. I hope therefore that you will take the survey result in that broader context of society.

None the less it does lead me to put to you a few things about community engagement. They are the only things that I really brought with me today to make some critical remarks about in terms of Local Government. In truth I don’t think you are doing it well enough yet. I have to say from the letters that still flood in to the Minister for Local Government, having a say about this or that in your local government area, sometimes having a say about the council and complaining about decisions but mostly the great majority are complaining about not getting a reply. I really think that is fairly hard to justify. Sitting at my desk, looking at the complaint letters, your systems in some of the councils could be better than they are. I wonder whether elected members are monitoring the systems. Having a look at the complaints that come in to which ever section of the council and how they are handled. I write back regularly to people to say there is a complaints process in your council. Officially make a complaint to the CEO and he or she will then appoint a suitable person to investigate and this is a process on paper and you will be kept informed and given the outcome of the investigation. You should be telling all your constituents that. This is not something that I wish I was writing in so many letters so many times. Are there constituents who are unreasonable, are there constituents who don’t tell me the full story? Of course there are, but there are so many letters ladies and gentleman about this complaints process that I think there has got to be some truth in it. I think that some amongst you need to have a look and see whether it could be improved in your council.

I have to say to you that in terms of community engagement, the council that I see doing it absolutely the best, including complaints management is Brisbane City Council. You may say that they are bigger
and have the resources or whatever. They are doing it really well and I encourage you, if you want to examine your system, to have a look at how they do it. They do it really well in terms of neighborhood planning too. Another aspect of their community engagement is that it is ongoing, all the time. It is not just a special occasion of having a barbecue in the park and inviting all the local residents to see the council some time this year. It’s a continual dialogue mechanism.

With that can I say to you, a lesson that we are learning the hard way in the State Government is when you have hard times making very hard decisions that are unpopular, you need to do twice as much engaging with your community, not half as much. That when the messages are worse you need to talk about them and explain those more. When you are putting up your rates, some of you, I see in the media clips that I get every day about councils were leading up to that and you were talking about the issues you are facing. The price of construction, the cost of employment, the projects that needed doing, the impost the that the State Government had put on you and so on. I do encourage you however to have a look at your community engagement and consider whether you may do it better.

Now I come to the last, which was before my first and is to tell you some good things before I get off the stage. I am seeing some big stepping up in terms of the amalgamated councils and my congratulations go first to them because the job has been for them even harder. Particularly considering that a good number of people in the amalgamated councils, probably amongst the staff but certainly amongst the elected members were not in favour of the amalgamation decision that was made in their area. None the less have accepted that that is the fact in law that is the decision that has been made. Instead of sitting around saying woe is us and holding their head in their hands, wishing for the good old days of pre amalgamation to come back, they have got on with it and they have stepped up to the mark.

For example, I have some examples here and they are far from all of them. Rob Loughnan from Maranoa, an amalgamation of Roma, Bungil, Bendemere, Warroo and Baringa Shires. Does it get any harder than that? Despite the hard economic times do you know that council has handed down a budget with one of the lowest rate rises in the state; 5% on average. How did they do that? Not by cutting their capital works program, they have a $43 million dollar capital works budget that is protecting jobs and building for the future while keeping their rates low.

Another example is the Mackay pipeline. The biggest project that Mackay Regional Council has committed to funding since they were voted in last year, a $27 million project of which they are only getting three million from the State. It was a project the former Sarina Shire Council had been looking at since 2000. Now what they have is a project to guarantee water supply to south Mackay, Paget, Nabilla and Sarina for the next forty years.

Les Tyrell from Townsville was one who really dialogued with his community about the position that his Local Government was in and the hard issues they were facing. He has listed a number of the benefits that came from the amalgamation - better utilisation of their own expertise and resources, leading to savings on external consultancies. Two hundred thousand dollars in savings through smarter use of electricity tariffs; Four hundred thousand dollars saved on telecommunications and the associated network; Seven million dollars in appreciation on council assets through better management practices. Congratulations to Townsville too.

Moreton Bay has come up with financial savings of nineteen point two million dollars over two years and they are projecting thirty four million over the first term of the amalgamated council. Very clever stuff.

Maybe they are the hardest of times, but maybe they are the best of times in terms of councils stepping up to the mark, thinking bigger, thinking better, looking at the variety and choices that there are for
councils while raising money, particularly when not so much is immediately available from the State Government.

May I congratulate also Rockhampton who I hear took the awards at Tidy Towns, pipping a few others at the post. Congratulations to you.

Ladies and Gentlemen, when the Premier said to me you can go back to Local Government, I was very please and I still am. I love being your Local Government Minister and have had the pleasure of meeting with about twelve councils this morning over specific issues. I look forward to catching up with all of you along the way. Can I encourage you in these hard times, as in the words Bob Abbot gave me when I visited Sunshine Coast Regional Council last week. He said ‘we are not looking backwards, we are stepping up Desley’. As I have said right form the start and we think it every day at the Sunshine Coast, what are we doing, we are making history. In the world of Local Government at the moment you are, all of you, making history. My sincere best wishes to you all and my support at whatever level I can deliver that.

Thank you very much.

**Question:** Cr Brad Carter, Rockhampton Regional Council: We have been strong supporters and advocates for amalgamation. That was one of the reasons I stood for the Mayoral position. We are working very hard at improving our performance along the way. The question I have for you is in relation to the Local Government Act. Whilst we are starting to get dribs and drabs of the regulations coming out and the plan for the Government to fully adopt that act around December sometime, it is a request whether you would give consideration to withholding the full implementation of that until about the 1st July to allow us to, if we need to amend our business structures and organizational structures etcetera to reflect the regulations. We can do that more comfortably in a full financial year or the start of the financial year rather than half way through it. So, it was just a request for your consideration.

**Answer:** I think I’ll take a little bit of offence on the Departments part of the dribs and drabs description of the regulations coming out. The first of three, there is only three now, how good is that? The first of three are on your desk for consultation and the other two are coming in good order a month apart. None the less I will take on board what you have requested.

The reason we were so keen on December was to get on with it and because that is 150 years of Local Government in Queensland so it was very tidy. If it needs to go back to some other date for full implementation we will consider it at least. Have you given me your best argument on paper? Not yet, but you will and if any others of you who have difficulties I will give it good consideration.

**Question:** Cr John Brent, Scenic Rim Regional Council: Just like yourself, I think you said 21 years in Local Government, this is my 35th Local Government Conference and if nothing more I think I have probably earned the right to be able to make some assessment of Local Government in Queensland during that period and probably where we are right at this time. But I have to say that given the Governor’s opening address this morning and sadly and probably disgustingly for me, not one of her Excellencies Ministers were present to hear that address. To hear the wisdom, the comment and the assessments that she has made of Local Government and its people as she has travelled throughout Queensland, certainly is in stark contrast to that, that’s made by the Queensland Government in relation to what is occurring in Queensland.

The Governor has been in that position for some months and the Queensland State Government, the Bligh and Beattie Government have been there for ten or twelve years. I would really hope that you take the time to hear some of the comments that the Governor presented this morning. The Presidents’
address along with that of the Governors’ is certainly worthy of comprehension by the Ministers and the Queensland Government, so they do understand the very real issues that are there.

There is a question coming, but I need to set the scene and I am sorry to have to do this, and it is not about a debate. I think as a result of some of the comments that I am making here today, I am fearful that there will be some financial disadvantage applied to my Council by your Government and the bureaucrats. That is a sad indictment Minister, but I would like to think that the opportunities that could be taken privately behind the scenes, the way in which we have tried to work with Government, have to now rise to a public field as we have here today, to hope that we can address some of those very real issues.

But my question to you Minister is that as a former councillor of some substance and understanding and comprehension of the issues, and you and I have known each other quite some years. I have got to say, is there some convincing argument or comment that you can put forward right now, to all those gathered who have some issues with regard to where the Government is at this time, in relation to their attitude to Government and maybe to deliver on that mantra of amalgamation where we talked about building stronger communities? Thank you.

**Answer:** We all of us I would have thought in this room and in Councils pre-amalgamation, in fact for many years have talked about the independence of Local Government in Queensland. The Local Government Reform Program has been all about sustainability, and with sustainability you get a stronger Local Government sector that can be more independent. It is hard for you therefore to come to the point, all be it precipitated by the financial crisis, where it is not simply a matter of getting your money by waiting for a subsidy round and putting out your hand. That you are going to have to stand more on your own two feet financially, consider a wider range of funding sources than in times past, may well not be happy news for you.

But I don’t see that it is so dreadful, in that I have absolutely no doubt along with all of the reports that I have seen from QTC, of your ability to survive and become stronger and more sustainable. It is not nice therefore to be in the position of the Local Government Minister without a kind of large nest to offer you that has been offered in times past. I have no doubt at all about your ability to become stronger and better and more independent Local Governments as the years go on.
Address “Long Term Community Plans”

Mayor Philippa Barriball JP
Thames-Coromandel District Council, New Zealand

Good afternoon. Thank you for letting me come, and thank you for the introduction. It is a real pleasure to be here all the way from New Zealand. I am calling myself the New Zealand Economic Stimulus Package. I have been here for about a week and I am single handedly improving the economy of the Gold Coast. It has been great! Between me and my eight year old daughter, we have done you guys a great service, so I hope you really appreciate that.

Of course I was here last year and had the great pleasure of spending some time with Greg, so I thank you Greg for inviting me back and allowing me back after last year. The relationship between New Zealand and Australia is quite close, despite sharing those sheep jokes and of course that rugby rivalry. We do share that common set of values and a shared sense of nationhood.

Both these countries of course have a really strong sense of history in maintaining a lot of cultural rituals, developed over both of our very young countries growth. When I was coming through customs I was very interested to see those little cards you have to fill in. It asks if you have a criminal conviction and I hadn’t realised it was still an entry requirement for Australia. I had to wake you up didn’t I? I know you have had a great lunch, it is two o’clock, it is the grave yard shift and you are thinking do I have to sit through half an hour of this.

Anyway, on those shared set of values I am here to share with you a New Zealand experience about engaging a community and long term planning. Now for the purposes of this presentation I have actually used two examples of the strategies we have used in our council at Thames-Coromandel. One of them is what we call our LTCCP, the Long Term Community Council Plan. One was for the ten year span of the LTCCP and the other one was for something we call Blueprint. Blueprint is our fifty year strategy. That is what I will be talking about.

First of all I want to introduce you to my community. I wasn’t allowed to use actual photos because you might get sued, so I have taken some random ones off the internet to depict who we have got living in our community. We, Thames-Coromandel are pretty unique to New Zealand; we stand out a lot from the rest of our country for a lot of reasons. The first one is that we service about twenty six thousand rateable properties, spread around a land mass of two hundred and fifty thousand hectares, through about fifty two separate communities.

Our district spans from a mountainous ridge down through the centre to about five hundred kilometers of coast line. It is home to about twenty six thousand residents. If you are smart enough to figure out there is something wrong with those numbers then you are not asleep, which is great. You have just identified our biggest challenge. Well over half of our property owners live outside the district. As you have picked up from our picture there, we have a much greater than average of elderly people. That is reflective of the kind of enjoyable retirement life style that they can come and enjoy. Now we have a lower than average youth population as well. Of course our economy is entirely reliant on that summer time population. We have very little industry and of course those are largely empty holiday homes fill up with dozens of extended family and friends. That is something else Australians share with New Zealanders, you have a trillion cousins. Our population swells to one hundred and fifty thousand people.
For that reason we have got development as a constant challenge and challenges to our building and planning rules are really common. The resulting properties are extremely high value, very well sought after and therefore we attract a lot of professionals from all sectors. We have a particular dominance of retired judges and senior barristers all of whom join rate power associations and give me a hard time. Sounds like you have the same.

We have got some great surf and water sports and that is a big part of the peninsula as well. But, then we have got a very solid core of what I call greenies. These people marched on my council chambers a little while ago with a real focus on anti-mining. They don’t particularly like me much. We don’t have any mining on the peninsula but they are just making sure none ever comes. You can imagine that engaging and connecting with these people to do a long term community plan is really hard.

We need a lot of innovative tools and we need to use a lot of communication techniques and language. Of course the other thing that comes out of these little sectors is a number of emerging societies. You know, where everybody gets together and forms an incorporated society and they are going to do something fantastic. It might be an information centre, it might be the surf life saving club, and it might be a heritage society/museum club, art, painting or anything like that. Those groups actually come along and target council for funding.

We don’t have anything like that, there is no central or regional government funding for these organisations. These groups are one of the bigger challenges for our community, because you start out asking for a little hand out. They just want a little bit of money because ‘we are going to improve the district in amazing ways, it is absolutely vital’. Then they need a staff person, they need to have a paid employee part time. The person comes in and for some reason they then have to pass a trade qualification. The problem with that is that they then become over qualified and they can’t do the job they started out doing, so they have to employ someone else. Then you have two, and then you start getting a small empire. As more and more people are required to do this wonderful thing, the council will sometimes try to say no to them. They will then organise a march or a petition and frighten the councillors into submission.

Be warned, because a big part of the reason for this growth and perhaps outside traditional core business was the change in legislation we had in 2002. Core business was no longer articulated as roads, rates, rubbish and whatever else. But all of a sudden we had the social, cultural, environmental and economic well being of the community. They have actually got a legislative mandate to hang their requests on. They can come along and say, ‘but council you have to look after the social well being of our community, and we need the knitting club’. Very tough!

I am going to move on to some other slides now, so for any of you that find legislation a useful remedy for sleeplessness, please keep the presentation for future use. For those CEO’s in the audience I am sure your elected members will say, take notes while you have a nod off. We are going to blast through these quickly as we haven’t got a lot of time.

First of all we have got the Local Government Act 2002. Basically it is to provide democratic and effective local government that recognises the diversity of New Zealand communities and that to end it basically states that the purpose of local government is a frame work promoting accountability etc. What this said is that we are moving away from representative democracy, (we elect you and we will see you in three years time) to participatory democracy. It is about the community having a say every step of the way.

Old boys don’t do deals in the back room with their brandy and cigars. That is over, it is history. You don’t make decisions in an instant anymore. Everything must be consulted on. We have some planning,
decision making and accountability requirements here, which actually are very descriptive in the way you have to go through every decision or plan that you make. Particularly I think the big thing to point out is that when you have to make sure every decision and that doesn’t matter if it is a decision to buy blue pens, or a decision to buy red pens, or a decision to buy a waste water plant. Every decision must be in accordance with the provisions of this Act. What that means is it is complicated and expensive.

Why costly? Because it is about consultation, then more consultation. Not just with anybody and everybody, you have to make sure you are specifically targeting those people who are affected. Identifying who is affected can be a challenge because whether it is giving something, or taking something away, or changing a level of service, there will be a part of your community that will be affected.

If you refer to the earlier slides you will see the diversity in the community. What affects one may affect another in a very different way. Once you have actually identified who you need to communicate with, you need to allow them to have an opportunity to have their say. That act itself doesn’t say that consultation is about negotiation or about compromise or anything like that. The rate payer, doesn’t actually don’t see it this way and there will always be people who will have a go at you because, they have made their submission. They told you to paint it blue and you went out and painted it pink and therefore you didn’t listen to them.

At the heart of it all we have a special consultative procedure. We love these big words and I will talk a bit about that later. We have to basically go out with a statement of proposal. We then have to say, this is the thing we want to do and this is all the information around it. You have also got to give them some options as well. These are the options we looked at, so you have got a whole range of things. Any change in direction from the council, new activity, or exiting something you are doing, you have to go through this special procedure. Again it is a very costly exercise. We are going to talk about LTCCP shortly. But, once you have got that, if you want to change it you must do one of these procedures.

Because of the expense, in New Zealand what we try to do is (annual plan, budget review), anything we are going to change in our LTCCP we will run concurrently with another review simply because of the cost. With a Notice of Proposal you have got to make sure everybody knows about it. Put letters in the paper, put signs up on the wall, send people letters etc. Of course the Act is a minimum standard and the council might actually choose to go beyond that.

Section 93. This is the provision relating to the infamous long term council community plan or LTCCP as it is more commonly known. Because as you will notice even I struggle with LTCCP and what it means, rate payers have that same problem. So we actually branded ours as a ten year plan because it is simple, it’s easy and most people can understand and engage with that.

This is a pretty lengthy and resource intensive process, but over time it will actually deliver real results and make sure mistakes of our past won’t be repeated. Specifically for New Zealand, it was the lack of planning for infrastructure. New Zealand did that really badly. We went through a phase of, zero rate increase through the seventies and the eighties. Then through the nineties we couldn’t understand why we had raw sewerage floating out in the harbours and why people were getting sick. Water was unpotable; storm water was uncontrolled etc, because nobody had actually kept up with the program of maintenance.

That is only a tiny part of our Local Government Act and I guess it is a bit of a waste of a forest. Basically what it means to you people that are not so interested in legislation, it has basically moved Local Government into a new paradigm and it through up a really significant challenge for a lot of the New Zealand members who have been in the Local Government game for a number of years. For the
first time ever they actually had to talk to the community, not just their mates, they had to talk to the community. They had to have a conversation, it wasn’t one way, it is about going both ways.

Because the Local Government is about long term planning and it is about sustainability, at the very core we’re starting with community outcomes. Community outcomes will be the airy fairy stuff of pavlova paradise, sunshine and roses, but what they do articulate is your community priorities. Achieving those outcomes or priorities is not something that can often be achieved over night. Underpinning that is a strategic program that will need to be developed to get your course or your pathway to get to those outcomes. So for TCDC we have our blueprint project which is kind of about delivering on our outcomes. Not just now, but into the future. The next step of course is identifying what activities are required to get you that outcome.

I guess an example would be, if your outcome is a clean harbour, then your strategic outcome program will include things like - managing your storm water, perhaps doing some storm water infrastructure upgrades, improvements to your wastewater plant discharge etcetera. Following on from that, wastewater will be one of your activities and that is going to require an increasingly higher level of service as you need to improve your discharge and I guess that equates to your program of projects. What does that mean to the ratepayer? Money! To give you an idea of what is going on, you will see form this picture, why it is so resource intensive. It takes a lot of work happening concurrently across an organisation. Your consultation with the community starts at the top end and actually goes through a whole filter process. You start with the whole of community. You want the whole community engaged in the outcome process. Then you will move through some more targeted engagement throughout those activity plan stages, where if you are involved in heritage you can specifically target groups that are involved with that or with economic development, you are likely to target your business community.

Once you have gone through those activity plan stages you will actually go through this whole of community consultation again through that special consultative procedure to finalise your ten year plan. What I am going to do now is cover some of the range of techniques that we use to engage those diverse sectors of our community and how that culminated in a final version of our ten year plan.

We have got to do a few things here. We want to add value, develop an engagement strategy, and basically we need some engagement tools. As you saw from the pictures earlier, for our community the diversity in Thames-Coromandel is not just geographic, it is not just about people living on the west coast or the east coast. It is about different sectors of the community, it could be age, it could be culture, it could be anything.

Of course there is always going to be a vocal minority and I am sure there is not a single person in this room that doesn’t know about a vocal minority. They don’t often represent the wider community and you need to think really hard about what tools you are going to use to ensure you are getting to as wide a cross section of the community as possible.

