

Message from the President

LGNSW President, Cr Keith Rhoades AFSM provides an update on local government issues.

Rate Peg for NSW Councils

The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal has set a 2.3% rate peg for 2018/19.

2016 LGNSW Annual Conference Action Report

Ahead of next week's LGNSW Annual Conference (Sydney, 4-6 December) an updated action report is now available online.

Easy to do Business Outdoor Dining Trial Commences

Councils are invited to take part in a NSW Outdoor Dining Trial being conducted by Service NSW and the Office of the NSW Small Business Commissioner.

Container Deposit Scheme Launches in NSW

The NSW Container Deposit Scheme, Return and Earn, commences today (1 December 2017).

Social Housing Community Improvement Fund – Round 4 Open

Councils can apply for grants through the Social Housing Community Improvement Fund for improvements to the environment, facilities and amenities in social housing communities.

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Message from the President

Cr Keith Rhoades AFSM

Friday 1 December 2017



Annual Conference – It's the final countdown to the [LGNSW Annual Conference 2107](#) (Sydney, 4-6 December). This year's speakers include Acting Premier John Barilaro, Minister for Local Government Gabrielle Upton and Walkley Award-winning journalist Annabel Crabb. As well as debating motions and shaping our priorities for the next 12 months, we'll reveal the findings of our research into community perceptions of local government and present outstanding service awards. Debate promises to be lively with varied motions from banning single use plastic bags to changing the Government's policy on road transfers to councils, and moves to ensure the NSW Government's planning reforms actually serve the community rather than excluding people from having a say. We all want to improve the planning system and support housing affordability, in fact Chief Executive

Donna Rygate met with Landcom on affordability this week. The raft of motions moved by members from both sides of the political fence though, highlights some of the risks of a short sighted anti-community approach. I look forward to a robust debate around these issues and other motions contained in the [Business Paper](#) when we gather at the Annual Conference in Sydney next week!

Rate peg – IPART made a welcome change to its Rate Pegging Methodology when it announced a 2.3% rate peg for 2018/19 that LGNSW has long argued for. The cap doesn't protect residents' budgets because they are often forced to pay in other ways, through deteriorating roads, reduced services or new charges and levies. IPART acknowledges the pressures on local government budgets from increasing labour costs, electricity and street lighting charges and increasing construction costs for roads, drains, footpaths, kerbing and bridges. IPART announced it will drop the productivity factor from the rate cap calculation – a win for the sector and something we have advocated for many years. [Read more.](#)

Container deposit scheme – The NSW Government's container deposit scheme – [Return and Earn](#) – has been set down for launch today. Our sector has long advocated that industry takes its fair share of responsibility for litter management and recycling. More than 200 collection points are available from today, including reverse vending machines, over-the-counter sites such as cafes, small grocers and newsagencies and automated depots for high volumes, marking the first step in the roll out of around 500 collection points across NSW. We are continuing to advocate for better information for councils. [Read more.](#)

Recent submissions – LGNSW has made recent submissions as follows: to the Legislative Council Inquiry into the Fire and Emergency Services Levy (FESL), to the Department of Planning and Environment's Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000 Issues Paper and to Liquor and Gaming NSW on the Evaluation of Interim Restaurant Authorisations Discussion Paper. The FESL submission will be available soon on the Parliamentary website. [View the other submissions on the LGNSW website.](#)

This is my last weekly message to you as President. I'll finish by saying just what a privilege it has been for me to serve you, our members. I have a great love of local government, and enduring admiration for all the work you do for your communities. May you go from strength to strength in the years ahead.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "K Rhoades". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cr Keith Rhoades AFSM

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General Interest

Item 3: 2016 LGNSW Annual Conference Action Report

Ahead of next week's LGNSW Annual Conference (Sydney, 4-6 December) an updated action report is now available online.

It includes advocacy actions and outcomes following 2016 conference resolutions.

Councils that submitted motions to last year's annual conference are encouraged to view the action report to see how LGNSW advocates on conference resolutions, and to check responses and outcomes.

