

## Replacement Report

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### REPORTS THROUGH THE GENERAL MANAGER

### REPORTS FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

## 2 [GM-CM] Local Government NSW Policy Review

**SUBMITTED BY: General Manager**

Validms



## Civic Leadership

### LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK:

- 1 Civic Leadership
- 1.4 Strengthen coordination among Commonwealth and State Governments, their agencies and other service providers and Statutory Authorities to avoid duplication, synchronise service delivery and seek economies of scale
- 1.4.1 Council will perform its functions as required by law and form effective partnerships with State and Commonwealth governments and their agencies to advance the welfare of the Tweed community

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### SUMMARY OF REPORT:

Local Government NSW has embarked on a process of reviewing its Policy Framework and council as a member has been invited to contribute to this review by providing feedback to specific questions by 18 July 2016.

As background to this review, the key role of Local Government NSW (LGNSW) is to advocate and make representations to politicians, decision makers and influencers about the issues that matter most to its members and this is why council contributes as a member, particularly for the wider advocacy role.

The methods LGNSW uses to understand the issues of concern to members are conference resolutions, Board-endorsed submissions and letters from members. These issues, and the Association's position on them, are then developed into Policy Statements.

LGNSW's Policy Statements have become outdated and grown over time to a set of 95 statements which cover a wide range of issues. This large number of statements is also a legacy issue arising from the merger of the Local Government Association and Shires Association. When the two organisations merged and became LGNSW, the policy statements were combined and became LGNSW's "interim" policy statements. These "interim" statements now need review, and organisation's policy framework updated to give LGNSW clearer guidance on the principles and issues which their members want the Association to advocate for, on their behalf.

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Therefore, Council as a member of LGNSW has been offered the opportunity to respond to this review. These responses will be considered at the LGNSW Board meeting to be conducted in August and then referred to the Annual Conference to be conducted in October 2016.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**That Council submits its responses to the Local Government NSW Policy Review as detailed in the report.**

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### REPORT:

The key role of Local Government NSW (LGNSW) is to advocate and make representations to politicians, decision makers and influencers about the issues that matter most to its members and this is why council contributes as a member, particularly for the wider advocacy role.

The methods LGNSW uses to understand the issues of concern to members are conference resolutions, Board-endorsed submissions and letters from members. These issues, and our position on them, are then developed into Policy Statements.

LGNSW's Policy Statements have become outdated and grown over time to a set of 95 statements which cover a wide range of issues. This large number of statements is also a legacy issue arising from the merger of the Local Government Association and Shires Association. When the two organisations merged and became LGNSW, the policy statements were combined and became LGNSW's "interim" policy statements. These "interim" statements now need review, and organisation's policy framework updated to give LGNSW clearer guidance on the principles and issues which their members want the Association to advocate for, on their behalf.

To gauge feedback from its member councils, LGNSW has compiled a set of responses that are to be responded to online. In an attempt to seek endorsement from council, the questions are provided as follows and council may wish to provide their collective response to these questions to enable them to be submitted.

### Policy Principles Feedback Form

**1. What do you see as the primary purpose of the LGNSW policies?**  
*(select as many as relevant)*

- To frame how the sector responds to issues
- To set the strategic direction for LGNSW for the coming year
- To guide the advocacy efforts of LGNSW
- To guide councils in the development of their own policies
- To record previously endorsed policies and conference resolutions
- Other (please specify)

To strengthen the role of local government

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### 2. Which approach do you prefer?

- Having high-level principles with more detailed position statements on current issues
- Having policies on numerous issues derived from conference motions or Board decisions
- Don't know
- Other (please specify)

### 3. What do you think should be the process for endorsing policy principles? *(note the 'policy principles' are high-level long term principles rather than a short term position on an issue)*

- Endorsement at LGNSW Annual Conference
- Endorsement by the LGNSW Board
- Other (please specify)

### 4. What do you think should be the process for endorsing position statements?

*(note the position statements would be updated more often to reflect the current and emerging issues for the sector. These sit under the principles)*

- Endorsement at LGNSW Annual Conference
- Endorsement by the LGNSW Board
- Other (please specify)

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5. The Discussion paper sets out 12 high-level policy principles under 7 areas. Are these the areas for which we should have policy principles?

	Yes	No	Don't know
Economic	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Infrastructure	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Planning	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Environment	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social and Community	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Governance	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Commitment		<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)

6. Do you agree with the 12 policy principles as expressed on pages 5 & 6 of the discussion paper?

- Yes  
 No

If No, which would you change? Please provide proposed wording.

Tweed Shire Council believes that Policy Principles 11 and 12 should be included within the Social and Community area.

7. Do you agree that these are the key areas for which position statements should be developed?

*In the proposed framework, position statements would cover the top 10-15 critical issues for the sector (existing and emerging), and would be periodically updated and replaced over time*

	Yes	No	Don't know
Constitutional recognition of Aboriginal people	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Strong and inclusive communities	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sustainable library services and programs	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Natural resources	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Climate change	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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	Yes	No	Don't know
Extended producer responsibility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Sustainability	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Revenue and funding	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Planning	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Infrastructure	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Constitutional recognition of local government	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Democracy and governance	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)

8. Do you like the format of the position statements as shown in the example in the Policy review paper pages 7, 8 & 9?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Other (please specify)

Requires Action and also a review date (i.e. a review date should be nominated) not date reviewed

9. What is the single most important local government sector-wide policy issue for your council?

Restrictions on revenue raising through:

1. Non-indexation of statutory fees and charges;
  2. Rate pegging; and
  3. Section 94 caps

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### 10. Any other comments?

The conference resolutions reflect the general majority view of all Council's across NSW. The Board and their public comments should reflect these resolved positions.

#### **OPTIONS:**

Council can provide feedback to this survey, or it may wish to not provide any feedback.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

To ensure that Local Government retains its focus as the hardest working sphere of government, a positive and interactive approach needs to be implemented by its peak body – Local Government NSW. Providing positive feedback into this review process will ensure that the association maintains an important advocate for New South Wales Local Government.

#### **COUNCIL IMPLICATIONS:**

**a. Policy:**

Corporate Policy Not Applicable

**b. Budget/Long Term Financial Plan:**

An annual membership contribution is paid to Local Government NSW.

**c. Legal:**

Not Applicable.

**d. Communication/Engagement:**

**Inform** - We will keep you informed.

Important feedback will be provided through this survey. This will be further enhanced by the attendance of the voting delegates at the Annual LGNSW Conference to be conducted in October 2016, where they will be given the opportunity to further debate and provide input on this topic.

#### **UNDER SEPARATE COVER/FURTHER INFORMATION:**

Attachment 1.

Local Government NSW – Policy review –  
Discussion Paper (ECM 4117315)

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