If you are an elected member, you should know who your community is, because they actually voted you in. You will know their personalities; you will know who are those big apathetic silent majorities, who generally don’t care about anything unless something goes wrong for them personally. May be their tap stops working, or their rate bill jumped up really high. To engage those people you have to make it really easy for them. That means you can’t expect them to come into a meeting and council chambers on a work day and not everybody wants to give up a precious weekend. Of course the elderly, for me or TCDC, don’t want to come out at night, especially in winter! So, you also need to look at what level of detail you put into each document. You will find if you have an audit process, that auditors need the fine print and truck loads of it. The more you can give them of the dots and T crossing the more they love it. What your community need is simple clear language that they can understand.
We have some tools, we have a lot of tools really, a really big range. First of all - Branding! We just did this blue print project and when my staff came to me they came with a document that basically said, developing an integrated land and coastal plan for the Coromandel Peninsula in 2050. Who was ever going to read that, no real people, it is just not going to work? Of course the problem here is with all due respect, councils are really good at putting out bureaucratic clap trap, so finding something novel can be a real challenge. It is absolutely worth being creative with this. The result for us was a massive increase in our response rate. We got over three thousand responses to our blue print project. Twenty six thousand residents, three thousand responses, that's a pretty good hit rate.

We came up with a really strong brand; it was about design, language, behaviour, the representation. We had to make sure that whoever was making the decisions had a real cross section of the community. Something with style, messages that made people think, I really want to be part of that. Use the right language, use the right tools. This is what we came up with. It was about, image, it engaged people. It is our peninsula, toddlers are growing up, and it actually engaged people. Yes, it cost money, but it will work for you. Don't let the dollar cost put you off. The buy in will absolutely be worth it. Of course I think one of the really key parts of this is, it is not about promoting you or the council, it is actually about promoting the community to get the buy in. It works for the LTCCP! It enabled us to create documents that stepped away from that bureaucratic stuff and get people really engaged. It is really important when you are creating that document, that it spells out how much will be on those rate bills. I can’t emphasise that enough. We got some great feed back. We had rate payers saying it was great; we had the utilities company saying it was great the media came in and said, “heyy this is really wonderful”.

BEBO, have you all heard of BEBO, do you all use BEBO? One that is terrific. Go and look at BEBO, because if you haven’t used it then I am sure your children or grandchildren do use it. It was an absolute first for TCDC and it was absolutely essential to get youth participation in a media they were comfortable with. Before my arrival funnily enough youth participation in Thames-Coromandel was zero. Using something like this was really exciting. So, what is it? It is basically a social networking site, kids love to use or your people love to use. It is free and they can come in and do what they like. A great way of communicating! A small number of hits, the first time we did it and we ran it for a program. While it was low in numbers the quality of the feedback was actually outstanding. Really amazing! If you want to use it, it is absolutely free, it will engage young people and it is something that is cost effective. Experience with BEBO is absolutely fantastic and it is certainly one that we are really committed too.

When you are doing LTCCP or long term planning, budgets etc, kids have a lot of value they can add, so it is quite important to get them involved as well. Our biggest successes were workshops or consultation, open days, we had coffee mornings, ‘Coffee with the Mayor’, and using this suite of open informal days was really great. We initially tried a number of public meetings, the traditional ones where you guys all come and sit down like this and I stand up here and do a power point and people ask a few question. People just go home and send you submissions. It wasn’t actually engaging really well so we thought, lets create an opportunity for people to get face to face. Sit down face to face and actually have a go at this. We actually ran ‘Coffee with the Mayor’ right around the district, we had staff and elected members there, it was really informal and we did get some community members who came in and said we want the big audience. We want to sit down in the big audience because I need to stand up and say something to you. I need my big audience to do that. In every instance where people came in and complained about that, it was about them not having the opportunity to grandstand. It was about some people wanting to just yell abuse at you in front of a crowd. You still have to be able to run those forums to enable those people to have what makes them feel really good.
The interesting thing is when you actually make them sit down and engage face to face, one on one; you will basically get one of two outcomes. Either they will realise what the big picture is and understand why something is there, or you’ll discover they have actually got no clue what so ever and when they realise through the course of the conversation, they will just storm out anyway. Really you have lost nothing because they were never going to vote for you anyway.

I think one of the most important parts of this day is asking people how they would do something. If they say ‘I don’t like that’, then you say, well how would you do that? What would you come up with? If you present the challenges that you have gone through, present the process that you have gone through, present the options you have discarded and the reasons why, most people will come to accept where you got to with it and sometimes they might come up with a really brilliant idea that you hadn’t thought of.

The most important parts of these types of days are to use staff who communicates well with the public. You need elected members there because they are the ones who make the decisions. Staff shouldn’t have to defend your decisions, they are only the messenger. Decision makers should be face to face with the community. If there is going to be a punch up they should be in the front row.

This is another really cool tool. ‘Step Back in Time’. We found when we said to people, can you plan fifty years ahead? People really struggled, so we decided to take them backwards. We had an awesome amount of fun and the public really engaged with us. We had this classic old caravan, lots of old photos and film archive running through on a DVD. We had this thing called Beach Hop, I think you might have something called Winter Sun or some sort of festival here. Beach Hop is a celebration of the fifties and sixties. It is an American classic car parade, rock and roll dancing competition, and pretty much everything about America and the Happy Days era right down to the hotdogs. We dressed up in retro gear, we had heaps of retro stuff happening. It was great especially for the older people we find who generally in our district struggle to see fifty years ahead. They struggle to understand things like BEBO, texting and the use of the internet these days. It is really hard for them to grasp what kind of tools and technology are available. But, when you actually take them back fifty years, they say “I remember when it was like that, I remember that tree until the council cut it down”. It is an absolutely fantastic tool and if you have got a limited budget, but you have got heaps of historic resources and you will have historic resources it is great. It is also great if you have got access to passers by, any kind of festival and you have got to make if funky, you have got to make it fun, there has got to be a reason why people come in.

I think the other important thing is that you really want to get people interested in what you are doing. It doesn’t matter if they are living in your area, or if they are visiting because generally if they are a visitor they are making a contribution to your economy. It is really important to know why they come, why they come and spend time and visit with you. Why they want to spend their money in your shops, so it is important to engage them as well. If they can’t think ahead very well, take them back and get them to think – Gee would you ever have thought that the community would look like this today. If that is what has happened over the last fifty years, where are we going in the next fifty years?

Of course we have the traditional boring stuff like pamphlets and feedback forms. But, we took it a step further and gave it a bit of a modern twist. We did things like competition incentives. We also made sure we got a lot of online stuff happening as well. We made the forms look a little bit different from the boring things you generally send out and absolutely no Bureau Speak, none, zero, don’t put bureau speak in it.

This is why it will work for you:
- If you need specific answers to specific questions
• If you want to present a range of issues
• If you don’t have a large budget, it can be quite a useful tool

I guess just a warning, with lessons for a long term Council Community Plan, don’t ask endless lists of questions, unless you want to spend weeks and weeks of your life sifting through every single one of the responses and actually cataloguing them all, then sending the responses to them all! Your forms don’t need to be open ended, but they certainly should be encouraging people to think about the big stuff.

Youth competitions, again, probably something you have all seen before. Make sure you get to young people. They have lots of bright ideas, lots of opportunities. We have a program called Enviro School, which is a program that we run where we get kids engaged in Council type stuff. Of course it is really important to translate the feedback. You will find like we did, when we presented the feedback some of my councillors didn’t get it. So, make sure you have got someone there that can interpret for you. Give kids credit they can grasp the issues an awful lot better than you actually give them credit for. Again it is really important to make sure community leaders are out there marketing it.

Successful engagement, what does it look like? I guess in my mind these are your success measures: for us having youth participation and having rate payers that have never before been involved in the past - come in an engage and actually discuss. That was reward enough, because we actually achieved our mission of getting beyond the vocal minority and discovered a whole new view within our community. We actually found people that liked the district and thought council was doing a good job. They are actually out there - it is amazing, who would have thought, because you never hear from them.

You also would have noticed, some of the way through this presentation if you have been reading really fast, I was talking about this right to debate. Now, I use this phrase a lot and there is a really good reason for it. This came out of the office of the Auditor General Report that had done the review of the 2006 LTCCP’s throughout New Zealand. Too many of those LTCCP’s in the first round were actually too much about ticking the boxes. ‘Did we meet that’; ‘did we meet that’. Not enough of them got the community to think about more than the bottom line on their rate account. You have to prioritise and the community has to have their say on what those priorities are.

They also need to realise that everything they want actually has a cost. There might be a lot of things that they don’t really want, but they are compulsory for the Council. For us, we have dog licensing, building license and building consents, planning control etc. Central Government puts those onto Local Government to do, so we don’t have a choice. It is really important they actually understand that. From that, we gathered all that community engagement and then the council had to decide.

It started off with the outcomes we had gone through the public had put in, the vision, the requirements, other contacts, the workshops and basically it all flows in and it runs through as I showed you earlier through the strategic program to the activities. We then worked out which activities we were going to do. The interesting thing about this is we have what we call Community Boards. I am not sure if you have them here Greg? No you don’t, you are so lucky. Well these Community Boards are delightful people that live in the community. They get elected and usually not enough people stand for the elections, so there is no election. We have to engage them and often a lot of those people really struggle. So, we made it really simple. It is just like shopping at the supermarket.

When we did our budgets just providing the basics like water, waste water, storm water, rubbish collection and doing our roads was going to cost eighty five cents out of every dollar we collected. When you have only got fifteen cents to spend it is a pretty tough prioritisation process to work out where you are going to spend those fifteen cents. Nothing will focus people quicker than giving them
the old monopoly money and saying here is your money. That is the money you have to spend on all of the really important stuff, to make sure that sewerage gets flushed away and the rest of it.

We started with Community Boards and then we went out and engaged the community as well and actually got the community to understand that if they wanted those extra luxury items, it actually equated to their rates bill going up. They were quite smart, they come out and said ‘you know what, picking up our rubbish is quite important, so even though we want the sports stadium, we would rather you picked up our rubbish first’. ‘It is rather quite important that our toilet flushes as well’. Food safety, I was actually quite surprised about that one, it just never occurred to me that people think that is an important thing for the council to do. Mostly we only get people complaining about how much we charge for it, so that was a bit of a revelation.

I think when you go through this process yourselves you might be really surprised about what they actually come up with. I particularly liked that they put libraries really low on the list. Of course I showed you about those little community groups in the beginning, how they start from the big guy and they end up like Java. That is our libraries. They are this huge empire that is costing us $2 million dollars per annum. Like I said, 26,000 rateable properties in your budget of $50 million, $2 million dollars on a library seems a little excessive to me, especially when normal people don’t actually rate them that highly.

What does it all mean? A ten year plan passes the very high audit hurdle. It must get council sign off – obviously you need a majority to pass it. In my experience I prefer to have all my councillors on board, I didn’t this year. I had one that didn’t support for genuine reasons. You have got to have public acceptance, it is important because if they legally challenge you it is going to cost everybody a lot of money. Staff will know exactly what they are doing, they actually know what they are doing and you haven’t got these adhoc decisions coming through about paint it black, paint it white, paint it blue, half and half. More than that, the public knows exactly what they are going to get. In my community the public came forward and said we want a sports stadium, they are not getting a sports stadium. Because they said we want a sports stadium that is going to cost twenty million but don’t put our rates up, not going to work and ultimately it is your district that will win.

Thank you very much.
Address “Launch: Rejuvenated LG Online”
New world, New technologies, New ways - a New LG Online

Jock O’Keefe
Director, Optimacy Pty Ltd

Glen Beckett
LGAQ Manager Business Information

I am Jock O’Keefe, I am the good looking one and that is Glenn Beckett. Thank you to the voice in the air that introduced us. LG Online is a part of many lives out here and I have the privilege of being able to introduce the next phase of LG Online. It has been the subject of a very significant revamp and major investment program over the last eighteen months or so. The results of that investment program have born their fruit and the new LG Online is there for you.

It is a significant thing for Local Government in Queensland. It is a quite unique tool it varies from what is available to your colleagues in other states and in many other countries. It is a very specific Local Government highly directed highly specific tool, where as most other people are forced to rely on very general tools. You have heard from Paul Bell this morning and from other people today saying that Local Government has got many challenges ahead of it. To meet those challenges you are going to need better information tools and you are going to need better tools to support the new environment. You are going to need help in attacking costs and you are also going to need better tools with which to engage your communities both formally and informally. We do have some good news on that front.

Let me just begin with the first line where what we are talking about is something which is much easier to use. It has a bright and clean new look and feel so that it is easier for people to intuitively work their way around. One of the issues that LG Online has had is that because it is so rich and has so many things to do, it has been a bit hard to find your way around.

The most important changes are that the tool now becomes able to be personalised to your needs. You can have your own version of LG Online. The personalization, the ability to change the focus of what you receive in terms of emails and SMS’s, the way that you can bookmark the system so that you can go to exactly the same place when you log on or need to are very significant points.

We are talking about two separate things today - Two very positive growth and investment areas with LG Online. One has been what I am focusing on today which is the information portal. The second is what was collectively known as the council websites. That is the subject of another presentation of Tony Faure tomorrow morning. Council Business online is something again which meets the objectives of being able to help Local Governments do their business better.

To recap who we are: Glen is the face of IT for LGAQ and he is the executive within LGAQ that is overseeing the development. What Glen is going to do for all of you in the next couple of days is tell you what you need to know about LG Online. We are not going to run some big demo this afternoon because that would be a bit of a waste of time. If you go and see Glen you will be able to see exactly how LG Online can be shaped to meet your particular need.

I am a technology and business consultant. The LGAQ drafted me to help with this process. I am delighted to do this and to let you know you have got the first look at the new LG Online. This is a pre announcement. The rest of the LG Online community doesn’t get to see this until next week.
In terms of the real value we believe LG Online is for you now, it becomes your trusted source. It is your trusted source of the information you need to be able to do your day to day business in Local Government. The really big differences are the information now comes to you the way you want it and when you want it. You are not subject to a time cycle.

The other point I was making before is that LG Online is extremely particular to your requirements. It is not like Google. Google is the most wonderful tool. The problem with Google is it finds too many things. You don’t have to trawl through thousands, hundreds of thousands, or even millions of results in order to get what you want.

We just did a quick search on one single term and this is one of many. We did a search on enterprise bargaining and we got almost 1.4 million responses from Google. By the time you get to page six or page seven you actually get one entry that is applicable to Queensland. Whereas with the new LG Online, we got 122 responses, but you can see down the left hand side we got results which are precisely, directly, related to enterprise bargaining in Local Government in Queensland. That is the promise of the new LG Online.

I will just quickly go through some of the range and the scope of what LG Online is for you.

- Media monitoring: Every day there is all the clips from yesterday from every media outlet in Queensland, every local authority
- Legislation: There is the ability to get to and access all of the current legislation as the new act makes its way onto the scene, the best place to see that act will be via LG Online
- Legal Opinions: The ability for the Local Government community to reduce its cost by using the LG Online service to get a single legal opinion that is multi-use and able to be used by all of you.
- Statistics: Even more applicable with the much greater community involvement models that we will be working with as part of the new act. Your ability to research information and do the benchmark of your numbers. I thought one of the really potent aspects of Philippa’s presentation to us was her ability to use the stats to put things into context. LG Online gives you easy access to all the stats you need and all the other items you can trust LG Online to deliver to you.

I suggest now that you head out on to the booth and talk to Glen and the team. You are going to have to re-register to join the new LG Online community. Glen and his team will do that for you in less than a minute.

I will just finish up before Glen gets to show you a couple of the screens up there and talk about what happens in other industries. If you are in the IT Industry and you want up to date information you subscribe to an information service. The most popular one in IT is an American company called Gartner. If you are in the Biotech industry you subscribe to BioLife and in manufacturing it is Forrester etc. Every industry typically has a trusted source where if I tell Glen that something was on Gartner then he is going to give that great credibility.

What you guys have with LG Online is that trusted source - If you can find it on LG Online, you can use that and quote with credibility to your colleagues and to your constituents.

Thank you. Glen would like to show people what we are going to look at.
Glen Beckett, Manager, Business Information LGAQ

Thanks Jock. Firstly on behalf of the LGAQ I would like to pass on our thanks to Jock himself for providing us with some very important mentoring and advice as we went through the LG Online process.

Up on the screen is our new LG Online and you as delegates of the conference are the very first people in Queensland able to see what the new LG Online is going to look like. Much cleaner, much simpler, much easier to use, much simpler to navigate and much more personal to your own individual information needs, wants and wishes.

There are only three very simple messages I would like to give to delegates today about the new LG Online and that is what its tag line is.

LG Online is about advice, LG Online is about updates and LG Online is about access. In terms of advice it is a trusted authoritative and timely source of information. There are over thirty thousand individual web pages of content built over the last decade by umpteen LGAQ staff and people from Local Government. LG Online is the first place to go to know things and the first place to go for help. All that is available to you with one click of the button.

To give you an idea, circulars are obviously a big part of the LGAQ. The new circulars look much cleaner, much simpler and lower and behold we have humanised them as well. If you need extra advice, you need extra assistance or you are looking for information there is a phone number, a fax number, an email address and a photo of the person who created that piece of content. Making sure that you in Local Government have the information you need to make the decisions for your community.

In terms of updates, the famous things about LG Online remain. It still provides email updates and we have made them much simpler, easier and much more targeted to your individual information needs. We are also extending the SMS service to all Councillors and interested staff in Queensland. If you want breaking news, breaking advice about those things that are of a major nature affecting Local Government, you can rest assured that the LGAQ will keep you informed.

Finally access! Access exists at a couple of different levels. Firstly we have made it even simpler to get online. To access LG Online from Monday, all you will need is your email address and a password that you yourself set. It can’t get any easier than that. Everything you also want is on your homepage. We have made everything just one click away. Apart from the nice big flashy ads at the top, there is whole range of services that you can access. Things like the legislation services are only a click away. The new legislation services have had a major makeover, now you can actually see the legislation itself as it appears within the State Government document. It is providing advice and commentary to help you better understand the intent of the legislation.

Also from LG Online, right in the very heart of the page is a search function that allows you to get right to what you want. We also have a bookmarking feature over on the right hand side. This means that if there are pages that you visit on a regular basis, may be it is a favourite piece of legislation, maybe it is a legal opinion you like to refer to on a regular basis, and you can make that a favourite, make it a bookmark on the page and jump straight through to it.

Access also in terms of the other major services is there. We have talked about legislation, we have talked about legal opinions, media monitors, Jock mentioned before. LG Online is really your gateway to everything you need to know about Local Government in Queensland and I commend the service to you. LG Online, its about advice, it’s about updates, it’s about access, it’s available Monday to you,
your colleagues back at council, your council staff. To find out more please come to see my team and myself at the LGAQ booth.

Thank you.

Address “Winning Against the Odds”

Ms Tracey Bartram
Courtesy of Saxtons Speakers Bureau

Due to copyright laws this speech was unable to be published.