Online information

Action Report available on the [2016 LGNSW Annual Conference page](#)

Contact

Elizabeth Robertson
Policy Officer LGNSW
elizabeth.robertson@lgnsw.org.au
02 9242 4028

Ref: R14/0021 ER

Community

Item 4: Social Housing Community Improvement Fund – Round 4 Open

Councils can apply for grants through the Social Housing Community Improvement Fund for improvements to the environment, facilities and amenities in social housing communities.

The NSW Government is expanding the program to a fourth and final round, with \$1.2 million available for new and innovative projects for social housing communities that have had little or no previous Social Housing Community Improvement Fund (SHCIF) funding.

One-off grants ranging from \$35,000 to \$50,000 will be awarded for:

- Physical improvement projects that will make a substantial difference to the amenity and liveability of a significant population of social housing residents
- Projects that deliver a whole-of-community benefit to a large or significant public space (e.g. parks, community facilities, community gardens and sporting grounds)
- Projects where consultation with local communities and planning is advanced enough that, with sufficient funding, work could begin by March 2018
- Organisations that have strong capacity and experience to deliver a project no later than March 2019 or within 12 months, less if the contract is not executed by March 2018.

Any community can apply for funding. However, social housing communities that have received little or no SHCIF funding in previous rounds will be prioritised.

To date, almost \$17 million has been awarded for projects delivering a range of initiatives for social housing communities.

Projects delivered through this program have included community gardens, public parks and sporting fields and structural and cosmetic improvements to local facilities such as community centres and community halls.

Dates and location

Applications close 13 December

Online information

Contact

1800 379 184 or

email SHCIF@fac.s.nsw.gov.au

Ref: R90/0066 MK

Community

Item 5: Smart Skilled and Hired program

Councils interested in providing employment to young people are encouraged to register for the NSW Government's Smart Skilled and Hired program.

The NSW Government has committed \$65 million over three years to 2020 to enable young people (aged 15 – 24 years) who are out of work or underemployed, to access training, mentoring, work placements and build their skills and experience.

The Smart Skilled and Hired program is open in the following four regions:

- Western Sydney
- Hunter and Central Coast
- North Coast
- New England and North West.

The Government has contracted employment service providers in each of these regions to connect young people with employers and employment opportunities.

Councils interested in the program should contact the provider in their region. See the [Department of Industry's webpage](#) for more information and provider contact details.

Online information

[Smart, Skilled and Hired Youth employment program](#)

Contact

Vanessa Little
Smart Skilled and Hired
Department of Industry
02 9338 6647
vanessa.little@industry.nsw.gov.au

Ref: R90/0129-05 ER

Economic Development

Item 6: Easy to do Business Outdoor Dining Trial Commences

Councils are invited to take part in a NSW Outdoor Dining Trial being conducted by Service NSW and the Office of the NSW Small Business Commissioner.

Outdoor dining can bring vibrancy to local communities, boost local economies and provide additional jobs.

The NSW Government's Interim Outdoor Dining Policy (part of the Easy to do Business initiative) aims to streamline the complex and sometimes lengthy process that food-based businesses face when they wish to expand their operations to adjacent footpaths or mall areas.

The policy enables eligible cafes, restaurants and food-based businesses to have outdoor dining applications approved in two business days through a self-assessment process.

It also includes an interim authorisation process for change of existing on-premises (restaurant) liquor licence boundaries and classified road approval from Roads and Maritime Services.

Six councils began trialling the policy in September 2017:

- City of Parramatta
- Snowy Valleys
- Queanbeyan-Palerang
- Canterbury Bankstown
- Liverpool Plains
- Cootamundra-Gundagai.

These councils have designated a single street or location as the trial area, mainly areas in need of revitalisation. All participating councils and government agencies have waived fees and rents for the trial period which concludes on 30 June 2018.

Service NSW is currently developing a digital solution for the application process and providing full customer support for interested businesses, including help with questions and assistance in completing all parts of the assessment.

The Office of the Small Business Commissioner is seeking feedback ([via an online survey](#)) from councils across NSW on the interim policy and related matters, including fee and rental models.

