

Message from the President

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

International Women's Day Luncheon 2018

Join us to celebrate women in government at the inaugural LGNSW International Women's Day Luncheon (Sydney, 8 March).

Grants Available to Combat Local Crime

Councils are invited to apply for grants of up to \$250,000 through the NSW Community Safety Fund for infrastructure and projects with a crime prevention focus.

New Land Management State Environment Planning Policy

The NSW Government has introduced a new land management state environmental planning policy.

Community Engagement Strategy for Crown Land Management

The closing date for submissions on the draft community engagement strategy for Crown land management has been extended to 10 December 2017.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT NSW

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Message from the President

Cr Keith Rhoades AFSM

Friday 24 November 2017



Counter terrorism – On Wednesday, LGNSW Chief Executive Donna Rygate and I were joined by John Pritchard from ALGA to meet with NSW Counter Terrorism Minister David Elliot for a briefing on the recently released Australian Strategy for Protecting Crowded Places from Terrorism. Under the strategy, owners and operators of crowded places are responsible for protecting their sites from foreseeable threats, including terrorism. The main issue facing councils is striking the right balance between supporting community events while protecting people from potential threats. The strategy plans to establish state and territory crowded place forums (chaired by the police) and it's vital that local government is involved in these. The meeting also gave us the opportunity to discuss council programs for disengaged and at risk youth, and issues for councils as airport operators.

Joint organisations – The Local Government Amendment (Regional Joint Organisations) Bill 2017 has now passed through the Parliament. LGNSW supported the bill, but worked with the Government and a range of cross-benchers to improve it. We suggested a number of amendments, which were raised in the debate. Our focus now is on implementation, ensuring councils have enough time and funding to do what's required if they wish to establish a JO.

LGNSW Annual Conference – The business paper for our 2017 conference has been mailed to all members and is available for download from the LGNSW website. We are all looking forward to debating motions and shaping our agenda for the coming year when conference is held in Sydney from 4-6 December. Find out more and register.

Active Kids rebate – Last weekend the Sports Minister announced that, from January next year, parents of school children across NSW can take advantage of the \$100 Active Kids rebate for sport and fitness-related costs. The Office of Sport is working with recreation peak bodies and sporting organisations who provide relevant programs to pre-load their details into the Service NSW Active Kids platform to ensure parents can redeem vouchers for a wide range of services when the program formally launches on 31 January. LGNSW Chief Executive Donna Rygate met with Executive Director at the Office of Sport Dr Phil Hamdorf and Active Kids Program Director David Cushway on Monday in response to sporting body claims that fees to use council spaces might come before rebate payments. LGNSW is happy to look into this, but took the opportunity to raise a number of real implications and issues for councils. LGNSW encouraged the Office of Sport to join our ongoing push to ensure adequate recreational spaces are included as part of urban and regional planning. Councils could be providers under the Active Kids scheme where their programs meet eligibility requirements. Most importantly, there is already very significant pressure on council sporting fields etc, and Active Kids will only increase this. Proper Government funding for maintenance, and for upgrades of grassroots facilities, is urgently required. There seems to be a lot of money available at the moment for sporting stadiums – local government would like some for the fields, courts etc that thousands of people use every day of the year. I have now written to the Sports Minister along these lines. Find out more about the Active Kids scheme on the Office of Sport website.

Easy to do Business – Following last week's meeting of the Easy to do Business steering committee, Donna met with NSW Small Business Commissioner Robyn Hobbs to discuss how councils might be encouraged to participate in this initiative as well as in the Small Business Friendly Councils program (see last week's article).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "K Rhoades". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Cr Keith Rhoades AFSM

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Conferences and Events

Item 1: Upcoming Conferences and Events

International Women's Day Luncheon 2018

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Grants and Funding

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Grants Available to Combat Local Crime

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General Interest

Item 3: International Women's Day Luncheon 2018

Join us to celebrate women in government at the inaugural LGNSW International Women's Day Luncheon (Sydney, 8 March).

Celebrate the leadership of women in local government – both staff and elected officials – who are making a positive difference in their communities.

Please register your interest to receive further information and make a diary note.

LGNSW thanks event sponsor StateCover Mutual Limited.

Dates and location

Thursday 8 March 2018,
12.00noon – 3pm
Doltone House – Hyde Park,
3/181 Elizabeth Street, Sydney

Online information

IWD Luncheon

Contact

Events
02 9242 4000
events@lgnsw.org.au

Ref: R17/0020 JM

Community

Item 4: Grants Available to Combat Local Crime

Councils are invited to apply for grants of up to \$250,000 through the NSW Community Safety Fund for infrastructure and projects with a crime prevention focus.

The fund aims to reduce criminal and anti-social behaviour and is particularly geared towards disadvantaged, and regional and remote communities.

Funding is available for projects that:

- Address local crime hot spots
- Address anti-social behaviour in communities
- Promote safe and inclusive use of public space
- Promote collaborative approaches to community safety and crime reduction, prevention and detection initiatives.

Infrastructure projects can include improvements to pedestrian routes, signage or lighting.

Service delivery projects can include:

- Community development and social cohesion projects
- Diversion projects for youth at risk
- Drug and alcohol treatment and counselling
- Treatment programs for youth and adult offenders
- Diversionary programs for offenders at risk of recidivism.

Councils may partner with community groups or apply individually.