Address “ALGA Update”

Cr Geoff Lake
President ALGA

Thank you everybody and good morning. I know that you have had amalgamations recently in Queensland, but I didn’t realize you amalgamated down to this few councillors. They say that the only thing worst than speaking at the last session of a conference is speaking at the first session after the big main dinner, that is my task this morning.

Can I begin by acknowledging Cr Paul Bell, also Greg Hallam and I am not sure if Bob Abbot is here, I did see Margaret de Wit and Greg Bell. Those four people I mentioned other than Greg Hallam are your two Board members and your two alternate Board members on our Board at ALGA and they do a very good job in representing your interests around our table.

It is also appropriate for me to say at this opportunity, I have said it before at our National Conferences at ALGA, here in Queensland it is worth me recognising the contribution that Paul Bell has made to our organisation at the national level over the four years up until November of last year that he was our President. It think it is fair to say Paul that you left the organisation in much better shape than you found it. Those of you who have paid any attention to Local Government over that last four or five years, I am sure would have appreciated the far sharper and more focused approach that Local Government now takes on national issues. This is a real credit to Paul’s leadership and the way that he took what was a fairly scatter gun approach in terms of Local Government lobbying and focus at the national level and really chiseled it down to four main strategic priorities.

Those four main strategic priorities that Paul put in place about two years ago continue to be our main priorities. They continue to evolve a bit of course as times move on. Those four key directions which I will touch on shortly continue to be the thrust of what we do.

I am reminded when we think about Local Government, that we are often in a precarious position as far as how we are viewed by our colleagues at a State or Federal level. Of course you have seen it most recently here in Queensland with the issues around amalgamation. We often hear our state politicians reflect on Local Government as needing more regulation, needing more control, and more State legislation to define and regulate what we do. I think sometimes for those of us in Local Government it is easy to feel a little bit under challenged and undervalued by other levels of Government.

I came across a quote just recently which I think is one of the more eloquent defenses of Local Government that I have seen recently. This is the quote “Sure there are dishonest men in Local...
Government, but there are dishonest men in National Government too”. That is worth reminding our colleagues at State and Federal level when they point to what they see are the problems with Local Government. Just out of interest does anyone have any idea or can guess who actually said this? It was none other than Richard Nixon. Take heart from the wisdom of Richard Nixon the next time you feel unfairly under challenged by those who occupy the other two levels of Government.

Today in the next ten minutes or so what I am going to do is talk to you about ALGA, the Australian Local Government Association. Hopefully for many of you, you already know quite a bit about ALGA, given the relationship between Queensland and ALGA over the last four years with Paul’s position. I am going to touch on a few of our recent successes over that last twelve months or so at the National level. I am going to also talk about some of the future challenges that we face in working towards increasing the role and the influence of Local Government at the National level. I am going to give you an update on constitutional reform or some people know it as constitutional recognition, pursuing a place for Local Government in the Australian Constitution. And I am going to touch on what I see as some of the future opportunities for Local Government nationally.

Just in touching on, by way of a broad overview, what exactly ALGA is, as I often travel around and speak to people within their council rather than at a State Local Government Association level. There is often not much of an understanding about what ALGA is. That I think is not surprising, given that ALGA doesn’t have a direct link with you as a council, but rather our link is with your State Association, with LGAQ and with the other State and Territory Associations around the country, they are our members and I guess indirectly we then have a relationship with all of you in your capacities as councillors and in your respective councils.

We are governed by a Board made up of sixteen people, which are two people from each State or Territory. Local Government exists in every State and Territory in Australia except the ACT. We are pleased that in the ACT, despite no existing Local Government, we still have the ACT Government as part of our Board by virtue of the municipal functions that they deliver within their State or Territory Government. It is good for us as a sector I think, that sitting on our Board representing the ACT Government is John Stanhope, their Chief Minister. I think it is a real feather in the cap of Local Government, that essentially a State Premier, or in his case a Territory Chief Minister sees value in being part of Local Governments national efforts as far as advancing his Territory interests and the municipal function that they provide. Essentially what we are is exactly what LGAQ is to all of you in your councils. We are that same kind of collaboration at the National level to try to provide a coordinated voice on behalf of Local Government.

It is worth remembering that Local Government is very diverse across Australia and that makes our job a real challenge at ALGA. We have councils of course like Brisbane, the one that we are meeting in at the moment, with more than a million people and a budget bigger than the Tasmanian Government. We also have some councils in WA that have less than two hundred people and budgets that probably more approximate a large household budget than the large budgets that many of us are ministering in our position as councillors.

Up on the screen is a map of Australia showing Council boundaries that all of you will probably recognise are a little bit out of date now. Perhaps it doesn’t reflect the new amalgamated boundaries of some Queensland Councils and the Northern Territory. That is up there just to impress upon you that there are five hundred and sixty five councils across the country operating between different State and Territory jurisdictions. Different functions, different responsibilities. So, it is difficult when we try to distill from that a National perspective and a National position for Local Government across what ever issue it might be. We can’t always do it, but where we can do it I think we are becoming increasingly more effective on how we present that message at a National level.
One of the best things Local Government has going for it, and certainly the difference between ALGA and any other peak body that operates out of Canberra, whether it is the Business Chamber of Commerce or the National Automobile Association or whatever it might be, is that we sit at the nations most important intergovernmental table, the Council of Australian Governments. I sit there as a President and before me it was Paul sitting there representing Local Government and we sit beside the Prime Minister, the State Premiers and the Territory Chief Ministers. That is an ideal opportunity for Local Government to be plugged right into the National collaboration across Governments and working on issues where there is a dimension at all three levels of Government.

You don’t always see our contribution being made at COAG in what you see in the media when they report on COAG meetings. This photo is probably fairly emblematic of that. If you look really closely at the right hand side of the photo, you can just make out the tip of my nose. This is sort of typical of the way the media will report on COAG. They will choose the shots that show the recognisable people. The Prime Minister, the Premiers that people recognise. They try to get that funny obscure person representing Local Government at the end of the table, whether it was Paul or it is now me, they try to get us out of shot. That might be the media perception of us, but I can tell you the perception of the other leaders at COAG is very different. We have the same right of contribution. We have the same time to be able to make contributions on issues that are debated around that table as what the Prime Minister does or any of the Premiers. That is a real opportunity for Local Government to be a really effective player at that National level.

You probably will have picked up that, in the last couple of years or so, since the election of the Rudd Government and building on what was a good partnership with the previous Government, in Local Government there has been a real consolidation of the relationship and the ties that exist between us in our councils and with the National Government.

I have listed a number of issues that at the moment are priorities for the Australian Government and which have a really significant component for us at the local level. Whether it is things like the National Broadband Network, community infrastructure, climate change, CPRS or the various other things, these are all things the Australian Government knows that they need a strong relationship with Local Government on the ground, in order to deliver the sorts of things that they are wanting to achieve, through the policy programs they are pursuing in those areas. That is a great opportunity for us. There is the recently established Australian Council of Local Government and on the screen is a picture from the most recent meeting a couple of months ago, of the Prime Minister and a couple of Mayors from Victoria over dinner at that meeting.

I am just going to touch on, as I said, a few of the recent successes for Local Government. Almost unprecedented has been the injection of funds from the Federal level over the last nine months into our sector. It has obviously been as a result of the financial climate and as a way of stimulating the economy. More than one billion dollars has been provided, or soon will be provided, (as it has been announced) for Local Government to spend at the community level on building infrastructure, whether it be recreational things such as sporting fields, community halls, roads or whatever. That is a billion dollars that we weren’t expecting, and has been announced and we are now in our respective councils, beginning to roll out and to build.

We have been successful in extending ‘Roads to Recovery’, through to 2014. That was achieved just prior to Paul handing over the Presidents’ position to me. That is, as I am sure everyone in this room appreciates such a critical program for Local Government. Of course there is no guarantee that program will be here forever. But, we have been very pleased with the win to be able to extend that through to 2014.
At the recent meeting of the Australian Council of Local Government, the Prime Minister announced $25 million for Local Government to pursue reform and to improve the way we manage our assets. We see that as another important contribution form the Federal Government. Helping Local Government to more effectively structure our affairs in a more consistent way, will enable us to put a better case to the Federal Government for more assistance in asset funding, whether it be in community infrastructure or in roads.

I can say, and I think I am not going to upset anyone in this room that Victoria and Queensland, when it comes to Local Government are the leaders in Asset Management. Your Association and the Association that I am from in Victoria, the Municipal Association of Victoria, are leading Local Government nationally in rolling our a more consistent and better frame work for how we manage our assets on an ongoing basis.

There was also an announcement at that Australian Council of Local Government meeting a couple of months ago, about the formation of the Local Government Centre of Excellence. That is an important way for our sector to get a bit more academic rigor into the way that we deliver policy and some of the services that we need to respond to in the future. I think that is a great thing for our sector. We don’t want too many academics, just like we don’t want too many lawyers running Local Government, or telling us how Local Government should be run. I think there is an absence in academic interest in Local Government, that isn’t the case with State or Federal Government. There is plenty of interest in those levels of Government. Hopefully this centre is a way of getting a little bit of guidance and perspective. It may be a perspective that we ignore, but none the less at least having some of that critical thought out there in our sector will be a good thing.

Perhaps this is just about the biggest success of the previous twelve months for ALGA - arguing for the removal of legacy waste in the proposed Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme. This is past waste that has been deposited over the last ten or fifteen years at landfill. Under the previously proposed operation of the CPRS, this was going to cost council somewhere in the order of $200 million dollars per year, in order to make contributions for the carbon emissions emitted from that past waste. The inclusion of that component in the CPRS policy made no sense. It was going to tax Local Government and local communities for retrospective activity. That was very different to every other industry that was going to be covered by the CPRS. The focus of the CPRS is and should be, on effecting current and future behaviour. Local Government has no gripes with the CPRS attaching to current and future waste. But, we saw no sense at all in the CPRS applying it to all this past waste that nobody can do anything about. It was put there years and years ago, sometimes by previous generations. Being able to have that removed from the CPRS and that was announced by the then Parliamentary Secretary Greg Combet a few months ago. That is a big win for our sector that will save communities a lot of money each year.

Some of the challenges that we have got coming up of course, the main thrust of ALGA’s activity is trying to increase the share of funding that Local Government receive at a Federal level. There is the Henry Tax Review which is on at the moment and is due to report in December. There are a range of opportunities and threats that will come out of his recommendations. We are plugged in very closely with that. We have presented to his enquiry twice as well as making written submissions as well. We will continue to be all over that and you can be sure we will be responding pro-actively in December depending on what some of his recommendations are.

We are trying to achieve a permanent community infrastructure program building on the billion dollars that we have received over the last nine months. We want to see a modest amount or an affordable amount as part of an annual payment to Local Government, just like we receive ‘Roads to Recovery’ money at the moment. We think that makes sense and we have had some good messages out of the
Minister for Local Government, Anthony Albanese being amenable to that. There is still a bit of a way to go to achieving it.

Of course we want to make ‘Roads to Recovery’ permanent. We have got it funded through to 2014. We can’t lose sight of the fact that we need to make sure that it will be renewed beyond 2014 as well. Local Government is at the vanguard of how Australia responds to climate change and adaptation strategies. Increasingly ALGA is putting more effort and more resources into making climate change a higher priority on Local Governments national lobbying agenda.

I would just like to touch on Constitutional Reform before I finish or as I said before, the term I less prefer Constitutional Recognition. I say I less prefer Constitutional Recognition because to me, Constitutional Recognition implies nothing more than just a symbolic effort on our part, or a wish to see ourselves mentioned in the Australian Constitution for no other reason than to make all of us in this room feel good. It doesn’t really mean much to anybody outside of this room. To me, that is the wrong priority. There are strong and compelling reasons why Local Government ought to be in the Constitution, but it is not to make any of us feel better. This slide is up there firstly to demonstrate to you that there is a real opportunity for Local Government in this regard. We have a Government that has not only said they support Constitutional Reform to put Local Government in the constitution, but they have actually committed and been elected on a policy platform that says that they will work with Local Government to put a referendum to the Australian people to recognise and include Local Government in the constitution.

That policy and platform is now our challenge at a Local Government level. Nationally in terms of how we take that forward, as I said before, the reasons why this is important, is not so much that symbolic feel good factor. But it is trying to clear up some of the current constitutional uncertainty that surrounds direct payments from the Federal Government to Local Government.

Some of you may have heard of the recent High Court judgment in the Pape case. That was the judgment that concerned the challenge to the validity of the commonwealth, being able to fund the stimulus package payment to tax payers. Those $900 payments that some of you in this room would hopefully have received by now, and the challenge to that as to whether it was constitutional for those payments to be made. Sparing you the technical legal jargon and the tie in, the reasoning in that judgment by the High Court has direct implications for Local Government. Essentially what it has thrown up is some serious questions and concerns over whether or not it is within the constitutional power of the Federal Government, to provide the direct funds that they provide to Local Government. The best two examples are the money that they provide to us through Roads to Recovery and the money that they provided to us over the last nine months or so through the Community Infrastructure Funding. That money is at risk, it is unlikely that money will be taken away from us because there are ways it can be channeled through the State.

This puts Local Government in a permanent subservient position to State Government as far as our relationship with the Commonwealth. It means that essentially there is no Local Government level when it comes to the way the Federal Government constitutionally views us. We are simply this branch of State Government (that if they wish to provide some funding to us, because they can see us as a useful policy tool for advancing some of their priorities), they need to fund by channeling money through the States and then relying on the States to pass that money on to us.

This makes us increasingly vulnerable, it makes no sense in 2009 when we have three levels of Government (when we get most of our funding which comes from Government, from the Federal level rather than the State level), for this to happen. This is why I think Constitutional Reform is very important for Local Government, to provide a direct financial power for the Australian Government to
provide funds to Local Government. To essentially reflect what has happened in practice since the 1970’s when funding to Local Government was introduced at the Commonwealth level.

It is not a threat to State Sovereignty, it is not a threat to local rate payers or people in the community who feel that there are councils, who are going to become out of control and take over the world. It is just sensible change to reflect the way that Australia is governed in 2009. That is why we are working on it and I can tell you that the ALGA Board with Bob Abbot and Paul Bell are currently working closely with George Williams, who is the foremost constitutional law expert in this country. Also with former Senator Robert Ray as our political adviser and CPR communications, to begin work on a National strategy and a National campaign for Local Government, to give itself the best prospect of success in achieving this change.

In conclusion, hopefully the message that I am aiming for you to take home form this discussion, is that increasingly Local Government is being seen as a useful partner by the Australian Government at the National level. Our biggest advantage and the thing that they have most interest in us for, is in our dispersed network throughout just about every single community across the country. There is no other private sector organisation or government in this country, other possibly than Australia Post that has the same dispersed network of offices as what Local Government does throughout this country. That presents us with a real opportunity to be an effective partner across key national issues and to help grow the role of Local Government. Hopefully also to grow the funding base for how we are funded and how we can go about our core activity.

I think there is a challenge for us in how we represent that at a National level. We need to do some things smarter! Certainly at the Australian Local Government Association, we are doing our best to try to increase the influence and the lobbying capability of Local Government across the sector. That challenge, as well as it being our challenge is your challenge as well. How we relate and how we perform in each of our councils, will play a really prominent part in how these issues are advanced and how the role of Local Government develops over the next ten years and beyond.

Thank you very much; I appreciate the opportunity to be here.

Question: Have they given any timeframe as to when we will be included in the Constitution?

Answer: No. The timeline that we are working on is the most logical time for a referendum to be held - and I am sure everyone is aware, that the only way you can achieve constitutional change in this country is through a referendum at the ballot box - the most logical time for a referendum to be held would be somewhere between the next election and the one after. So, if we are work on the assumption that the next election will probably be at the end of next year, maybe sooner, but let’s say it will be the end of next year, because that is what most commentators seem to say. That is probably the beginning of what is then a two year window of opportunity.

The likelihood is that this would be one question as part of a suit of referenda proposals that would be put to the people. Probably four or five dealing with a range of other things: something to do with indigenous issues and recognition of Aboriginal people in the constitution; possibly something to do with a Republic or a plebiscite on the sort of model people prefer if we were to go down the republic route; and maybe a couple of other things to do with fixed Parliamentary Terms or whatever it might be.

That is the sort of window we are targeting and it means that the next two years is fairly crucial. That is the sort of timeframe we are working on as far as the strategy that we are currently both developing and beginning to implement.
**Question:** Cr Brendan McNamara, Flinders Shire: The Community Infrastructure Grants we have received for the last two years, we have got a formula that if you are under 5000 people I think it is, last year it was $100,000 and this year it is $30,000. Once you get over 5000 people it goes up on some method of calculation. I guess while getting any money is better than nothing, $30,000 to spend on an infrastructure project really only gets you into trouble, rather than build anything for you.

I wonder will that formula continue in the future or will some other formula come in. I guess if we get more money the bigger Councils are going to miss out, and they’re not going to be happy with that. But, in reality I think that a Central Queensland Mayor said this year, that if he puts his $100,000 dollars from last year with his $30,000 from this year, he probably still hasn’t got enough to build a decent toilet. So, really the $30,000 when you are trying to do some sort of stimulus package or benefit your community doesn’t get you very far. I was just wondering if that formula will continue.

**Answer:** There is no reason why that formula needs to continue. So it is very much up to us as a sector, if we have got a formula that we would prefer and there is a prospect of further funding it is very much up to us to put that to the Commonwealth Government.

This goes back to the map that I showed you before and the diversity that makes our role at ALGA and I am sure it is the same here for LGAQ, very difficult. When we represent councils like Brisbane, but also these rats and mice over in WA with less than two hundred people, how do we go about best representing the view of the Local Government sector as far as how funding should be apportioned? There are obviously views that are diametrically opposed as to whether there should be funding done on a per capita population basis which I would assume would be Brisbane’s preferred model, or whether it is done to advantage small councils, which obviously would be the view of many smaller rural councils.

We take the view that with out a doubt, smaller rural Councils are the ones doing it most tough out there as far as Local Government Sustainability. So at a National level we tend to favour an approach that provides extra assistance to smaller Councils. But at the same time we are mindful that the bigger population centers are a critical part of our membership base as well. They need to have their rights respected as well.

I am just calling this out, just to let you know more of the sensitivities, which I am sure you appreciate already. If there are thoughts about how that formula should be struck, now and over the next six months or so, leading up to ALGA’s submission for next years Federal Budget, it would be quite relevant to form our decision making around how we pitch that proposal for that program to become entrenched, like the Roads to Recovery program.

**Question:** Geoff thanks for that presentation that was good, I missed some of it and probably what you are talking about now is the question I am asking about. I went to the first Prime Ministers meeting of Mayors down in Canberra. I missed the second one, but at the first one he talked about helping Local Government with Asset funding if we had our Asset Management in place. Obviously you are talking about this now are you? About a formula to hand out money to Local Government throughout Australia to help replace and develop our assets. The other part of the question is will these meetings continue? I know you haven’t got a crystal ball, but is it likely these annual meetings with the Prime Minister will continue?