Stakeholder consultation as well as feedback and evaluation will inform the development of a state-wide outdoor dining policy at the end of the trial.

Councils interested in finding out more about the policy or taking part in the trial can email the [Office of the Small Business Commissioner](#).

Dates

Trial: 4 Sept 2017 to 30 June 2018
Consultation closes: 19 Jan 2018

Online information

[Outdoor dining trial information](#)

[Provide feedback – council survey](#)

Contact

[Email Office of the Small Business Commissioner](#) or call 02 8222 4860 or 02 8222 4853

Ref: R92/0138-04 DT

Environment

Item 7: Best Practice Asbestos Management for Councils

LGNSW is hosting a forum on best practice asbestos management for councils (Armidale, 21 February).

Councils from the northern inland region of NSW are invited to join representatives of the Environment Protection Authority, SafeWork, Fire and Rescue NSW, the NSW Offices of Emergency Management and Local Government, Northern Inland Regional Waste and LGNSW to discuss:

- Case studies on the council asbestos management
- Asbestos management during emergencies
- Asbestos land contamination, asbestos waste management and illegal dumping
- Managing asbestos risks in council workplaces
- The Model Asbestos Policy for NSW councils.

Who should attend?

Council officers and staff responsible for:

- Asset management
- Emergency management
- Health, building and regulation
- Planning and development
- Properties and facilities management
- Waste management
- Work health and safety.

This forum will offer participants an opportunity to explore the role of councils in the safe management and regulation of asbestos within their local government areas.

Date and Location:

21 February 2018, 9am - 2:30pm
Armidale City Bowling Club

Cost: free, catering included

Registration: [Click here](#)

LGNSW Asbestos Policy Information

<https://www.lgnsw.org.au/policy/asbestos>

Contact

Daniel Adler
Project Manager – Asbestos Policy
P: (02) 9242 4128 or
E: daniel.adler@lgnsw.org.au

Ref: R11/0034 DA

Environment

Item 8: Container Deposit Scheme Launches in NSW

The NSW Container Deposit Scheme, Return and Earn, commences today (1 December 2017).

Litter management and kerbside recycling costs councils millions of dollars annually and the local government sector has long advocated for a container deposit scheme to ensure industry shares responsibility for litter management.

Under Return and Earn, a 10 cent refund will be issued when an eligible drink container is returned to a designated collection point.

A collection point map, frequently asked questions and other details can be viewed on the Government's [Return and Earn website](#).

There are three types of collection points: reverse vending machines, over-the-counter collection points and automated depots.

Refunds will also be available in various ways (depending on the type of collection point) including cash refunds, redeemable vouchers for participating retail partners, refunds through PayPal or donations to a charity or community group.

[Factsheets](#) for local councils, households, retailers, suppliers/manufacturers and community/charity groups are also available online.

Online information

[Return and Earn](#) website, including collection point map

EPA Return and Earn [factsheets](#)

Contact

NSW EPA CDS Implementation Unit
Container.deposit@epa.nsw.gov.au

Ref: R90/0994-06 LD

Environment

Item 9: Extension to Transitional Arrangements for the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016

The NSW Government has extended transitional arrangements for development consent under Part 4 of the *Environment Planning and Assessment Act* to allow assessment to continue under former planning provisions until 25 February 2018 in most local government areas.

The Minister for the Environment has made an amendment to the Biodiversity Conservation (Savings & Transitional) Regulation 2017.

The amendment extends to six months from commencement of the *Biodiversity Act 2016*, the period for which former planning provisions apply to local developments across the state. The amending regulation can be viewed [online](#).

All NSW councils have been notified of this change through an Office of Local Government circular for councils 17-38 [Update on implementation of the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 Office of Local Government](#).