Further eligibility and application information is available in the [program guidelines](#) available on the NSW Department of Justice website.

Dates

Applications close 5pm on
Wednesday 20 December 2017

Online information

[NSW Community Safety Fund 2018](#)

Contact

NSW Department of Justice
02 8688 8666
csf@justice.nsw.gov.au

Ref: R90/0125-12 DT

Environment

Item 5: New Land Management State Environment Planning Policy

The NSW Government has introduced a new land management state environmental planning policy.

The State Environmental Planning Policy (Vegetation in Non-Rural Areas) 2017 (Vegetation SEPP) is one of a suite of land management and biodiversity conservation reforms that commenced on 25 August 2017.

When does the Vegetation SEPP apply?

The Vegetation SEPP applies to clearing of vegetation in non-rural areas that does not require development consent.

The SEPP applies to:

- Native vegetation above the Biodiversity Offset Scheme (BOS) threshold where a proponent will require an approval from the native vegetation panel
- Vegetation below the BOS threshold where a proponent will require a permit from council if that vegetation is identified in the council's development control plan (DCP).

The BOS threshold is triggered for clearing of vegetation:

- Identified on the biodiversity values map
- Above area-based thresholds identified in the Biodiversity Conservation Regulation 2017. These area-based thresholds are cumulative to deter incremental clearing that could defeat the intention of the BOS.

The SEPP requires clearing above the biodiversity offset scheme (BOS) threshold to be assessed using the Biodiversity Assessment Methodology (BAM) and approved by the Native Vegetation Panel. If clearing is approved, offsetting will be required.

Regulation of local vegetation

Previously, councils relied on clauses 5.9 and 5.9AA of the *Standard Instrument - Principal Local Environmental Plan* and the *Native Vegetation Act 2003* (NV Act) to manage local vegetation.

The NV Act was repealed by the *Local Land Services Amendment Act 2016*.

The Vegetation SEPP has substantially reproduced the effect of clauses 5.9 and 5.9AA, allowing councils to continue to regulate clearing of native vegetation through their DCPs. Existing DCPs that prescribe vegetation for the purposes of clauses 5.9 and 5.9AA will continue to have effect.

Councils may also develop new DCP provisions that recognise the role of the Vegetation SEPP in regulating clearing above the biodiversity offset thresholds. This means that there is no need to immediately update any existing DCP.

In some cases, councils previously relied on the NV Act rather than DCP provisions to regulate clearing in R5 and E zones. Under the new BOS councils will now be able to rely on the Vegetation SEPP to regulate clearing in R5 and E zones, and can extend their DCPs to regulate clearing in these zones below the BOS threshold if required.

Online information

[Vegetation SEPP webpage](#)

[FAQs for councils](#)

Contact

1300 305 695

information@planning.nsw.gov.au

If English isn't your first language, please call 131 450. Ask for an interpreter in your language.

Ref: R91/0146 KMc

Planning

Item 6: Community Engagement Strategy for Crown Land Management

The closing date for submissions on the draft community engagement strategy for Crown land management has been extended to 10 December 2017.

Crown land managers, tenure holders and the wider community are being encouraged to have their say on how Crown land should be used by the community.

The strategy will apply to non-council Crown land managers and is a statutory requirement of the new *Crown Land Management Act 2016*.

It will be used by department staff and non-council Crown land managers (i.e. current reserve trust managers that are not local councils), to support community engagement on a range of Crown land actions including licences and leases, sales and the preparation of plans of management. Councils should be aware of the new processes affecting stakeholders that manage Crown land in their local communities.

The strategy is supported by a toolkit that contains practical, step-by-step guidance to support department staff and non-council Crown land managers as they carry out engagement.

Community information sessions have been held in Sydney, Newcastle, Ballina, Wagga Wagga and Dubbo to gain feedback from stakeholders.

More information is available on [the Crown Land and Water website](#).

Online information

Contact

Crown Lands and Water on
1300 886 235

Further Information

Email:
community.engagement@crowland.nsw.gov.au

Phone: 1300 886 235

Ref: R90/0485 SMcB

Learning

Item 7: Short Courses for Elected Members and Staff

LGNSW is offering the following short courses for elected members and staff in the closing weeks of 2017.

Internal Audit Familiarisation

Sydney – Tuesday 28 November 2017

Develop better understanding of internal audit functions and its role in performance improvement and risk mitigation across the council's governance and operations. [More information.](#)

Social Media for Councillors

Sydney – Wednesday 29 November 2017

Gain an overview of the value of social networking and how it can be used to positively impact on community engagement and business objectives. [More information.](#)

Finance for Non-Finance Managers

Sydney – Thursday 7 December 2017

Understand, interpret and explain financial issues related to your department or section. [More information.](#)

Resilience and Wellbeing (for staff)

Sydney – 8 December 2017

Understand the importance of a mentally healthy workplace, how you can contribute to that positive environment, the value of focusing on your own individual health, wellbeing and resilience, and the need to understand how to support others. [More information.](#)

Contact [LGNSW Learning Solutions](#) to discuss running these programs in-house or with other organisations in your area.

Online information

[LGNSW Training](#)

Registrations

[LGNSW Learning Solutions registrations](#)

Contact

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

Ref: I98/0012 SA

In the News

Item 8: ALGA Newsletter

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

<http://alga.asn.au/news.aspx?Type=Summary&Year=current&Menu=35,402>