**Answer:** Thanks for the question. The question before, was about the formula and if there is going to be anymore money in the bucket for distribution to Councils for community infrastructure. What will be the formula, and I think it is very much within our spectrum of interest to put a view to the Government as to how that formula should be.
You are right that at the November Mayors meeting, the Prime Minister stressed the importance of Local Government doing better in how we manage our assets in order to demonstrate for further funding. That is a message that we have received at the National level and it has also been a message that the Prime Minister has backed up with his announcement two months ago, of twenty five million dollars to help Local Government do better in how we aggregate our management of assets across the sector and get more consistency across jurisdictions.

I see those things very much in alignment and now it is up to us as a sector in how we respond. As far as the ongoing future of those meetings, I think we can be assured that those meetings have a really bright future. The most recent meeting, the Prime Minister and the Minister were over the moon and enthused about bringing all the Mayors to Canberra, the benefit they get from it and this new improved relationship.

So I think we have no reason to fear that this won’t be an annual occurrence as they have committed to it being so. Also outside of that annual meeting, the steering committee which is a committee of about thirty people of which Paul and I are on and various other people across the sector are on it. It meets four times a year with the Minister for Local Government and that is an effective way to keep the issues bubbling along, being worked on and tossed over, outside of the Annual Mayors Meeting.
Address “Launch: Council Business Online - an Evolution”

Mr Tony Faure
Online Media Entrepreneur, previously CEO Ninemsn, Australian Founder and Vice President South Asia for Yahoo!

Morning! I am here to talk about online consumers and I guess the big message that will come out of this is, in terms of an opportunity to communicate with rate payers and your audience in a completely different way - there is probably no thing you can do more easily and more cheaply than think about online more seriously.

When people introduce me I am now referring to how I get introduced in articles and so on, everyone calls me an internet veteran. I don’t like the veteran bit, but I don’t mind the internet bit. In a general sense I think it reflects the fact that I have been involved in this industry now for the best part of thirteen years. It is very interesting being here today talking about how we apply the internet to the world of Local Government, when in the early days of the internet, getting anybody to take it seriously at all was an extraordinary achievement.

I think we have seen the internet come a very long way in what is in most media terms a relatively short period of time. That fact that we are talking about it today is a great indication of that.

I guess my message for today is about consumers and how they have become mainstream and about therefore we need to think about the internet audience and how we can talk to them and what we can do for them, that helps us in our job of communicating with them day to day. I think it is a huge opportunity for Local Government, because I think Government in general has been one of the slower movers in moving online and starting to work with consumers online.

I want to start with two numbers. You probably know these, but they are really worth mentioning at the start now. These are the number of people who use the internet in Australia today - 86% of the Australian population is online. I think it is probably fair to say that if you are in the 14% you are never going to be, or you are unlikely to be. Because, if you have got this far and you are still not interested, this is probably not something that is going to work for you. Realistically the online audience is 86% of the Australian population. That is a big number, almost as big a number - 85% - is the number of Australians who not only use the internet, but use it every day. So, again if I went back to when we started Yahoo in Australia in 1997, if you could get anybody to look at the internet more than once a week, that was extraordinary. If you look at it now, this is something that people are doing on an absolutely regular basis. I think it is fair to say that for almost all of us today, the internet is absolutely part of the fabric of our daily lives.

The internet as I think we all know, doesn’t only mean the internet that you get on your PC, your laptop, when you are at home or at work, increasingly it also starts to mean - mobile phones that do a really good job of enabling you to get hold of those services and information you get on your PC as well. The internet becomes an important part of our day to day lives. It is probably true to say that, where it started out as a kind of interesting diversion for people, it has now gone the whole gamut and become essential. For most of us in the room today, somebody said the internet is down, it becomes a major issue for us in not being able to do the things that we would expect to be able to do day today. So, the internet becomes an absolutely core part of how we live our lives day to day.

Because of that when you think about internet consumers and when you’re thinking about how you interact with those consumers, what is in your head I think needs to change. I don’t know the extent
that internet consumer has changed over time. I just wanted to walk through a quick summary of who those people are and how that has changed over time. Because there is still this general sense, that the internet consumer is generally the same type of person. Everyone on the internet is sort of the same person. It is really very clearly the case, when you think about that and we analyze the data, that that is not the case at all.

So, who are the internet audience? If you go back, the person people used to think of as the internet consumer, probably between 1997 and 2003 is this guy. We call him Digerati. Digerati is one of those guys who thinks he invented the internet. Always wears those glasses, always looks unshaven, builds websites for a living and interestingly, research says that he spends all of his time online on the ABC and actually when you track him he is spending time on a lot of different sites, he would rather you didn’t know about. But, that is kind of his profile. A lot of people when they think about the internet audience think that this is the guy right? This is the person who drives the audience. In fact, now this is probably less than 20% of the overall internet audience and it is a vocal group that you hear about a lot, but is becoming less and less important over time.

After those guys drove the first phase of the internet, the second phase became about these guys. We call them the Social Expressives. The best way to describe a Social Expressive is probably, your teenage children. They are people whose whole social lives and networks are online. The way they communicate with each other, the way they discover music, the way they share information, the way they make social arrangements all happens online. I think most of us think that today they are the dominant group online. They are the people who are the biggest part of the overall audience. That probably would have been true two or three years ago. Today it is no longer the case because this group is being replaced. It is being replaced by two groups that I want to talk about a little bit. What is kind of interesting about them is how normal they are. The first group and probably the dominant group on the internet right now we call the Cruise Controllers.

The first two groups are very intense users. The Digerati guys are the ones looking at every single new website and passing judgment on it. The Social Expressive guys are the ones who spend their whole lives and their whole social life online. These people are almost the opposite. The Cruise Controllers profile is - they tend to be 35 to 45 years old; they are predominantly female; they are successful during the day and their view would be, where would I find the time to do all that stuff you teenagers and you weird geeky guys are doing. The reason I am online is I want to get things done! I want to be able to be more efficient in how I run my life. Those guys are an absolutely dominant part of the web right now and they are driving this move to making the internet more useful. The early versions of the web were interesting, but they weren’t very useful.

The versions of the web we are getting now are actually more useful, driven by this group of Cruise Controllers. The other group who are not yet dominant, but will become so, we call the Conservative Cross Readers. The Conservative Cross Readers are in many cases the parents of the Social Expressives. I used to think I was Digerati, but I have now become one of these. I don’t know what my daughters are doing online and I am very worried about it. This group is kind of characterised by almost even less active involvement day to day than the previous group, the Cruise Controller group. But they want the internet to work for them and they want to do functional things online. They are very interested in making it work and making it productive in their day to day lives. The difference between them and the previous group is the previous group really liked the internet; this group is a little bit suspicious of it. Not quite sure what is going to happen and not quite sure how they want to get involved.

These four groups are probably right now about equal in terms of their overall portion of that 86% of Australians who are online. What you definitely see is that the move is toward the latter two categories. I think this enables you to say definitively that the internet is now being overtaken by
normal people and normal people as we know want to do in most cases normal things. They want to do those normal things in a little bit less time, a little bit smarter and a little bit more cleverly than they used to be able to. If they want a job, they want to go to Seek. If they want a house, they want to go to RealEstate.com. If they want to find something they want to go to Google. That is how the medium works for them.

We actually pulled some data on what it is these people actually do online. I think there is this general sense that online is mostly about entertainment, games and all that kind of stuff. If you look at this list, what is striking about it is how boring it is. The main thing people do is email! That is like saying the main thing you have your phone for is talking to people. The next things on the list are, they do banking, pay bills, use maps, get directions to things and find out what it is going on. It isn’t until you get down to number five on this list, that you actually get into what the publishers would call content. The things that are actually created for internet users, doesn’t rank until fifth on the list.

I can’t remember the percentages off the top of my head, but emails 97% of users and I think by the time you get down to news updates, you are just north of fifty. Even now, and even today before we get this move into a more normal set of people using the internet, the main things we use it for are actually pretty straightforward, sensible and functional.

The two new things that we are going to watch - people get very excited about these, particularly in the media world and they talk about social networking and they talk about online video. I think what I would say is Social Networking is people talking to each other and online video is television. What we are actually seeing with these new developments on the web is that even these things, even organizing your social life, the chatting to each other, the knowing what is going on and the watching television, all those things are moving to the internet as well. It compounds this idea, that what we are actually doing online are that same things that we would be doing in the rest of our lives, but we are doing them more efficiently.

These are the four categories that are growing most quickly outside those ones I have talked about already. Thirty one percent of this sample has already bought airline tickets online. Thirty one percent isn’t seventy percent, but thirty one percent of twelve million, which is the online audience, means that you have got right now, probably four million people in Australia, buying their airline tickets online. You have got slightly less than that booking their hotel accommodation or their travel plans and whatever else online. Critically for our conversation today, twenty six percent are a quarter, three million people plus use the internet to find their local community information. That is their main reason for using it, or increasingly is starting to use it in order to make payments to Government.

Again if the first list was pretty prosaic, this list is even more fundamental and utility driven. This is a group of consumers, doing normal things, who want to do those things online as well. Probably the way to sum that up is to say that almost everyone is now on line and they are doing almost everything online. So, really, all the things we do in our day to day lives, all the mainstream things that matter to us, we now use the internet via our PC or our phone to be able to start doing.

The crucial thing for us to take away from that today is, if that is what we do as individuals that is also what we expect of organisations that we deal with on an ongoing basis. I think we all expect now, the people we deal with, the people we buy tickets from, the people we pay bills to will be as online savvy as we are. Because it is not pointy end anymore, it is not clever people in funny glasses with stubble, it is normal people and normal people expect to be able to deal with other normal people in that kind of way.
One of the things that struck me about the LGAQ survey results is that I think you guys came out with at the weekend, was for Local Government, these numbers here were going backwards and going backwards quite quickly. Communication in general seems to be a strategic weakness that isn’t going all that well and in the satisfaction ratings there were three that struck me that were going backwards quite quickly.

The guys out there feel like, in terms of informing the community that Council is getting worse. They feel that consulting the community is getting worse and responding to the community particularly is getting much worse. I would have thought in general terms, responding to the community is going to be a real worry. They are obviously the guys you want on side believing in what you are doing.

We have got this normal group of people, they are all moving online and they are all expecting the same thing of everyone they deal with. I think that the survey tells you that that is also what they expect from Local Government. They expect to be able to do business with you and find out about what is going on, online. I think they are disappointed about that fact that currently they can’t.

That is the bad news that comes out of this. What is the good news that comes out of this? In terms of the investment required to change the dial on some of those numbers if you are happy to use online services and if you are happy to embrace the opportunity that online gives you. The ability to be able to suddenly change the perception of the community about how easy it is to talk to you, about how easy it is to find things out and about how easy it is to be able to give you feedback you can act on. All of those things can actually be changed really quickly. The great thing about online is it doesn’t cost much! Building a good website and delivering it is relatively inexpensive. It is easy for people out there to get the information you put up. It is pretty easy to give them ways of feeding back to you. As a result of those two things it is quick to bring the community to life and get people involved. There is a real opportunity that comes out of everything we have seen so far. To be able to start using the tools that online provides, to be able to build that kind of relationship with the consumer in what has become the daily medium of choice for them.

If that is the case, what do you do now? Three things to think about straight away! The first thing you need is a plan. The plan is going to vary depending on where you are right now. The general sense that you need to strategically have a view on getting products out there that your community can start to use and to play with, is incredibly important, and you need a very specific plan for how to do it.

The two things that you would want to think about doing first - The number one thing is anything that delivers the message to people in your community that you are listening. You can tell us what it is you think and we are giving you a forum to say that in, where we will listen to what it is you are going to say. The second is a really simple thing, can you create something online that means that people can go there and just tell you that something is wrong? Simple things like, there is a pothole in this place; there is a problem at these traffic lights. Whatever it is, a really easy way for people to take what it is they want to say and know that they have delivered that message to you and you are going to do something about it is using online.

For all of these things, the very good news out of this conversation today is that the Resolute guys, Kathryn and team, have a series of products available that will enable you to take some really big steps in this direction - very quickly and very cheaply! As a result of doing those things, you begin to interact with the consumer and you start to figure out what works for them and what doesn’t. Doing that along with all the other things I am sure are going on, makes a really big difference to how people in your community are going to see the services and how you are going to provide them.

Thank you for listening.
Address “Opposition Update”

Mr Howard Hobbs MP
Shadow Minister for Local Government and Aboriginal Strait Islander Partnerships

Well thank you very much Paul for that introduction. The President of the ALGA, Geoff Lake, Fiona Simpson, Member for Maroochydore and the Shadow Minister for Transport and Main Roads, thank you Fiona for coming along this morning, President of the ULGA Paul Pisale, Mayors, councillors and CEO’s, distinguished guests, Departmental Officers, Ladies and Gentlemen.

First of all I would like to pass on an apology from our leader John-Paul Langbrook who couldn’t be here with us today. He does send his apologies. He is intending to do a lot of travelling over the next few months and will certainly be calling in to talk to councillors and Mayors as he travels around. He is very keen to do that, I have spoken to him this morning and he is very enthusiastic. I would like to also thank, last night at the function, Dr Douglas Member for Gaven was there, along with Aidan McLindon ex Logan Councillor and now the member for Beaudesert. It was great to have them along as well.

Thank you for the opportunity to share with you the State Opposition update. Over recent years my message has been similar, that Local Government has had a challenging year. One day I hope that I can say that Local Government has had a strong and productive year and a good relationship with the State Government. Not suggesting that pigs will fly, just hoping for a good result. Councillors you have done a wonderful job under very difficult conditions over the last few years. Juggling the rate payer demands and the State Government expectations can be a challenge and the interpretations can have in some cases, very different outcomes.

That reminds me about the priest who was at the pearly gates. He was waiting in line up there and ahead of him was a guy dressed in sunglasses, a loud shirt, leather jacket and jeans. Saint Peter addressed this guy and said “who are you so I may know whether to admit you or not into the kingdom of heaven”. He replies, “My name is Joe Cohen, taxi driver”. Saint Peter consults his list, smiles and says to the taxi driver, “take this silken robe and golden staff and enter the kingdom of heaven. Next it is the turn of the Priest. He stands up and booms out, “my name is Reverend John Smith, Pastor of Saint Mary’s for the last thirty two years”. Saint Peter consults his list. He says to the Minister, “take this cotton robe and wooden staff and enter the kingdom of heaven”. “Just a minute” says the priest, “that taxi driver ahead of me, how come he got a silken robe and a golden staff”. Saint Peter says “up here we work by results, while you preached, people slept”, while he drove people prayed”. A good analogy of an outcome and a different interpretation.

I want to thank you, councillors and Mayors, who work tirelessly for your communities. This last year has seen a large work load placed on Councils, especially those that have been amalgamated. The challenge of amalgamation is still there and will stay for many years to come. The challenge of amalgamation is certainly alive and well. I ask the Minister, down the track very soon, to in fact rule out that no further amalgamations will occur in Queensland. This is hard to believe, but the whisper around the house is that some more things are being talked about. Let’s see what the Minister has to say about that.

We have had some significant events as well this year. The new Local Government Act has been passed, streamlined in volume, and principally governed by regulation. This new legislative trend has the LNP support, however all the promised regulations while announced, have not yet been provided. It will be
a very tight time frame to have them in place by the end of the year as scheduled. The Government has
committed to road test these regulations through a genuine working group.

The LNP supports genuine Parliamentary scrutiny of legislation and regulation and the Government
should not underestimate our resolve in this matter. Should these regulations, be imposed without
further adequate consultation we will see a further reduction in the credibility of the legislative process
in this state. If Local Government is not satisfied with these regulations, they should not be
implemented. Rushed legislation is not good legislation.

The Sustainable Planning Bill has been introduced into Parliament and debate is expected to be towards
the end of the year. This Bill will make overall improvements to our Planning Laws; however deemed
approvals have raised concerns with Councils. Planning issues have recently been in the news in
Queensland and the influence of certain people with relation to land development and other business
dealings have been raised.

The LNP has called for a Royal Commission to tackle this issue, to ensure that all sections of the
community including Local Government get a fair go. It has been abundantly clear for some time that
more land was needed for housing, particularly in South East Queensland. However it is very important
that where land is released for further development, that it is done appropriately, in consultation with
Local Government and in accordance with good town planning principles.

We are regularly now hearing of land being opened up and Local Councils reading about it in the papers.
Long delays in obtaining development assessments have been a problem for some time- with blame
being based with referral agencies, incomplete applications, Local Governments and cumbersome
legislation. The new Planning Act along with reduced building activity should be able to improve the
development assessment time frame. The Ministerial call-ins process is an important tool for
Government to have. However we have seen an increased use of these call-in powers over recent years
and I believe this has not always been in the best interest of good planning, especially in the political
climate we have had over those same years.

The most recent significant event was the State Budget and the Estimates Hearings. Over recent years, I
have reported to you an increase in State Government debt to be around $50 billion dollars. It has now
blown out to $85.5 billion. It is not inconceivable that this will reach $100 billion in the next few years.
Queensland now has the highest debt of any Australian State with a budget deficit up to two point one
three billion dollars per year has been proposed for the next eight to ten years.

It must be remembered that this debt was accrued before the Global Financial Crisis. Interest is
accruing at $14 million a day and every Queensland household of four is facing a debt of $78,000 each.
Queenslanders will be paying out $5.2 billion a year in interest payments from 2012. Contrast this to the
payment of $3 billion the Federal Government give to all Local Governments across Australia per year.

Another comparison! $5.2 billion will rebuild to a new standard a two lane bitumen highway from
Brisbane to Darwin and back to Mt Isa each year. Each year! That is 5,000 kilometres at a $1 million
kilometre. Another analogy! We have five thousand kilometers of national highway in Queensland. You
could put a $1 million a kilometre and do the whole lot or obviously through all the urban areas it is
much more expensive. You could double that, say $3 million a kilometre, every three years you could
rebuild the national highway in Queensland with the debt we have got. That will give you some idea of
what we are up against.

Local Government’s of course did not fair well in the State Budget, with significant cuts to grants and
state subsidies that have been in place for many years. $25 million roads and drainage grants that were
paid each year on a grants commission formula, have been cut this year without warning, impacting on many councils budgets that were in the final stages of developments.

Other grants and subsidies such as street lighting and environmental subsidy programs have been cut along with the introduction of a fuel tax of 9.2 cents per litre, which will cost Local Government, $6 million a year. In total the cut to Local Government in 2009-2010 is $45 million. On top of this, further funding of $100 million will be cut in 2011 when water and sewerage programs will cease. Only $45 million will then be available as a general grant and subsidy program.

Long term funding from the State Government will be seriously curtailed, with one billion being stripped from the grants and subsidy program in the next decade. Due to Queensland losing its AAA rating, council borrowing costs will also rise by $7.5 million per year. During the estimates, I was able to quiz the Minister on the ninety approved council projects were $36.9 million that will no longer be funded under the grant and subsidy scheme. I was told that these projects were all ones that were three years and older, that Councils had chosen not to proceed with them anymore and Councils had not advised the Department the reasons for the delays.

However consideration of the list of Council projects that I had the Minister table, I found the Minister’s statements were not correct. $5.4 million of the 36.9%, or 42% of the lapsed funds for the projects, were approved less than three years before the 2009 budget was in fact tabled. As the proposal to enforce sweeping amalgamations was not announced in 2007, much of this time as well as Council resources have been focused on the new structure and therefore given little opportunity to progress these developments.