The key elements are:

- New applications for development consent or modifications to an approved development under Part 4 of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act) (not including state significant development) will continue to be assessed under former planning provisions until 25 February 2018 in most local government areas.
- In the seven local government areas identified as interim designated areas – Camden, City of Campbelltown, City of Fairfield, City of Hawkesbury, City of Liverpool, City of Penrith and Wollondilly, new applications for development consent, or modifications to an approved development, under Part 4 of the EP&A Act will continue to be assessed under the former planning provisions until 25 August 2018.
- The Minister for the Environment will have until 25 February 2018 to declare additional interim designated areas.
- An amendment to the Biodiversity Conservation Regulation (Savings and Transitional) 2017 is proposed to give effect to the intended policy that biodiversity impacts are only offset once.
- Transitional arrangements will continue to apply to activities under Part 5 of the EP&A Act, major projects and mining projects as outlined in the Biodiversity Conservation Regulation (Savings and Transitional) 2017.

Training for council staff

Training sessions for assessors and local government approvers will continue to roll out over 2018. [Find out more and register](#).

Online information

[Biodiversity reform information for local government](#)

Contact

LMBC Support Centre

lmbc.support@environment.nsw.gov

Ref: R90/0321 KMC

Environment

Item 10: Food Waste Education Grants – Apply Now

Councils can apply for grants of up to \$30,000 from the Environment Protection Authority's Love Food Hate Waste program to support projects that help households or businesses reduce the amount of edible food they waste.

The latest round of grants will be delivered in three streams.

Streams 1 and 2 are currently open:

- Stream 1 – Household education. Grants of up to \$20,000 to support organisations to use the Food Smart Kit to educate households to waste less food.
- Stream 2 – Business education. Grants of up to \$30,000 per year to support organisations to use the Your Business is Food Kit to educate and provide support to NSW food businesses to reduce food waste.

Resource kits, surveys and delivery support will be provided free of charge, and no co-contribution is required.

The third stream – Love Food Communities – will be available from early 2018, offering grants of up to \$250,000 for up to five NSW towns, cities or regions to plan and deliver a two-year whole-of-city approach to food waste prevention.

Love Food Hate Waste is part of the Environment Protection Authority's Waste Less Recycle More initiative.

Closing date

22 December 2017

Online information

For full details, guidelines and application forms please visit the [EPA webpage](#).

Further information: [Love Food Hate Waste website](#)

Contact

Sarah Chen, NSW EPA
(02) 9995 6926
Sarah.chen@epa.nsw.gov.au or

Elizabeth Craggs, NSW EPA
(02) 9995 6890
Elizabeth.craggs@epa.nsw.gov.au

Ref: R15/0002 LD

Finance

Item 11: Rate Peg for NSW Councils

The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal has set a 2.3% rate peg for 2018/19.

The rate peg is higher than that set for the previous two years (1.8% in 2016/17 and 1.5% in 2017/18), which the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) explained is due to increases in labour costs, electricity and street lighting charges, and higher construction costs for roads, drains, footpaths, kerbs and bridges.

The rate peg is derived from the Local Government Cost Index (LGCI) for the year ending September 2017. The rate peg of 2.3% exceeds the CPI for the same period of 1.8%.

No further adjustment for productivity improvements was made this year. IPART also announced that it intends to set the productivity factor at zero as a default in future years, but retain discretion to deduct a productivity factor, if there is evidence of productivity improvements in the local government sector that have not been fully incorporated in the LGCI.

LGNSW has long argued against the application of the productivity index and welcomes this decision.

IPART will also consult with councils and other stakeholders on a proposal to release the rate peg around the beginning of September in future years.

See IPART's [Fact Sheet](#).

Online information

[IPART Rate Peg Fact Sheet](#)

[IPART Media Release](#)

Ref: R90/0397-05 SMcB

Industrial Relations

Item 12: Local Government Remuneration Tribunal

Members are advised that the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal has commenced its 2018 review of the fees payable to mayors and councillors.

Pursuant to s. 241 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, the tribunal is required to make an annual determination by no later than 1 May of each year on the fees payable to mayors and councillors.

Every three years, the tribunal is also required to review the categorisation of councils.

In 2017, the tribunal determined a new categorisation model for remuneration purposes, but noted that a number of further merger proposals were on hold as a consequence of legal action.