I have since been advised by several Councils that lost funding that in fact the Department was well aware of delays in those projects. Clearly, what we have been told by the Government and the Minister at that Estimates Hearing was not true.

I took the opportunity to ask which Councils who had demonstrated a limited financial capacity to pay, would be eligible to apply for the new $45 million general grant and subsidy programs that replace the water and sewerage programs in 2011. The Minister said she was unable to provide the information because it was not decided yet. This is simply another indication that no strategic planning has occurred, just crisis management.

Councillors, your President reported to you, the State Government broke its pre-election commitment to councils, that it was committed to the continuation of the Local Government infrastructure and subsidy program beyond 2011. They intended to maintain the current levels of funding for the programs. I also have to report to you that during the budget estimates process, the Minister for Local Government continued to insist that no funding cuts had been made to Local Government. That no funding cuts had been made to Local Government! In fact she wrote to the Courier Mail who published an article about the cuts to Local Government and said, “This is not correct, I am pleased to tell you that no cuts have been made”. In fact she said yesterday, I think, that no commitments were dropped.

You and I both know that that is incorrect and untruthful. The Minister failed to acknowledge that Councils have been financially impacted due to the sudden and unexpected cutting of grants and subsidy programs. The integrity of the budget Estimates Committee process is grossly compromised by the amendments made to the Criminal Code, in June 2006, which abolished the crime of knowingly providing false evidence to the Legislative Assembly or Committee. The LNP has recently introduced the Private Members Bill to Parliament to repeal the Labor Government’s laws, which make it legal for Ministers to lie to Parliament.
The Minister was being untruthful with councils and the public when answers from the Department indicate clearly that programs had been cut and approved projects not honored. The Minister repeatedly refused to answer questions about the pre-election ALP commitments to maintain current levels of funding for the program and subsidy programs in response to your LGAQ ten point plan. In my view we have reached a new low in Local Government in Queensland. Never have we seen such blatant abuse of the truth, trying to defend the indefensible.

However in every dark cloud there can be a silver lining. The Federal Government is keen to unload some money and fortunately Local Government is geared up to accommodate them. The Regional Local Community Infrastructure Program provided $1.07 billion to pump into our communities. This funding is a great assistance at this time. I would like to see an improved distribution formula to cater for all Councils. In the last round, thirty two Western Councils representing over half of Queensland, received only $1.086 million out of half a billion dollars. So while this funding is welcome, it must be remembered that a significant amount of this stimulus funding may also not be ongoing.

Amalgamations! It is now 18 months since forced amalgamations. I take the opportunity to once again thank councillors for your tireless effort in managing this difficult change. Amalgamated councils have told me that they are facing serious financial pressures and twenty five Councils have provided detailed submissions to the Treasury for $185 million in assistance with amalgamation costs. Due to time constraints and difficulties in obtaining eligibility criteria, some councils were unable to get those applications in on time. To date we have not received any advice as to the success or not of those submissions, leaving the rate payers to once again pick up the bill.

It is worth noting, that if funding was going to be forthcoming, this conference would have been a good time for the Government to announce it. It hasn’t come through yet. Interesting too that, in all my time I have been coming to these conferences, this is the first time that we have never had an update from the Main Roads Minister or an update from the Minister for Transport and I think that is certainly very disappointing.

Let me say that it has been my long held view, that the amalgamations model forced on Queensland Councils was not a good one. It was based on a political outcome rather than improved governance outcome. The State Government has been less than honest with Council and the communities throughout this process, resulting in poor outcomes, difficulties in providing services, higher rates and placing additional financial pressures on councils. Councils were never told by the Government, that a billion dollars over the next ten years for water and sewerage grants and subsidies would be withdrawn because the Government believes large and amalgamated Councils can now finance their own water and sewerage costs.

The Treasurer and the previous Local Government Minister clearly had a plan for Local Government that he did not share with councillors at that time. Councillors have been concerned also that enterprise bargaining costs associated with forced amalgamations was not going to be considered as a legitimate amalgamation cost. During estimates I raised this question and was told that enterprise bargaining was a discretionary cost for Local Government and would not be considered as a legitimate amalgamation cost. This is despite when up to eight councils had to be amalgamated. Councils had no real choice but to resolve the different wage conditions and structures in those Shires.

It is interesting to note that in the State Government is now facing a similar situation with the amalgamation of the Department of Main Roads and Transport. There will be an interesting scenario to see how they manage that.
The original estimate that amalgamations have cost Queensland rate payers in the vicinity of $200 million is still a realistic assessment. At the last annual conference I spoke of the history and the impact of forced amalgamations. Generally councillors and councils who strongly supported forced amalgamations were not elected. The first election after forced amalgamations many councillors weren’t returned. This is simple history!

Unfortunately recent surveys undertaken by the LGAQ on community attitude polls, amalgamated councils have fared very poorly. This is disappointing, but not surprising. The poor planning, the poor model you were given, the lack of support has been shocking, unprofessional and shows a lack of the basic understanding of Local Government in the State. But typical of the type of governance we have come to expect here in Queensland.

In conclusion, the Local Government Association has been a tower of strength throughout the year. Your Association has taken on an unprecedented action, to set up a fighting fund to counter unreasonable behaviour toward councils and their communities in Queensland. A fund with an initial $500,000 along with $100,000 contribution annually will provide a significant boost to your negotiation power on matters of significance to Local Government.

It is a sorry state of affairs when you have to go to such lengths to protect your members. There clearly can be no forgiveness for the callous attacks by the State Government on the Local Government over recent years. I leave you with this quote from General Norman Schwarzkopf, who when asked if he thought there was room for forgiveness towards the people who have harboured and abetted terrorists, he replied, “I believe that forgiving them is Gods function, our job is to arrange the meeting”.

Thank you.

**Question:** Cr Annie Clarke, Burke Shire Council: Howard I was just wondering if you might be able to give a comment on what you thing the future of Regional Development Australia may be and how the Federal Infrastructure Program may be of assistance to Councils? Because that appears to me to be the way that it is driven and might I also thank you for your comments in relation to LGAQ coming through when we were handed the Poison Chalice quite frankly. Thank you for complimenting them because the hard work has been done and I think that we are sailing again. Just back to the comments on how you think that might affect us.

**Answer:** Annie I think this funding has certainly been very welcome and there certainly is an opportunity there. The Federal Government is keen at this stage to spend some money and roll that around. So, there is certainly a great opportunity for Councils at the present moment and I think we can build some real infrastructure and have some support in our communities. The only problem I think is Cr Mcnamara spoke earlier on; some of that funding wasn’t going to be a great deal for some of the smaller councils, or rather the smaller populated councils. That formula needs to be adjusted and as your ALGA President mentioned a short while ago, that formula isn’t set in stone. Maybe an improvement can be made there. But, that certainly is one wonderful avenue of finance that we have. Well, it is almost the only avenue of finance we have left at the present moment, because the State Government I think your President said is stuffed and broke. That is about the situation.

**Question:** Cr John Brent, Scenic Rim Regional Council: I would just like to be informed, Howard, if you could help us. What impact has the water grid in South East Queensland had on the State Budget and is that progressing? I come from Central Queensland of course and it doesn’t seem to be featuring much in the press lately.
**Question:** Cr Paul Bell AM, President LGAQ: Howard, is your lot ready to Govern? You have told us what the, well we didn’t need to know what they have done to us. What are your lot going to do to change that?

**Answer:** My word we are and we have done a power of work over the time. We are very keen to get in there, very enthusiastic. We have a good team here; a lot of new people have come in, in the last election. We had eleven new members elected. A very enthusiastic team and at the end of the day, I believe that the policies and philosophies we are espousing, will improve the overall enthusiasm of the state to be able to generate the income, the revenue that we need to be able to drive it. Presently the Government seems to be running around with no great plan. I guess I could sum it up this way. Think of the worst person you have known in your life. The big noter who eventually went nowhere! That is how the State is being run now. We believe we can do far better than that.

**Question:** Cr Lorraine Pyefinch, Mayor, Bundaberg Regional Council: Will the LNP reintroduce the 40% subsidy for water and sewerage?

**Answer:** We are very keen to reintroduce those subsidies. We believe in fact, we’ve put that in place originally with Di McCauley in 1995. We had a six hundred million dollar program that we put there for water and sewerage. We see the Governments actions as irresponsible. It will all depend of course Lorraine, as I mentioned before, things are pretty bad in the State Budget. We are very keen to support Local Government. We believe in a genuine partnership in Government because Local Government is the third sphere of Government and a very important one. We want to make sure that you have the tools and the finances to carry out that role.

**Question:** Cr Melva Hobson, Mayor, Redland City Council: This morning the assembly agreed to seek that the State Government develops a State Population Policy that takes account of the long and short term environmental impact of development at Local and National levels, including effect on climate change, sustainable use, avoiding adverse environment social and cultural impacts. Will you make a commitment that if elected, your Government will have wide consultation, implement and develop a State Population Policy?

**Answer:** We will certainly have no problem in having wide consultation with you on any matter and obviously we would need to be able to study in detail what you are proposing. But, I would certainly have no problem. If it is good for Local Government, if it is good for the State Government, then I see no reason why we wouldn’t head down that track. However, we would need to be able to study it first. We certainly would guarantee you that we will be able to sit down, talk it through and if it is feasible we can do it.
Address “Asset Management”

Mr Stuart Gibson
Group General Manager Asset Management Transfield Services

I am going to talk to you about why Asset Management is so damn sexy. I get excited about it, but I am paid to.

I am going to start off by explaining what I think Asset Management is, because I know you work within a regulatory framework that defines Asset Management in relation to council. I will talk about how I find it, the results we get and then I am going to run through a case study. We are going to get right down into the weeds of what Asset Management does. This isn’t my definition; this is the definition of the Asset Management Council.

There are three important things about Asset Management. Firstly, it is about what you do over the whole of the lifecycle. Secondly it is about management. It isn’t just about creating a plan for your assets. Thirdly it is about achieving. The whole reason we manage our assets is, that you achieve the results you want as asset owners from those assets. So it is not necessarily about creating a plan or doing a lifecycle analysis, it is not necessarily just about lowest cost; it is about creating a systematic approach to what we do.

What is an asset lifecycle? We decide we need it for a start, we design it, we operate it, we maintain it, modify it and eventually sometimes we might dispose of it. Typically we expect our asset performance to increase over time, but our ability to influence the costs are much higher during the design and build stage. If we design ourselves a crappy asset, we are left maintaining it with a high maintenance cost throughout its life. The important thing is that we still have an ability to influence cost and performance during the life of the asset.

Often we find in my business, when we get to an asset it isn’t performing as it was expected. We call that performance surprise. We find because of that performance surprise (and that is an important word) because it is costing more than it should. The piece of asset management that I am concerned with, is closing the gap on that performance surprise and therefore closing the gap on the cost surprise.

What can we want as an organization in respect of our assets? I work in the private sector with a lot of production assets, so the first thing the private sector wants is increased revenue. You get that by producing more, with the same assets. Increase quality or conform to specification, reduce the need for capital, reduce risk, reduce environmental risk especially and the real big one all around the world in every industry today, reduce costs. Reduced cost of capital improvements and reduced operating costs to operate them.

I will give you three examples of things that we have done. This is an oil refinery at Altona, just out of Melbourne. What you see there is a huge reduction in the cost. 60% reduction in the annual maintenance cost of that plant. At the same time a huge increase in the availability. It didn’t go that way around. If you thing breaks down less, it costs less to maintain. It sounds simple and self evident, but that is what we are aiming for.

This is a coal fired power station in Western Australia owned by Verve Energy. We took over asset management of that power station in 2005. What you see there is that we have increased the production capacity out of it, so it is producing more megawatt hours. It is a base load coal fired power station. Its availability - the amount of time it is not broken down if you like - has increased quite
dramatically. Capacity factor for those of you, who aren’t exposed to the industry, is the period of time it is running at its peak or maximum. So that is money in the bank for these guys. The mean time between failures, that is any failure, anything that goes wrong with the plant that we didn’t expect, not necessarily a failure that takes the plant down, has increased from forty three days to one hundred and one days. Roughly we get three problems that we didn’t expect each year and it is a plant that is a little bit more complex than most motor cars, and a 5% year on year cost reduction.

Here is another one, it is a civil asset, and it is the Australian Rail Track Corporations railway line in South Australia. There what you see again, is a dramatic reduction in cost, from about $23,000 a kilometre to maintain that each year, down to about $10,000 a kilometre. At the same time you see a dramatic increase in functionality. By functionality for a railway line, I mean lack of time spent under speed restrictions. A railway line is a little bit like a road. You can still drive on it even if it has lots of pot holes, or you can still drive on a railway line if it has got a few problems. You just have to slow the train down. Here we have reduced the amount of track under speed restriction from 5% which is quite a big hunk, to 0.3%.

Asset management is sexy and it gets you some results. It can reduce operating and capital costs dramatically. Let’s go through a case study very quickly. This particular case study is a minerals production plant. It actually isn’t in Australia, but it doesn’t matter. It is in a remote location and it has a service town almost dedicated to it. A service town creates problems because, if you fire somebody, lay people off or if you cancel contracts with major contractors. You actually upset the whole dynamics of the town. So that is sort of important.

It was a public company, subject to quarterly reporting and that drove some stupid behaviour inside the company. The production costs were in the upper quarter, although there was something about the ore body that meant that it was a bit more expensive for them to produce what they were producing than most companies that did the same thing around the world.

Despite that its total cost of maintenance - by total cost of maintenance I mean the cost of labour, spare parts and the cost of subcontractors was around about the median for their industry. The graph shows you their quarterly expenditure on total cost of maintenance over a three year period. As you see it is running at around seventy five million US dollars a quarter. It is slightly rising to the right because of inflation. In the fourth quarter of 2005, they had a problem, major output contract ended and they had to renegotiate the supply contract.

The prices went down, the volumes remained the same. But they had to reduce the cost of production. Because they were forced to reduce the cost of production they did some arbitrary things. I will call them stupid things and you can make up your mind at the end whether you think they are stupid or not. They made 10% across the board budget reductions. It is very easy, just cut everybody’s budget by 10%. They knew that wouldn’t reduce all costs unless they laid some staff off. They forced every department including the maintenance department to lay off 10% of their staff. That would get the costs down! They also reduced things they thought were discretionary expenditure. No training, no travel, no consultants, including no engineering consultants.

What did they get? This is the next four quarters and you will see they did get their 20% reduction in the first quarter after they did it. What happened one year later is that they were paying about a third more for their maintenance, than what they were paying before they had the intervention. We might conclude from this that an unintelligent drive at cost reduction might get you the exact opposite result.

Let’s see what was happening. This is the daily production data from the facility. The pink line is its daily production and you can see that it goes up and down, up and down, up and down. That is not a
really well run plant. The green line there is the average of all the pink points. So that is their average production. The interesting thing is the blue line. The blue line is the designed capacity for the plant. You will see that the pink line goes above the design capacity. What they are doing is, at the end of each month they are putting their foot on the accelerator and running the plant well above its design capacity. The inevitable result of that is a breakdown. If you add up all of those over clocking and breakdowns, what you end up with is a sub- optimized plant. The green line, the average production is below the blue line (designed capacity).

The time series of this graph is the four quarters during which the costs increased dramatically. You will also note that the breakdowns don’t get anymore at the end of that year than at the beginning. There were still a whole heap of breakdowns.

So, why was it costing more? In the maintenance department, they had an increasing backlog. They couldn’t get all of the work done because they had reduced staff by 10%. What they did is they sacrificed condition monitoring tasks for break fix repairs. If you could fix something quickly you became a hero. All the intelligent guys wanted to be heroes! They wanted to be onto the break-fix tasks and what that inevitably leads to was, you had all the idiots doing the condition monitoring tasks (the testing and checking of things) and that drove future problems. It just increased and increased the problems.

What was happening with spare parts and contractors in this place? The spares industry grew dramatically, because what became important in this year, was fixing things quickly. Running out of spare parts became a firing offence. The amount of parts stock they kept increased dramatically. Use of contractors increased because they had a ceiling on their own staff. When things broke down they had to go to external contractors and after a while they lost control of cost of those external contractors. It became important to fix things very quickly and the price for fixing it was less and less important.

What was happening with Project Management? They had an enormous amount of new capital projects that were going on. New capital projects that were modifying this plant at any particular time. Here was the problem. Feasibility and design was rushed because it was important to get the project done. Everything became about time - got to fix it quickly! Because they didn’t use external design experts, they ended up with a whole lot of what I call willing amateurs doing design work. People who are willing to give it a go, but simply didn’t’ have the experience to design the complexity of the engineering things that they were building.

Couple with that of commissioning and handover of the assets as they were built was done very poorly because they wanted to rush onto the next job that they were doing. That put a whole lot of work onto the maintenance staff. Every time they finished designing something or building something, they had a great big list of things that need to be cured that should have been done in the project, but was thrown over the fence to maintenance - therefore increasing the maintenance backlog.

Lastly they didn’t do post implementation reviews of their projects. They never learnt the lessons and they kept repeating the mistakes over and over and over again. What we got was a financial surprise that we talked about earlier. The result of that was that they had another major intervention and they outsourced all of the maintenance and asset performance to somebody else. To us in fact! The challenge for us was to reduce the cost of maintenance by 20% in one hundred days then to reduce the cost of maintenance every year from then on by 5%.

We did that by splitting those into two different projects. The first things we called the quick wins. In the quick wins area we are trying to create a virtuous cycle of activity that builds on itself and finds time and money. If you can find time you can spend some of that time on cost reduction activities.
There was no opportunity in this plant to pay a big bill, to pay a whole lot of money to consultants to come in and tell us what to do.

Where do we start on this virtuous cycle? We will start with work volume reduction. We had to reduce the volume of work that was being done. What we did, was we looked at the planned maintenance. The maintenance they had in the system they did routinely. We went through it with a very big steel capped boot approach. You will see from this graph that there was 15% of maintenance that we just deleted because it actually wasn’t adding any value to the asset. Another 15% we extended the frequency of.

Getting rid of those tasks found some time and then we could spend that time on basic care and precision. Precision is just about getting things right the first time. A lot of our maintenance interventions offer costs down the road. So, these two graphs are analysis of rework and we looked at every time a person went back to a job that had been done less than six weeks ago. If you go back to do the same thing within six weeks, that is rework.

What you see on the left is an analysis by the number of reworks and on the right you see an analysis by the value of those tasks. You conclude that the value is the much more important thing to analyse.

How can we eliminate some of that rework? When we went around that circle and looked at the things that went wrong, we found three things that we needed to solve. One was better standards. The guys going out to do work needed to know, ‘to what standard I am doing this work’, and that needed to be written down because sometimes we were sending people out to, let’s say tighten a bolt which is not a standard. The way you tighten a bolt might be entirely different from the way that I might tighten a bolt. Asset specific training, the workers needed to understand the specific asset that they were working on. Different assets in different parts of the plant might behave differently, so training was important.

Thirdly - having the right tools to do the job. Often we skimp on tools for the want of a thousand dollar laser alignment kit, we miss align pumps and motors all for bearing problems later on. They sound like little things, but when you do them hundreds or thousands of times a day, they all add up to some millions of dollars in this case. Basic care is about what our operators do to maintain things. This plant had a lot of mechanical equipment in it, so the basic care activities were about keeping things lubricated with the right grease and oils, keeping things clean, dry, tight and aligned (vibration free). By doing that we could stop building in problems.

So few found some time, we stopped building in problems which has also found a bit of extra time, now we need to increase the productivity of our workforce. The first thing we did was do a tool time study. We actually followed people around. Not a time and motion study, but we were following the workers around to find out where we as management could see workers were wasting their time.

Here is the before and after graph. You see that in the before graph, only about 19% of time was spent actually on the tools. So the plumber was only spending 19% of his time plumbing, the fitter was only spending 19% of his time fitting. Most of it was spent waiting for things. Waiting for things is just bad planning. Waiting for subcontractors to turn up and dig a hole. Waiting for specialist equipment to arrive, waiting for parts. All we did was having identified where we were wasting time, we formed little teams to work on those projects and get rid of them.

Afterwards we got up to 57% of the time actually on the tools. My experience is that anything over about 60% is almost impossible to achieve. You think your workforce is working more than 60% of the
time, you are probably lying to yourself or they are lying to you or both. That is probably much as good as it gets.

Overtime was also an issue. Because this was in a rural environment there wasn’t a big sub-contractor base to draw from. What we found was that some of the supervisors were authoring their own salary increases by scheduling routine work to be done on Saturday morning or calling themselves back. They would pick the best people out of their team and they would say, come on Charlie, lets do some work on Saturday and they would do that work.

All we did there was introduced an accountants solution. We said, all overtime and call backs need to be approved two up and the result was a reduction in overtime and call back from 30% of total wages bill to about 4% of total wages bill. Quite a big boots approach, but it was quite effective.

Introducing a visual workplace is about avoiding errors and making people more productive. We use a system that Dr Gwyn Galloworth created. I will just go through this very briefly. We start off with visual order things, things like shadow boards on tools. It sounds stupid, but if you don’t have to look for the tool it is always there and it is a lot quicker. I didn’t dwell on it, but if we looked at the sources of error in rework, we found that a very large source of rework was leaving tools in an inappropriate machine after you had finished working on it. You don’t do things like that with shadow boards.

Visual Standards: Putting sticker on things with how to fix it if it breaks down often, so the standards are actually visually displayed.

Visual Metrics: Showing people how good they are doing or measuring things. Another thing we did was we created individual metrics for individual people. Right at the high level we have some really neat esoteric big metrics and we take that right down to an individual workman who will have one metric at a time. We don’t believe in the balance score card because the balance score card won’t change behaviours. If you want to change behaviour and culture at a place it’s simply a sum total of all the individual behaviours in an organisation. If you want to change cultures you have got to change individual behaviours. If you want to change individual behaviours you have got to do it one metric at a time. If you tell a person five things that are important in their job, typically change will be much slower because they don’t know which of those five things is important. You need to tell them one thing and then change it in a couple of months when they start gaining it and then changing it again.

Visual Controls: Now days we have got computers that control everything, but sometimes it is good to have little red cards in our bins of bolts to know when they are empty, because maybe the computer isn’t right.

Visual Guarantees: If I look at this for example I know that every file there is in the right shelf and in the right place, because of the way it is marked with the tape.

Spares and Contractors: I won’t dwell on spares; we ran a spares optimization project. We put spares data into a little application we have and that optimized the spares.

Sub Contractors: Sub contractors were difficult at this sight because it was a relatively small town. Everybody in the town was related to the plant. We did four things.

Supplier Concentration: Where we had twenty suppliers doing things that four suppliers could do, we actually went through the records and looked at who was supplying the highest quality work. Not the cheapest work, but the highest quality work. We chose those four suppliers to concentrate on. What we did then was, if ever a piece of work went out we would create a specification, email it out to all four
of those suppliers to get them to quote on it. They knew at any particular time they had to be the lowest price. They knew that if they hadn’t won a piece of work for three or four weeks, it was because they weren’t the lowest price. That drove price down and kept quality reasonably constant.

Specification improvement was indeed a part of that. Little engineering works went out, billed per sample. The sample would come back, not quite right because we had failed to specify it before it went out. So, making sure things were specified before it went out for bids was critically important.

The last one was - some contractors, there was no competition for, and they were the only one. For those we had to sit down with and say “where are we wasting your time and effort”. What is it that we are doing when we instruct you that is wasting your time and effort? How can we get rid of that, I want to keep half of what you save and you can keep the other half as a margin increase! That was a really good exercise, because we all knew where it was we were wasting their time and effort.

Lay Off: Sooner or later, if you are going to capture productivity increase, you have to fire someone or lay someone off. The rule there is, in every organisation there are terrorists. They don’t look like terrorists. Usually they are the nice guys because they have to be nice to keep their job. Usually they have been around for a long time, but if you knew them then, the way you knew them now, would you hire them? If the answer is no, then they are the first people to let go.

When you do let go staff if has got to increase the quality of work and productivity, not decrease it. Be careful who you let go. In this case we tried to identify, not very many people, one, two or three people who were generally underperformers. A lot of work they did was done wrong.

Defect Elimination: Now we are almost around the circle and the last piece we looked at was defect elimination. How can we stop things from breaking down in the first place? The organization had a reliability improvement team and we didn’t touch what they were doing. What we did do, was try to drive reliability improvement or defect elimination right down into the tradesman level.

We taught all trades people a thing called ‘Five Why’s’. This is quite simply; asking why did this happen five times in a row, to try to get back to the root cause, instead of people going out and ‘doing the job because they were told to do the job’, and walking away. We wanted to create some level of ownership of the asset in their mind to help change their culture. For planners and supervisors, we trained them in a little bit more complex methodology called ‘Root Cause Analysis’. They are the people who see repeat work coming through. Work that came through that was done six months ago. Every time they saw repeat work they did a ‘Root Cause Analysis’ and tried to solve the root cause.

A better way is simply a suggestion box scheme. It is a little scheme where we give out note books and pencils and every body carries a notebook in their top pocket. When they think of something that we could be doing better, they write it down and put it in the box. It is as simple as that. They don’t get rewarded for it monetarily, but they do get a song and dance made about it. Lots of ideas come out through that system.

Visual Problem Solving: This particular plant was an industrial plant out in the desert. It was subject to hard conditions. When we had a bad act up, a piece of the plant that broke down a lot, we painted it black so that everybody knew. Beside it we put a notice board and a whole lot of yellow stickers. Anybody who was walking past a piece of black plant, who got an idea, would write their idea on a sticker and put it up on the board. That way the engineers had a whole lot more information to work on.
That is the quick wins, how we were trying to get 20% in one hundred days. We just forced all that out in one hundred days. The next thing is how do we get the 5% per year, the 5% year on year? That is a bit more complex and sophisticated I guess. Essentially we used a four step process - compare what we are doing to what is actually happening in this place, to best practice.

That creates a set of gaps. Then we are going to prioritize those gaps. Which ones need to be closed first and which ones need to be closed last? Schedule projects and manage them like it is a project plan or a program of work.

What is Best Practice? We have a model that says there are these six major models of best practice and asset management modules.

1. Life cycle planning. How we plan the life cycle.
2. How we manage the maintenance itself.
3. How we manage the logistics.
4. How we improve the reliability of the thing.
5. How we modify it and how we manage that modification process.
6. How we manage the data that sits around it.

We don’t have time to dwell on that model, but I have just pulled out the next level below. I guess the thing is this is a model of Asset Management that goes well beyond just making an Asset Management Plan. This is just the top line of it. What asset have I got? What condition is it in? What do operations need from it? How do I make a plan for it? How do I support it and what the cost of it is? That is just the top line.

Having got an understanding of what we think best practice is, we need to make this assessment - What is actually happening? We don’t use consultants, it’s too expensive, so what we do is we train the people on site and we bring a few extra people in over a four day period. We train them on what asset management is, what we think best practice is, how to conduct an assessment and a little bit about consulting and change, because they are going to get involved in it.

We have a three dimensional database tool that the newly trained guys go out and enter data into and it is preloaded with our best practice. We put the organizational structure on top and it is preloaded on the other side with 296 things we consider in relation to Asset Management. Things generally around people, process, technology and metrics (what gets measured), those things tell us a lot about an organization. When I talk about people, I am talking about leadership, culture, organisational structure; I am talking about skills or training levels.

We gather data three ways. We follow people around as you already know and talk to them. We have structured interviews, where we go out and interview people. The system generates a structured interview questionnaire and lastly we interrogate the data that you have already got in the system.

Then the database produces a little set of reports. Because it is three dimensional we can cut it by organizational structure and do a whole lot of stuff. Lots of consultants have this stuff. It tells us where we are now (the green level on this graph), it tells you where we think we can get to in a year (that is the orange level) and it tells us where we think we should be in relation to this.

We have identified the gaps and what we need to change in the organization. Now we want to program those gaps. We use a model called a Capability Maturity Model and if you have heard of Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, Maslow being a maintenance manager may well have come up with this because this works in the same way. It basically says that there are some basic needs that you have to fill right at the very bottom and get those things right before you can move up to the next level. Maslow
said, ‘while I am starving I won’t think about self actualization’. We say ‘While you are out of control and not planning and scheduling work properly, but going around reacting to breakdowns, you will never be able to concentrate on higher order things in Asset Management’.

Essentially having discovered the gaps we now fill the gaps by moving from the bottom of the model to the top. We program them out in a big program sheet. It has some information about the current status, where we want to go in the future and a set of projects in a gant chart that project this out. We make it very visual and it is usually very big. It is somewhere in between six and ten feet long, then we put it on the wall of the office so everybody knows what it is that we are doing, why we are doing it and where we are going with this.

Then we just apply program control techniques to this stuff. We allocate out each individual project to a member of staff and then we monitor it. We have a weekly program management meeting and we keep things on track and force change as it goes through.

What did we get on this particular site? Here is their graph and you can see what happened in the first three years. When we took over we didn’t get our 20% in one hundred days. It took us an extra quarter (double that time) before we got our 20%, but we did cut 20% out of the organisation. As you can see it increased through put, by a little over 11%. It had no detrimental effect. It actually had a positive effect. We did that by smoothing out those lines obviously. When a thing breaks down less, it costs less. The key to this was not working on the cost side, but working on the thing breaking down less. The following year we got out 5% quarter on quarter cost reduction.

What did we learn out of this? Firstly I want to distinguish between doing Asset Management and merely having an Asset Management Plan. Having an Asset Management Plan for your assets aren’t doing Asset Management it is just having an Asset Management Plan. It is a step on the path.

Secondly, a lot of good Asset Management is about the culture of the organisation. You can’t get good Asset Management, unless you have got a culture that supports good Asset Management. If you don’t have good Asset Management now, you will need to change the culture of the organisation. It is not necessarily an easy thing to do, but it is quite possible to do. It just needs that disciplined approach. You need to plan out ‘what culture do I want’ and work towards it.

It needs to be driven from the top. Good Asset Management is not a thing you can get by delegating it to a middle manager. Good Asset Management has got to come from the top. I guess as Councillors, Directors or Senior Executives in an organisation, we have got to be careful about the signals we send; by the way we talk to people if we are going to lead good Asset Management.

If something is broken down and we ask what it is going to cost to fix it, when people hear that they hear, fix it up cheaply. What we have got to do is ask questions that drive that cultural change that people won’t misinterpret. Ask - Can we prevent it from happening again is a far better question to ask than, ‘Who caused this’?

So there it is, Asset Management - very sexy, everybody wants it!

**Question**: Mr President, I am just wondering, would there be any chance of hiring this gentleman to run Queensland Transport and Queensland Rail?

**Answer (President)**: Actually QR uses a bit of Transfields expertise in some projects and some alliance project and it does work.
Question: Stuart, have you actually done a specific ROI? Do you actually know the return on investment you have made in the process?

Answer: Essentially I didn’t dwell on it, but if I go back to the Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs of Maintenance, the capability and maturity model. There are two magical things about it. One is, if you start at the bottom and then gradually move up, you will have a greater chance of success. The more important thing perhaps is that it is self funding.

What we are doing at the bottom of the triangle is, we are finding time and money and then we are going to spend a piece of that time or money in getting more and more sophisticated. We could have gone in and hired consultants and had a big expenditure up front to get the result much quicker, maybe or maybe not.

Was there a capital gain investment up front? No! Did we invest in new technology? No. It was just doing some very simple things and there is nothing in that formula that is magical or new or exciting. It is just doing it in a disciplined approach. So, the return on investment is very high. They got their 20% cost reduction. Not in the time that they wanted, I have got to say, but you should always set a target as tight as you possibly can. You are typically never going to get more than the target.
Address “Remuneration Tribunal”

Mr Adrian Bloomfield
Chairman, Remuneration Tribunal

Thank you very much for your welcome again and thank to the organisers for allowing the Tribunal again to come and address delegates to the conference.

I just want to talk about three things very quickly today. The first is what we did last year, second is how we propose to attack matters this year and then thirdly is to talk about some issues that are going to arise in the future.

Firstly just a reminder that the Tribunal which was established in October of 2007 has got three primary functions. Those functions are there to establish categories of Local Government, to assign councils with the exception of the Brisbane City Council, to a category and then decide remuneration levels to be paid to councillors. We are obliged to do that each year before the first of December.

One of the early decisions that the Tribunal made when it was appointed was we were not going to be a George St Tribunal. We wanted to have, as much as possible, interface and contact with councils and we have taken a conscious and deliberate decision that we are going to try to meet as many councils as we can during the course of our three year term.

For that reason when we put together the consultation program last year, as you can see, we met with a number of delegations at the Indigenous Conference Council and also here. I think there are about 25 deputations that we spoke with. Then we also went and visited 19 other Councils in their workplace. We appreciate the opportunity and the hospitality that was provided to us during those meetings.

As a result of those consultations and the written submissions which were received from members of the public and some councils through the CEO or elected officials, we made the following decisions:

- We decided that we were going to maintain the nexus that we established in 2007 with the State MLA’s. That is that salaries are set as a percentage of the State MLA.
- We decided to maintain the practice of having a minimum and a maximum salary range for each level of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and councillor, within each of the ten categories that we established.
- We decided after reviewing the remuneration levels paid to Mayors in categories three, four, five and six, that we had undervalued the worth of the Mayors the first time around and we increased them by 5% of the rate of an MLA.

We had to make a consequential adjustment to category seven because the rates are structured in such a way that the maximum level in one category is the minimum level in the next. If we increased level six maximum we had to increase the level seven minimum. That only affects two councils, being Ipswich and Logan.

We also decided after a very extensive review of the situation involving the special category of councils, which primarily involves the seventeen Indigenous councils plus several others, to align the maximum remuneration levels for Mayors in those categories with the Mayors in level three. Take into account a number of concerns that in particular, some of the smaller Indigenous councils had about capacity to pay, we lowered the minimum remuneration levels that apply in that category. We moved as I indicated a moment ago, Ipswich Council from category six to category seven.
This is perhaps the most contentious issue that the Tribunal is going to face this year. Because of our alignment of wages with State MLA’s and because of the decision of Prime Minister Rudd to put a freeze on Federal Parliamentarian salaries to which State Parliamentarian salaries are aligned, there has been a freeze of Federal, State and Local Government salaries. That is not likely to change unless we do one of the three things at the bottom of that slide. That is to break the nexus with MLA’s, to alter the maximum in a category or categories, or change a particular Councils category or several Councils categories.

To look at whether we are going to do any of those three things we will be undertaking a further consultation program this year. We are meeting about eight or nine deputations during the course of the conference and then in the week of the 21st September, we are going to have our roller skates on visiting all of those Councils listed there within a three day period, starting about eight o’clock in the morning, then meeting and driving, meeting and driving. We will get them all done!

We will also be receiving written submissions and we have invited public submissions to come in with the closing date of 1st September. If any councillor is interested in putting in a submission we would encourage that, with a reminder the closing date is the 1st September.

We are also conscious that in previous years we have asked for a lot for data to come into the Tribunal from CEO’s. We are conscious also of the fact that the CEO’s receive a lot of requests from the Department of Local Government and other institutions. So, we are looking to piggy back on the data that has already been collected rather than ask you to provide us with fresh data that you have given to someone else as well. We are investigating means by which that might be done.

We want to use that data to update the tables which are at the back of the first report of 2007. This will allow us to check over the alignment of Councils in terms of how they sit in the categories. We will be having a close look at that data, just to make sure where people sit in their respective pecking orders.

Can I just talk about the amalgamation loading? When the Tribunal first tried to establish the amalgamation loading, we did so, on the basis that we didn’t wish to establish higher rates on an ongoing basis for councillors that might be involved in a lot of discussion within their Councils as a result of amalgamation. Because, at the end of three years or four years there was going to be a whopping great drop back to normal levels. We didn’t want that to occur. We decided that we would phase out what we put into place as an amalgamation loading, to recognize the extra work that those councillors were doing, over a four year period.

It had been our anticipation that wages would increase by three or four percent each year. As the wages went up, parts of the amalgamation loading would come away. The councillors would still get a net increase of one and half, two or three percent, whatever it might be. Unfortunately because of the wages freeze that has been implemented as a result of the decision of Prime Minister Rudd, reflected in State Parliament by Premier Bligh, we have seen the situation where come the first of July just recently, the councillors who have been receiving an amalgamation loading, would have received a small reduction in their weekly wage.

If any CEO’s haven’t implemented the reduction as yet, they need to go back and have a look at that, because there is no authority to pay higher than the rates which we have set as of the 1st July. I will come back to that issue in a moment when I deal with special cases a little later.
We toyed with the idea of perhaps looking at changing the duration of the next amalgamation loading. If we do that, we start to come into problems again next July. People might get a three or four percent increase if we align the normal operative dates for the Tribunal decision of 1st January, with the next phased reduction, perhaps in loading than in 2010 or 201, there is still going to be a reduction in wages. So we are likely to leave the dates for the changes unchanged of 1st July implementation or reduction date, because that coincides with the expected increases coming out of the Commonwealth Remuneration Tribunal flying through the State system.

The periods that the amalgamation loading operate has shown, fifteen months for the first quantum, twelve months, twelve months and then it will depend on when the election date is held in 2012. Whether it is March or October, the final amalgamation voting will run for that period.

In terms of the future, the Tribunal will cease to exist as it exists presently, with the enactment of the new Local Government Act scheduled to take effect on the 1st December 2009. Although I note that there was a proposition put by Rockhampton to the Minister yesterday that the date should be changed and the date might go out. In any event when the Act does come into effect, the remuneration Tribunal as such will cease to exist and it will become the Local Remuneration and Discipline Tribunal.

The composition of that Tribunal is yet to be determined. It will still be three people and the role will involve, not only the establishment of remuneration levels, but handling the most important instances of misconduct that are not going to be dealt with by the Regional Disciplinary Panels. Any determination that we make this year has to be given to the Minister before the 1st December and the outcomes will operate from the 1st January.

Special cases - the Tribunal isn’t powered to consider special cases that might be put before it. We have dealt with only two or three special cases that have been advanced, over the nearly two years that we have been established.