On 27 July 2017, the NSW Premier advised that the following proposed mergers would not proceed:

- Burwood, City of Canada Bay and Strathfield Municipal councils
- Hornsby Shire and Ku-ring-gai councils
- Hunter's Hill, Lane Cove and City of Ryde councils
- Mosman Municipal, North Sydney and Willoughby councils
- Randwick City, Waverley and Woollahra Municipal councils.

Given the above mergers did not proceed, the tribunal, if requested, will also review the allocation of the above metropolitan councils into the existing categories. The tribunal will not, however, alter the groups or the criteria which apply unless there is a very strong case to do so.

In preparation, members are requested to advise LGNSW if they will be making a submission to the tribunal, and to share their submissions with LGNSW in advance.

Those members making a submission to the tribunal for the 2018 review are encouraged to contact Vikki Sultana, Industrial Officer, on (02) 9242 4145 or via email at vikki.sultana@lgnsw.org.au.

Contact LGNSW before:
12 January 2018

Contact:
Vikki Sultana
Industrial Officer
Member Services Division
02 9242 4145
vikki.sultana@lgnsw.org.au

Ref: R93/0006-12

Planning

Item 13: Exhibition of SEPPs Extended

The NSW Department of Planning and Environment has extended the exhibition periods for two state environment planning policies (SEPPs) currently under review.

The exhibition period for the Explanation of Intended Effect for the Primary Production and Rural Development SEPP has been extended to 15 January, and the Explanation of Intended Effect for the Environment SEPP has been extended to 31 January.

LGNSW is preparing a submission on each document and welcomes feedback from members on the proposed changes.

Please email comments on the Primary Production and Rural Development SEPP EIE to [Susy Cenedese](mailto:Susy.Cenedese@lgnsw.org.au), Strategy Manager Environment by 15 December 2017.

Comments on the Explanation of Intended Effect for the Environment SEPP should be emailed to [Kirsty McIntyre](mailto:Kirsty.McIntyre@lgnsw.org.au), Senior Policy Officer LGNSW by 16 January 2018.

Online information and due dates

[EIE Primary Production and Rural Development SEPP](#) – 15 January

[EIE Environment SEPP](#) – 31 January 2018

Contact

Kirsty McIntyre, Senior Policy Officer
Kirsty.mcintyre@lgnsw.org.au

Ref: R04/0029 KMc

Learning

Item 14: New Drone Operations in Local Government Program

LGNSW is continuing to offer its drone operations program to councils in 2018.

Following the successful delivery of four introductory seminars in 2017, which attracted more than 50 staff from 30 councils, LGNSW will offer more seminars in new regional locations next year.

LGNSW has also introduced a mentoring program for councils intending to purchase and operate drones.

Introductory seminars

From infrastructure management and vegetation mapping to land use planning and tourism, drones have the capacity to perform many tasks, often saving time and money when used appropriately.

This half-day workshop covers the following content:

- Drone technologies – the range of technologies available and how they're commonly used
- Practical deployment of drones in local government operations – applications and innovations
- Drones and the law – current laws surrounding the operation of drones in public spaces
- Risks and mitigation – insurance and risk considerations in operating drone
- Purchase or contract – the pros and cons of in-house drone operations versus contracting
- Aircraft familiarisation – understanding the aircraft and its components / flying demonstration.

Targeted to staff with responsibility for infrastructure planning and management, tourism and economic development, land use planning and regulation and enforcement, the seminar is highly interactive and practical.

Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) Operations Mentoring Program

The RPAS Operations Mentoring Program provides councils intending to purchase and utilise drones, with support from trained RPAS specialists. The program has four elements:

1. RPAS equipment sourcing, document preparation and program establishment
2. Classroom tuition (two days) with nominated council operators
3. RPAS flight training and hand-over (seven hours per nominated pilot)
4. Annual support through refresher training for nominated pilots and equipment integrity checks at agreed intervals.