There might be arguments and I underline the word might, be argument that individual Councils as opposed to councillors, can advance as to why the amalgamation loading that died or reduced, on the 1st July just past might be continued. Because of what is happening within individual Councils. I wouldn’t rule out consideration of any such submission which might come. It was never out intention that people were going to suffer a reduction. If there is a strong argument that the workload continues, which justifies the continuation of the previous amalgamation, then we will deal with that submission on its merits.

Other than that, I am not sure whether I will be here next year in my role as the Chairperson or someone will replace me. I would like to acknowledge the close cooperation that I have received from many councillors, Deputy Mayors and Mayors I have spoken to over the last couple of years. The input has been greatly appreciated and it has certainly helped us make the decisions and make the decision making process much easier than it would have otherwise been.

I also want to extend my appreciation to the LGAQ for very close discussions that we had with them when the Tribunal was first established and we made our first report back in 2007.

Thank you.

Question: Is there a short answer why there is a difference between the minimum and maximum in each category? We have got to make the decision. We are damned if we go high by the rate payers. If we go a little bit down, by our wives or our husbands and I can’t see why we advertise for a job with the pay rate, is because of experience. That wouldn’t apply in this case.
Answer: If we were going to set pay rates that would reflect the true circumstances of every Council, we would have seventy two different pay rates. We decided that we were not going to set seventy two pay rates. We were going to set a reasonable number and we decided a reasonable number was ten.

We have made part of the political decision that needs to be made, but with respect, Councils need to make the next political decision as to where they set themselves within the range. Based upon where they think they might sit with the other Councils that are categorized at that level and issues of affordability.

Last year when I gave my address in Cairns, I put up on the board a screen showing the actual decisions of Councils and showing the levels that had been decided. In the back of the 2008 report that table is produced and it shows that the minimum and maximum range has been accessed quite widely by Councils to set rates, at which they think are appropriate. At the moment the feedback we are getting back from a majority of Councils in our consultation, is that they want a minimum and maximum range. We certainly appreciate that some Councils want us to make the political decision for them and set a rate, but on present thinking of the Tribunal we are not going to do that.

Question: In relation to the comment on the freeze on the Federal and State Politicians. I am not sure if you are aware, but I understand that the Federal Members Electorate Allowances are not subject to the freeze. In many cases the Electorate Allowances are just an addendum to their pay, rather than being used necessarily in the community. That is perfectly lawful, but I just ask you to take that into account. Effectively Federal Members have had an increase even though their base rate has been frozen.

Answer: I recognise what you say, and what you say is correct. The Electoral Allowances have changed. The Tribunal thus far hasn’t set an Electoral Allowance and indeed on the issue of entitlements other than remuneration, the Act precludes the Tribunal from looking at those sorts of things. Our discussions in the last couple of years and in the last two years with Councils, suggest that the bulk of Councils still want us, as opposed to the Department to set the entitlements that they might receive by way of the thousand dollars that they can claim for education, the five hundred dollars for out of pockets and that sort of thing.

We will be continuing to ask the Government to shift the responsibility for setting those types of allowances to us rather than the Department. We can’t take into account other than the remuneration, because the Act doesn’t allow us to.

Question: Adrian, your Board, is it truly independent? It is not being meddled by State Politicians?

Answer: No. One of the things that I can say with complete and absolute honesty is that apart from me giving the Tribunal’s report to the Minister at the time when it’s in its published forms, we have not had any discussions with any Government Minister. The Department made a submission on the first occasion, which is 2007. They haven’t made any submissions since that time.

Minister Pitt, when he called us together to tell us that we were going to be forming the Tribunal, I think about the 27th October 2007, asked us to have a look at the case of Indigenous Councils. Other than him asking us that, we haven’t had any pressure, consultation, contact with any Government Minister or a Government Bureaucrat.

Question: The second question is what is it costing you to run your Board?
Answer: I am normally employed down at the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission. The Act says that because I am paid by that body, I don’t get paid for any of the work that I put in. I am spending on average about four to five weeks a year, when you convert it to full time equivalents, that is carried out of the commission budget. The other two members of the Tribunal don’t get as involved as me because I do the bulk of the writing. They do get paid an attendance fee. One of the members donates hers to charity. I am not sure what the other one does. There is a part time secretary to help within the Department of Local Government. Then, we incur air fares and travel costs as we travel around the State, probably, $50,000 I suppose, all up, counting everything.
Address “Local State, Queensland Local Government 1985-15 March 2008”

Ms Gabrielle Walsh
Author

Professor John Martin
Director, Centre for Sustainable Regional Communities, La Trobe University

Gabrielle Walsh: Thank you I could say, good afternoon from John and good afternoon from me.

Good afternoon, first of all Cr Paul Bell AM, Executive Director Greg Hallam PSM and great stall wart in this whole project, the Rt Hon Lord Mayor Cr Campbell Newman, guests, ladies and gentlemen.

I would first of all like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands on which we are today meeting. This history of Local Government in Queensland form 1985 to the 15th March 2008, when the most significant contemporary amalgamation of Queensland Councils occurred, was made possible through the Fred Rogers Memorial Trust, a fund established in honour of a past President of the LGAQ Inc, the representative body of Local Government. Fred Rogers’ son Glen, himself an ex-Mayor of Stanthorpe is here today.

In commissioning this work, it was felt that a history and most notable, a critical analysis of Local Government and indeed LGAQ would be valuable, both as a recorded chronicle as much as what it might reveal in terms of political economy, public policy and public administration. This history is premised on the notion of the Local State. It examines its development, its changes and its missed opportunities. It is cognisant of past examination and past literature. Indeed the extensive literature search undertaken in the preparation of this history of Queensland Local Government reveals the perspicacity of Martin Mowbray’s observation that within the substantial body of literature on Australian Government and politics there is no shortage of material dealing specifically with Local Government and its changing profile. However, a number of features appear to characterise recent publications on Local Government. These include:

1. The absence of fundamental questions about the structure or place of Local Government within the overall state or apparatus of political economy.
2. The absence of serious efforts to explain the trajectory of change of the level of the local state.
3. Theoretical conservatism and assumptions that underlie the majority of contributions.

Mowbray’s critique and the prevailing literature are examined in chapter six – the literature, the local state and its future. This history has considered the role of the Local State internationally. An important contemporary reference to such a focused analysis may be found in Sir Michael Lyons’ final report examining English Local Government Taxation and the funding of local services. Michael Lyon says, ‘I want to emphasis in our discussions, about the role of Local Government, we must not become fixated on the service delivery role that has become so important over the last century’. There are three interrelated but identifiable sets of roles that Local Government played in the past and continues to play as service provider, as a vehicle for investment in infrastructure and as an institution of Government - a place for debate, discussion and collective decision making.

This book is unapologetically from the perspective of the internal life of Queensland Local Government. That said; it must not be assumed that it accepts a view of a benign local state. If anything it provides ample evidence of a heterogeneous Local State whose principal actors were politically engaged and when either a policy vacuum developed, or a problematic agenda was not prosecuted by a State
Government, as occurred during the Borbidge minority Government and in the first two terms of the Beattie minority Government, a Government of one seat majority. The Local State and its political representatives seize the agenda, seize the opportunity, prosecuted its own policies with notable success.

Equally it is argued; once the Beattie Government achieved landslide victories and a perceived an actual handsome mandate and so as to ensure a big picture reform as his legacy, Beattie embarked on what his Government termed Boundary Reform and which the Local State termed, forced amalgamation of councils. None of this should be assumed therefore that the reform of Local Government was not required. Indeed this account of Local Government accepts that not only was it required it was actively pursued by the Local State and its peak representative body LGAQ. The manner, pace and form of the reform was not. This is Beattie’s legacy.

Monkkonen observed; unlike most economic actors, even other corporations, Local Governments have always presented troublesome control problems. There semi autonomy, highly politicized nature and fiscal independence separated them from the larger body politic that had created them and to which they belonged.

Yes it is to them that we must turn to understand the activities, hence nature of the American State. In twenty first century Australia, the question as to the future of the Local State, will as Monkkonen suggests, inform the future role and characteristics of the Australian State. Consideration of this important question maybe found in the final chapter.

The approach adopted in this work is one that enlivens the voices and intellects of the LGAQ and Local Government Bureaucrats and politicians who help shape the policy and politics of the Local State and each of the decades under examination. In this sense the work is strengthened by the recording of the lived experience of those individuals from LGAQ and Local Government.

Unlike other geographic states in Australia, these bureaucrats and politicians have occupied their respective positions for relatively long periods. It is impossible to write the history of Queensland Local Government from 1985 to March 15th 2008 without having regard to the contribution of these individuals (all men). However, the contribution of these men to the history of the Local State has not been premised on the great men of history approach. The book examines the role of women in Queensland Local Government. This history of Queensland Local Government was being written at the time of the Local Government Constitutional Convention. This surely is a time in modern Australia, to consider how best democracy might be served in the 21st century and beyond. Surely too, it is a time for critical reflection on how contemporary governance occurs and whether there is a much greater and better place for the Local State. Whether post colonial State Governments have a place in modern Australia or whether politics generally and programmatic and service delivery outcomes specifically, might be better served through a system of National and Regional Government.

The patriarchal invocation that goes something like, ‘Our fore fathers never contemplated Local Government’s recognition as part of the Australian Commonwealth, part of the Australian Constitution. Anyway, Local Government is a creature of the State’s Constitutions, is manifestly conservative, visionless, constricting of ambition and ignorant of history. It is a protestation more akin to a catechistic faith expressed through rote learning, than to a mature contemplation of what has gone before and what might be appropriate for the future’.

This history reveals that the programs and policy outcomes of Local Government emanated out of State and Federal Governments attempts to expand their service delivery and agendas. As much it was an expression of Councils community experience, of the impact of economic rationalism and structural
change and globalisation. Its contours, contributions and contradictions are a manifest outcome of human agency. History after all is not a dry and impassive outcome of external forces. It is the outcome of lived experiences, the concerted contribution of human beings. It is a live and vibrant, not dour and impersonal; precisely because of the material actions of human actors - both men and women, indigenous and non-indigenous, urban and country alike. Equally a warts and all account, Queensland Local Government must surely address inconvenient issues such as corruption. If it is truly to be a genuine historical account and if more importantly, it is to contribute to a more formed critical and open discourse to its future.

At a point in time, when the work for this history of Local Government was well advanced, but still not completed, I was asked by Greg Hallam, what I had learned about Local Government. The question was disarming. I was so immersed in the material I went home and thought more about the question.

Delving into the material has been like witnessing a very good drama. It has been an adventure, with all the attributes of a good drama. Betrayals, David and Goliath struggles, at times unbelievably visionary and other times sentimentally lost in the past. It has not been a simple story of change. It has however contained an evolving and consistent theme. A struggle by LGA and Local Government itself to make Local Government’s presence felt as a genuine tier of Government in its own right, a Local State. Not some appendage to or poor cousin of a State or Federal Government.

Equally the move towards Regional Councils offers the Local State an unprecedented opportunity to organise itself, to assert itself and to be recognised in its own right. Ironically as revealed in this history, the very reason why past State Governments encouraged the proliferation of smaller councils. George Street did not want large regional bodies with their own funds, their own politicians, their own discretionary budgets. It made them nervous.

This is why the creation of large Regional Councils in the 21st century is so fascinating and worthy of analysis. This history reveals the human drama that is played out in equally fascinating ways, courage, taking on all comers, winning and losing, of naivety and of trust and betrayal. The history traces the decades, stretching from an activist and supported Minister to the transformation of a Local Government champion into the role of an enforcer. Finally to a brash young Minister who on occasion showed both admirable courage and as the events outlined in chapter five reveal, simultaneously prosecuted two alternate strategies, whilst keeping his cards close to his chest. All of which resulted in Cr Bell and others feeling ambushed over the announcement of the Council Amalgamations and a Premier who may have permanently tarnished his political persona in the last year of his Premiership. This makes for gripping drama and a worthy read. The exchange between Russ Hinze and Sir Albert Abbot and Greg Hoffman, detailed in chapter two is a wonderful metaphor of the times and the relationship between State and Local Governments.

Equally the coffee meeting at COAG between Peter Beattie and Paul Bell underscores the personal aspects of the politics of betrayal outlined in chapter five.

History and the writing of it are never value free and lofty impervious to internal or external forces. The writers’ prejudices and values intrude in the interpretation of facts and events. Accordingly this account of Queensland Local Government is no different. The role of women in Local Government, the move toward its greater independence and greater community recognition of Indigenous Councils, the impact of class on the system of the Government of Local State, inform this history of Queensland Local Government.

As much as possible I have attempted to let the story unfold. To not often intrude self indulgently. However the final chapter both revokes this habit and attempts to provide a thesis to understand Local
Government and what might be its future. This historical account of the development of the Local State reflects a strongly held person criticism of the timidity of historical analysis in Australia over the past two decades. This timidity of analysis was noted by Humphrey McQueen in his refreshed 2004 publication of A New Britannia.

Meanwhile the historical profession has suffered a loss in a nerve in its scope and scale. More than ever, students are directed to topics that could hardly matter less, in a tiny patch covering less than a decade.

Mindful of my mothers presence here today and also to reveal a little of myself, my motivation, my compulsion for writing this work and for my love of writing itself; I am reminded of the wonderful piece in the book by the extraordinary Sydney Poitier, a superb actor, a writer of considerable substance and a most impressive intellect. In his letters to his Great Granddaughter titled “Life Beyond Measure”, where he writes - Nor is life altogether devoid of compulsions, here is a list of those that remain; a compulsion to read more and better understand the world around me, to experience all that I can and most of all to learn all that there is to learn that might make me a better person, with better insights and a deeper understanding of myself and my fellow human beings.

Such has been a preoccupation of mine, a life goal, perhaps a principle one since as far back as I can remember. What kind of compulsion you might ask draws me toward such internal wanderings as to the nature of bravery verses cowardice and as to the nature of human nature. Some of this drive comes to all of us when we reach the age when we become a living time machine, seeing the lines of our lives stretching back and forward. Apparently it is a common affliction. The one erring compulsion that I never try to reign in is the one to learn, to understand, to decipher complicated things and circumstances.

Now for my two bobs worth! As intimated in an early chapter of the book, Local Government's finances require a rethink about the distribution of the goods and services tax. At a previous time and as documented in this history, unity had been achieved between the Queensland State Government and the Queensland Local State over a share of consumption tax revenue being directed towards Local Government. Such an approach is a sustaining one.

Much public headlines had been taken up on more recent rate hikes by Queensland Councils. Such rate hikes are explicable. Queensland Councils have much greater responsibilities in the provision of goods and services than in any other state. Queensland Councils have responsibility for 152,415 kilometers of roads. They are responsible for vital infrastructure and yet cost shifting by the State Government continues unabated.

Rate hikes are poor alternatives to better public policy by the Commonwealth Government. A share in taxation revenue is good policy. That the Local State aught to have such a share in tax revenue to provide the array of services required of it is a no-brainer. To resolve this one issue in the short term would be pioneering and futuristic. It is worthy of immediate attention and action. It would reflect that the Hawker Inquiry was more than an expensive taxpayer funded talk fest. It would fundamentally alter the role of the Local State and greatly assist in its developed autonomy. It is good public policy and good politics.

In writing this history it is hoped it will stimulate debate about the politics of the period and the place of the Local State in modern Australia. By employing the thesis of the Local State it is hoped that it will offer the possibility of better understanding of the political economy of Local Government, together with stimulating future critical analysis and research.
The publication of this book was superintended by Athol Gibson who has achieved where others would have feared to tread. So thank you Athol. All the essential background work was done with so much skill by Angie Gibson. Thank you Angie! This work is ambitious, written contemporaneously while significant changes occurring to and within the Local State. With unflinching support from Greg Hallam and Professor John Martin; constructive input from the review panel, comprised of Maurie Tucker and Gary Kellar; generous contribution and advice from Paul Bell and Noel Playford; together with gems of original material and insight from Greg Hoffman. I have been emboldened enough to stick my neck out.

I hope the end result is not timid, is a useful chronicle and contains sufficient illumination so as to honor those who helped create the history of Queensland Local Government, from 1985 to the 15th March 2008.

**Professor John Martin**

Well done Gabriel. It is written with passion, it is delivered with passion. It isn’t fiction, it is a great read and I am sure you will all look forward to getting your copy.

Cr Bell, Greg Hallam, distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen. It was an honour for me to get a phone call from Greg Hallam some time back and asked me to work with Gabrielle in an advisory capacity in the writing of this book. It is not often you actually get that opportunity. The Rogers family with their generous contribution some time back enabled that to actually happen.

It is a great read and I certainly recommend it to you. What you see is that Gabrielle doesn’t hold any punches in this and yet the story is a colourful story. I work with a colleague at the Institute of Local Government Studies in Birmingham and we were doing some workshops and he asked me to send him some case studies to him about critical incidents in Local Government. I went to the ICAC reports, not telling him this and I sent these things off to him. He came back to me on the email and said, John it is a bit fanciful. I said it is Australian Local Government. That is what you’re going to find when you get your copy of The Local State.

The idea of the Local State is very important. You just don’t write as a story with some criticism. There has to be some benchmark. There has to be some criteria against which you actually do that. The aspiration is I believe your aspiration of the Local State, that local democracy prevails. You have a level of responsibility and authority for your decision making in Local Government and you are the Local State as we have the State and the Nation State itself. So, I certainly recommend that to you.

I just have a couple of quotes that I would like to share with you. You will find there is lots of good information through here. This is a story that Greg Hoffman will know. This is where he and Alby Abbot are having a meeting with Russ Hinze and this is from Greg Hoffman:

It is an interesting recollection because Alby Abbot was about five foot four inches tall and probably weighed about sixty kilos. Whilst I was obviously taller (indeed, well over six foot) I didn’t weigh much more either. And good on you, you still don’t. Here was this big colossus Russ Hinze bellowing across the room, leaning on the desk that was moving towards us effectively telling us where to go and the story goes on. We can all imagine those sorts of stories.

If you think that Local Government doesn’t play a key role in the broader politics, here is one that is absolutely fascinating. It is from Bob Katter when he became Minister for Heritage in the State Government.
This is a quote from Bob Katter: I was crying a bit because I thought we might lose some votes. But I wasn’t crying about the Bellview (this is the knocking down of the Bellview and all the politics) and of course all those Liberals standing over there crying. I thought they were screamingly funny, but when I started to think about the political ramifications of it, I didn’t find it so funny because that was when they split.

These things are important, it is written largely on the Local State. It is $59.95. I recommend you get a copy. You will I understand get copies for your library and you will get a soft cover one for you council as well.

I congratulate the LGAQ for their foresight to go through this process and engage Gabrielle to do it. The last thanks are to Gabrielle herself because I think she has done an outstanding job and I recommend this to you.
Address “Planning for Performance: Brisbane’s success”

_Rt Hon Lord Mayor of Brisbane
Campbell Newman_

Well thanks very much to Cr Margaret de Wit, good afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen.

Can I start by acknowledging the traditional owners, can I acknowledge Howard Hobbs the Shadow Minister for Local Government, our President Paul Bell to Executive Director Greg Hallam and the members of the LGAQ staff, to the Mayors, councillors that are here, particularly my friend John Brent from Scenic Rim.