Contact [LGNSW Learning Solutions](mailto:learning@lgnsw.org.au) for more information about the Mentoring Program or to discuss running a drone seminar in-house or with other organisations in your area.

Dates and locations

7 March 2018 – Port Macquarie
21 March 2018 – Shoalhaven
9 May 2018 – Newcastle
23 May 2018 – The Hills
7 June 2018 - Albury

Online information

[LGNSW Training](#)

Registrations

[Drone Operations in Local Government](#)

Contact

LGNSW Learning Solutions
02 9242 4081
learning@lgnsw.org.au

Ref: I98/0012 SA

Learning

Item 15: LGNSW's Springboard and Navigator Programs

LGNSW offers four-day development programs for women and men to help them gain the skills, confidence and clarity to achieve their personal and career goals.

The Springboard Women's Development Program and the Navigator Men's Development Program are delivered over three months.

The programs include sessions on time management, assertiveness, dealing with change, conflict resolution, problem solving, goal setting, stress management, networking, communication and action planning.

Each workshop also features a high profile guest speaker.

The Springboard and Navigator programs help women and men to:

- Set and achieve personal goals
- Focus on priorities
- Acquire ideas, skills and confidence
- Make positive decisions and to take action.

All workshops are held in Sydney but councils outside the metropolitan area interested in implementing the program in their regions can contact [LGNSW Learning Solutions](#) for more information.

Dates

Springboard Women's Development Program

Mentor training –Tuesday 27 February 2018 (half day)
Workshop 1 – Wednesday 28 February 2018
Workshop 2 – Wednesday 21 March 2018
Workshop 3 – Wednesday 11 April 2018
Workshop 4 – Wednesday 2 May 2018

Navigator Men's Development Program

Workshop 1 – Thursday 22 February 2018
Workshop 2 – Thursday 22 March 2018
Workshop 3 – Thursday 18 April 2018
Workshop 4 – Thursday 17 May 2018

Online Registration

[Springboard Women's Development Program](#)
[Navigator Men's Development Program](#)

Cost

Members: \$1,320 incl. GST
(Includes four workshops for participants and a half-day workshop for mentors in the Springboard program)

Contact

LGNSW Learning Solutions
02 9242 4181
learning@lgnsw.org.au

Ref: I98/0012 SA

Learning

Item 16: 2018 LGNSW Learning Solutions Training Calendar Now Available

LGNSW's 2018 Training Calendar for January – June offers a comprehensive range of short courses for council employees and elected members.

The calendar includes a mix of frequently requested courses and some new programs developed to support the implementation of the Local Government Capability Framework.

Courses scheduled in early 2018 include:

Media Skills

Sydney – Tuesday 13 February 2018

Apply practical techniques to enable you to be more comfortable, confident and effective in dealing with the media. [More information.](#)

Improving your Correspondence Writing

Sydney – Wednesday 14 February 2018

Learn the basic skills of effective letter and email writing. [More information.](#)

Award History and Interpretation

Sydney – Tuesday 20 February 2018

Understand the application and interpretation of the Local Government (State) Award 2017 and the factors influencing the development of the series of State Awards. [More information.](#)

Financial Issues in Local Government

Sydney – Friday 23 February 2018

Gain practical skills, knowledge and confidence performing the financial duties of an elected member. [More information.](#)

Foundations of Directorship Program (AICD)

Sydney – Monday 26 February, Tuesday 27 February, Wednesday 28 February 2018

Gain a comprehensive understanding of directorship, including governance, finance, strategy and risk for directors. [More information.](#)

Contact LGNSW Learning Solutions for a quote to have these workshops delivered locally for your council or in partnership with other councils in your region.

Online information

<http://lgnsw.org.au/learning>

Registrations

<http://lgsa.wufoo.com/forms/upcoming-courses/>

Contact

LGNSW Learning Solutions
02 9242 4081

learning@lgnsw.org.au

Ref: I98/0012 SA

In the News

Item 17: Local Government NSW Media

View the latest media releases distributed by LGNSW.

Item 18: ALGA Newsletter

View the latest newsletter distributed by the Australia Local Government Association.