Some of you would have heard a terrible thing I said the other evening, I must apologise. We don’t want to put all our rubbish down in Scenic Rim, perhaps an incinerator or two to burn the rubbish from Brisbane. That is enough from you Brent! You are out of order!

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am a little bit embarrassed by the topic as it has been put out this afternoon - Planning for Performance: Brisbane’s model for success. The first thing I say is, I am embarrassed because as the largest Local Government, often we can be accused of being rather smug and telling everyone the way to do it. I don’t propose to do that this afternoon. That is not what I am here to do.

What I want to do over the next fifteen or twenty minutes is to tell you about what we are doing in term of planning for the future of this city. For some people, the locals they will be right across some of this material, but might not be across some of the things we’ve been doing in the council. But they will certainly be across the strategic plan for the region. But I also want to touch on some of the things that are the real clouds on the horizon to actually delivering on the plan. I am trying very hard to be not controversial, because I firmly believe that Local Government needs to have a good working relationship with State Government.

Unfortunately over the last few years, we have had a lot of fights. The LGAQ has had fights with them, we have had fights, and the Council of Mayors has had fights with the State Government. I am really saying today that I am going to really resist that, because I want a good relationship with the State Government, with the Premier, with the Treasurer, with the Minister for Infrastructure, with the Minister for Local Government and I say that publicly today. But, it has got to be a two way street. We do need a proper partnership.

So let me begin. The context for Brisbane City Council’s Plan is to do with the demographic changes that are expected, the population shift over the next twenty years. The revised figures are that the region will go form 2.8 million to 4.4 million people over the period between now and 2031. As many of you will know, the Local Governments of South East Queensland have been given some very significant population targets or dwelling targets to achieve.

Because ultimately the decision of everybody I thought - and I will come back to this later on - in a bipartisan way was that we weren’t going to go out, we were going to go up. That we were going to save the green space of South East Queensland and the bush land, the farm land, the biodiversity of this incredible region and actually try to manage growth in the urban areas. That is what I thought everybody agreed to do.
So with Terry Mackenroth a few years ago we created a Regional Plan and it was a great partnership and it saw those population targets, those dwelling target being shoulders I thought quite well by all the Local Governments. Then we’ve been through alliteration recently where again there has been involvement of Local Government and we all in South East Queensland have those targets to achieve. Brisbane with its current 370,000 dwellings situation across our Local Government area has a target of 156,000 new dwellings to be achieved by 2031.

For every Local Government now, particularly the ones who have the high infill targets and Brisbane has 138,000 infill dwellings that have to be achieved within that 156,000 - for the infill Local Government areas it is particularly challenging. It is not for Brent, because he has got acres of land and he can just plonk them anywhere really, except he is not allowed - again another little joke. But, the challenge really is for the infill areas.

So how is Brisbane dealing with that? Our approach is a methodology, or a process that we call neighbourhood planning. Neighbourhood planning is something we developed from the time we were in opposition, where the then leader of the opposition, actually she wasn’t leader of the opposition, she was the spokesperson on planning matters. Cr Carol Cashman actually went overseas (I think it was to the Asia Pacific City Summit), visited Seattle with Jim Sorely, but also visited Vancouver. She was captivated, absolutely inspired by the process they had used in Vancouver to plan for growth, without having some of the big political issues they had had elsewhere in the world in other cities and indeed in Australia.

Neighbourhood planning is a process which is about talking frankly to people about these issues. We have done it well in Brisbane; there are also areas already where we have done it not so well. I want to be quite open about that today. The good things that we did over the last four or five years is, we engaged some sixty thousand people in taking those initial Regional Plan - the 05 Regional Plan targets - they were a bit lower, but taking them and translating them into some sort of idea about where dwellings would be created across Brisbane.

So if you imagine, there’s metropolitan Brisbane going out fifteen to twenty kilometers from where we sit now. We said to the community, where do you want those dwellings to go? There are various approaches. We could just have density going in right across Brisbane - so to illustrate that, where you have currently got a suburban block (1000 square meters, 800 square meters) you allow a Queenslander to be jack up moved side ways and another house or mansion perhaps to be put in beside or you allow granny flats and town houses and the like. We said that is one way we could go.

The community rejected that and they said, the community said that they favoured a multi centered approach and density along transport corridors. So they said that we should have high density in the city core, West End, South Brisbane, Kurilpa, Wooloongabba, Bowen Hills, and Fortitude Valley to a certain extent into Tenneriffe. They also said that at key centers around Brisbane, there is nothing new here by the way, but for the first time people got behind it. They said that they would like to see growth in centers like Chermside, Indooroopilly, Upper Mount Gravatt, Garden City and Carindale.

They also said they would like to see some secondary centers developed - Wynnum, Toombul, Toowong and Mitchelton. Finally along key transport corridors and around key railway stations they said that they were prepared to accept more density.

That Ladies and Gentlemen was perhaps the easy bit, because we then move on and we have got to go into those areas that I have outlined and work out where the dwellings will go. We try to say to people that we are coming in with a blank sheet of paper, rather than do what we used to do and come in with
a preconceived plan. We start with a blank sheet of paper and talk about the things that I have already alluded to, which are mainly the green space issues.

There are other things that we need to talk about as well, the sustainability of the city from an environmental perspective - with energy use and water consumption. Things like the viability of public transport services. This is a low density city. We all want wonderful public transport and if we can put people around transport nodes we will be able to create a better system.

What about affordability? Is real estate too expensive? Are you worried about where your children are going to live? What about age care facilities or quality residential options in existing communities (tin and timber communities) for people who can’t handle multi level Queenslanders and trip hazards and the like. But, people who want to stay in a local area where they have friends and family, support services, relationships with Doctors and Dentists and the like. Shouldn’t we have quality higher density or medium density in the suburbs around those railway stations? So all those things are on the table.

An example of where we have done it well I believe is in the Lutwyche corridor where we found many opportunities for new dwellings and it has been supported. There are other areas where we haven’t gone so well. I think the trick in this process, if I can add this tick this afternoon, is you have got to beat the bushes in a metaphorical sense, to get everybody who might have a view involved in it up front. Putting the investment into marketing gets people involved, to tell them the process is going on, is the best way that you can guarantee against someone at the end saying, “hang on I don’t like that plan”, and then some sort of revolt if you like, starting. There have been difficulties around the city. So, particularly that is challenge to do that as you get more and more into the fine detail and the fine grained thing.

The worst example in Australia that I can see and I start to talk about challenges is in Melbourne. Many of us in South East Queensland would be getting this now from perhaps developers who wax lyrically about how great it is in Melbourne right now. It is very expensive up here supposedly and maybe they’re right. Infrastructure charges are through the roof compared to Melbourne. So, we should be looking at what is happening down there.

I recall that the Victorian State Government handed down a Melbourne 20/30 policy I think it was, and guess what, they were going to increase density along key pubic transport corridors, particularly along eh railway lines. I notice with interest that notable Australians such as Jeffrey Rush, particularly living in Melbourne, stood up, they rose up and they said save our suburbs. And you know what, my take on it is - I said I wasn’t going to be controversial, I meant about the Queensland Government, I will talk about the Victorian Government now - My take on it is they followed up like wet paper bags. What I see happening in Victoria now, is no pretence anymore about stopping the roll out of the low density burbs. My take on it (happy to be proven wrong), but my take on it is they have just said, go for your life Ladies and Gentlemen. They are releasing slabs of green farmland to actually build those new residential areas, because it got too hard. That is one of the challenges for the Regional Plan in South East Queensland.

I am particularly concerned when I see the signs that even State Members of the Government, aren’t prepared to back the plan. When it is coming down to the difficult times, when you are planning in a local area, they are already showing signs that they are not prepared to back the plan. What I need, is the support of the State Government. Not just from the Minister and the Premier, but I need the members of the Government and for Howard who is here, I need the Opposition to back it as well. Because it is good public policy and what we have got going in here, is too precious to lose through a sort of a vain attempt to hang on and use this as a political issue.
We should be better than that. We need the picture in the community of an LNP Mayor, it might be a Labor councillor, it could be an LNP opposition State Member standing side by side and saying, this is why this plan came into being, this is why we support it and this is why the Brisbane City Council has to do what it is doing now and indeed the Gold Coast and other Councils around the region. Wouldn’t that be a great vision? It could have happened and it still can happen, but we are getting near the edge of the precipice now of things that have been going on recently.

Victoria is not the model. Victoria shows what happens when people have folded. Yes, it has been good perhaps for the release of land and the like, but it certainly isn’t a demonstration of the way we should be going in South East Queensland.

My final point in terms of a note of concern is the issue of infrastructure charges. I think it behaves all of us, to be responsive to the criticisms of all of industry in relation to the level of our charges. If we don’t do that, then we are on very, very shaky ground. Should the State Government or individual Councils ultimately roll over to what the development industry are saying. Absolutely not, what we should be doing is saying, it has to be paid for. What we should be doing is not withstanding changes to the Act in terms of whether they can challenge those calculations. We should still be prepared to say here is the way we have worked out a PIP, here is the way that we have calculated it, go for your lives, scrutinize, challenge, question the industry and do your best as a Local Government to actually respond to that. That is fair, that is reasonable. But at the end of the day, if it is robust, if it has been done properly, I think the debate should be over. That is what has to be paid for the infrastructure for our communities.

If we talk again about Victoria, I am getting a procession of people saying not only those things about – it’s great down there, we have got all this green land we can develop - but we are also getting these people with a siren song about it is fifty or sixty grand a block in Queensland, or Brisbane, or South East Queensland, but it is only four grand down there.

Come on Ladies and Gentlemen, we know it is costing more than that. Someone is paying somewhere, those costs have to be dealt with, and we can’t run away from that. My take on it is (this is not an apples with apples comparison, nor by the way is it the correct figure I’m sure) and again I say, someone is paying for it, it has to be paid for. Victoria does not have a dramatically different cost base for delivering water pipes, sewerage pipes, curb and channeling and paved sealed roads. That is clear and so again I see a bit of a threat to the region, being that the infrastructure charging associated with Brisbane’s plan and indeed other Councils plans will be undermined by this sort of ongoing push from the industry. We must resist it, we must mount the arguments and the best way to do it I believe, I humbly submit to you this afternoon, is to do what I have suggested.

So, hopefully over the next few years, we will have developed in Brisbane a whole range of new neighbourhood plans covering the city - filling in the fine grain details of our Local Growth Management Strategy, which puts those 156,000 new dwellings on the table.

I want to conclude by saying we are committed to it, we are passionate about it. We believe firmly that the plan then leads to all sorts of good outcomes for the community in terms of preserving the livability of the city and the region. We believe it is the tool then that informs our infrastructure planning and also then of course the development of budgets. Five or ten year plans for asset maintenance and the delivery of infrastructure and the necessary development of funding strategies to support that.
I hope what I have said this afternoon was informative, I trust it wasn’t again Brisbane coming again and saying how we should do it. We have got much to learn. I hope as you have seen we have had some good points and we have certainly run into some difficult weather as well.

Thank you so much Mr President, Ladies and Gentlemen. I am happy to take a few questions if time permits.

**Comment:** You will be pleased to know that in two weeks time we will have completed an AEC review of the claims of the UDIA which have been disingenuous I know! We are doing it on behalf of Toowoomba, Townsville and others. In Toowoomba they quote Townsville’s lowest price and in Townsville they create Toowoomba’s lowest price. We have actually done that process of netting out and having apples and apples comparison. You may not be aware in Victoria, that this added one hundred thousand dollars an acre, State charge, in the last month on green fill sites in metropolitan Melbourne.

**Response:** I am not surprised that is exactly what I would have thought. I suppose just to amplify it a bit more as well, I have been to Property Council or UDIA meeting and functions in the past. They have said, you should be borrowing to develop infrastructure, well these days I am happy to stand up and say “Yes we are borrowing, we have obviously political pressures in terms of rates, but we have consistently and appropriately lifted rate”. We have got to pay for this infrastructure; we are spending money on infrastructure. So this year we will take in, certainly no more than $130 million dollars in infrastructure charges. This year we will do 1.5 billion dollars in capital works. Please tell me how this will be funded if we don’t have those revenue streams.

**Question:** Cr John Brent, Scenic Rim Regional Council: You are endorsing the Brisbane Waste Disposal strategy - I think one of the things I have been particularly proud of is the way in which you have lead, probably the part of South East Queensland and our Council of Mayors from Noosa to Gold Coast and west to Toowoomba. It is important that we recognise the valuable part that part of Queensland plays in the economic scene, not at all to discourage or down play the role that the rest of Queensland plays. However it is about, I know from the area I represent, it is about that back yard to Brisbane City. It is about ensuring that we have been somewhat, as a result of the Regional Plan, limited in the opportunities that we might have in those areas surrounding the 80% of the land mass. That includes the Western areas of Sunshine Coast, Moreton Bay moving around to the Lockyer’s and the Somerset’s and the Scenic Rim’s particularly.

But I am more interested Lord Mayor in the comment I made followed by a question yesterday or this morning (I can’t remember when it was), talking about the opportunities for State Government not to get in the way of Local Government moving forward and the opportunity there might be for again, our larger regional Councils to operate without the hindrance of State Government. How they might be able to act alone. I just seek your comment or your feeling, as to whether you see it as an opportunity in that way, to move Government forward at our level.

**Answer:** It almost sounds like motherhood in what I am about to say, but this is the way that I have said it to senior State Political Officials. They have given us this strategic guidance in terms of the Regional Plan. Basically what they need now is for Local Governments in the region to get on and deliver the plans and to demonstrate where those things happen. It should be a sort of a loose tight thing, in the words of Peters and Waterman, those management gurus’ years ago. They have set those requirements, let us go forward and do them.

We heard that amalgamation was about strong, robust Local Governments - Let us go, let us make it happen! Along the way, what I have said to the Premier is, tell us what the State interest is. At the end
of the day the Premier is the Premier and we are a level of Government under their legislation. All I am after is clear guidance on what they want us to do. They don’t need ULDA’s; they don’t need South Bank Corporations, apologies to our hosts here in the Exhibition Centre as well. But, they don’t need those sorts of things. They are just extra layers of bureaucracy and extra costs ultimately on the State.

They should tell Local Government, what the State interest is and require us to deliver it. If we don’t deliver it, they find mechanisms to do it then, but with the Local Government. So, that is what I am after and I think things would work a lot better if that approach was adopted. I stand ready to work with them in that way. I have said it before to them; I will say it again today.

**Question:** Lord Mayor, you have just put a plan down to 2030 and are delivering on it. We have just had a session before on the Community Plan and no doubt Brisbane will deliver on those as well. Could you give advice as to where do we start? Could you outline what you would do, or the first three things you would do in starting a Community Plan?

**Answer:** I must say I am a little at sea. I am not sure what you are referring to by a Community Plan. I can think of a few different things in term of what that might mean.

In terms of what we do, we have for example, the Brisbane 2026 vision. It is a bipartisan vision document that was created by both the Labor and LNP councillors during the period 2004-2008. I guess that is our Community plan, it goes out to 2026. It looks at various dimensions that we want to deliver on over the next twenty years or so. It talks about (these are really themes) the type of community we want.

These aren’t the words in the vision document, but I always talk about an inclusive and harmonious community. There is also detail about an accessible and connected city. There are strands there, it is high level, and it is inspirational. Then under the Vision Document there are all these other things. If you take accessible and connected and what that means into downstairs, if I can put it that way, is our 20 year transport plan. We actually have a plan which covers public transport, active transport, cycling etc, demand management and of course - roads, bridges, tunnels etc.

In terms of the community, that then drives all the things we do in terms of building community through, strengthening community groups, the grants program support to charities etcetera.

Then there is the economic development side of it and we have those sorts of strategies as well. It started off with Vision 20-26. It is really important to get everyone together and even in a political Council we did it. The trick to it then is in our Council, different ways of achieving those inspirational goals. The Labor party might have a different view on how we deal with Accessible and Connected than I do and so forth. But we did manage to achieve that even in a Political Council. Every Council should be able to do that I believe.

**Question:** Cr Ron Bellingham, Southern Downs Regional Council: Lord Mayor it is an interesting period for you when you were first elected. My question is really about your leadership and your strategies in managing a situation that was fraught with party politics. Would you like to make a comment on your role as a leader during that period?

**Answer:** Gee, I could give a half hour talk on that I think. On a note, there is at least one Labor councillor who might see it differently as well. I think it was and in some ways it is no different than the role a Mayor in any Local Government with two or three different factions would have to operate. It really is just about taking Council with you and it is always being on the side of, if you like, the community.
It is about actually pushing the things that you said you were going to deliver and particularly you feel were the basis of your personal mandate. That is one of the good things about the system in Queensland. You have been voted in by the community rather than the councillors. No offences to councillors here; but you do have that mandate and you should use it.

As long as you are true to those things you have promised and that you are clever with the use of the media and that soap box you actually get to stand on as the Mayor, I think that is the trick to it and that is what it was all about. Sometimes of course you don’t get what you want and you have just got to suck it in and move on.

Address: “Corporate Ethics and Social Responsibility”

Dr Attracta Lagan
*Courtesy of Saxtons Speakers Bureau*

Due to copyright laws this speech was unable to be published.
Address: “Hon Treasurers Report”

Cr Brendan McNamara  
Hon Treasurer, LGAQ

Mr President, distinguished guests, delegates and observers,

I move that the Statement of Financial Performance and the Statement of Financial Position as at 31st May 2009 and printed in the conference agenda at page 224 be received.

The LGAQ recorded a net surplus of $543,000 for the year ended 31st May 2009. This follows a surplus of $1.34m in the 2008 year which was boosted by a Local Government Workcare distribution of $1.5m.

The LGAQ recorded total revenues from ordinary activities of $15.4m of which $3.1m or 20% was contributed by member’s subscriptions. Other major contributions to income were grants of $3m (20%) and LG Online subs of $2.4m (15%).

The consolidated group recorded a net surplus of $401,000 for the year ended 31st May 2009. All owned entities and partnerships returned net profit results with the exception of the QPG shared services partnership. The partnership was expected to generate losses through the start up phase. Based on current business the partnership is expected to generate a cash return to the association in 2013.

The proposed budget for the 30th June 2010 financial year shows a $21,000 surplus. If attained, this will be the third consecutive year that the LGAQ has recorded a budget surplus which is consistent with the goals of the association.

The budget also gives significant endorsement to the executive consideration of the need for alternative and improved member engagement strategies as well as the need for a significant fighting fund in order to adequately respond to emerging issues for member councils. The 2009-10 budget makes a new $100,000 allocation to create a fighting fund reserve. A portion of the 2009 surplus can also be placed in this fighting fund or general reserve.

I would like to thank the LGAQ staff for their dedicated work in the past 12 months. Their workload has continued to be demanding as the State Governments reform agenda continues. We all know from our own councils that the work of our staff is what makes our councils successful. The LGAQ is no exception so once again thank you for your efforts over the past year.

Cr Brendan McNamara  
Hon Treasurer  
LGAQ

Address: “Slow Journey South”

Ms Paula Constant  
Courtesy of Saxtons Speakers Bureau

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