



MAYOR'S SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT

14th June 2005

MM3 SHIRES CONFERENCE AND LGMA FORUM
SUPP. FILE: * JACH

SUMMARY:

To provide Councillors with details of the proceedings of the Shires Conference and LGMA Forum held in Sydney.



The Local Government Managers Australia Forum held on Monday, 6 June was attended by Councillors Bowell, Green, McWilliam, Saul, the General Manager and myself.

The two keynote speakers were, around the world and a surviving 1998 Sydney to Hobart sailor, Tony Mowbray and Sheryle Moon, Telstra Business Woman of the Year in 1999. Both spoke about personal challenges and how those challenges can be used in our business lives. Other sessions were panel sessions including, "Democracy is Alive and Surviving – But is it Sustainable", "Challenges for our Community Survival" and "Keeping the Tribe on Track". Overall the forum was once again of a high standard.

The Shires Association Conference was held on Tuesday, 7 and Wednesday, 8 June. The Conference was opened by the Premier Hon. Bob Carr, MP and was addressed by a number of Ministers viz: -

- Minister for Local Government, Hon Tony Kelly MLC
- Minister for Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Natural Resources, Hon Craig Knowles
- Minister for Roads, Hon Michael Costa MLC
- Minister for Transport, Hon John Watkins MP
- Minister for Environment and Attorney General, Hon Bob Debus MP

as well as the Leader of the Opposition, John Brogden, MP.

The Conference was also addressed by: -

- Rod Gerr, Director State Cover Mutual Ltd
- Richard Acheson , Director Community Relations Service
- John O'Neill, Executive Director Tourism NSW
- David McLeod, NSW State Manager Multicultural Affairs and Settlements
- Clr Paul Bell, President Australian Local Government Association
- Brett Westbrook CEO, Local Government Superannuation Scheme
- Jennifer Westacott, Director General DIPNR

and a workshop on performance improvements in respect to governance, probity and ethics was held and covered, Code of Conduct, ICAC, Ombudsman, Pecuniary Interest, Disciplinary Tribunal and Council Image.

The Minister for Local Government advised that legislation was to be introduced to regulate payments to Councillors under Section 252 of the Local Government Act. Council's policies under that section are to be forwarded to the Department for approval. Standard contracts for General managers are to be developed in conjunction with the Associations with the remuneration to be determined by each Council. Legislation is also to be introduced to enable Councils to voluntarily reduce the number of Councillors by giving 21 days notice of a motion to that effect. The reduction would take affect at the next election unless there are two or more vacancies on Council. The minimum number of Councillors on a Council shall still remain at five. The Minister asked that those Councils applying for a special rate variation forward their applications to the Department prior to the end of the exhibition period of their Management Plans so that the applications can be processed prior to the 30 June. Sub divisions adjoining crown roads must be referred to the Department of Lands.

Craig Knowles, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Natural Resources spoke on the need to develop partnerships between Local Government and Catchment Management Authorities, the new opportunities under Section 94 through fixed levies and planning agreements and announced that The Hon. Tony Kelly , Minister for Local Government has been appointed Minister Assisting for Natural Resources.

Many of the programs were detailed by Jennifer Westacott, Director General DIPNR including initiatives to have Catchment Management Authority funds substantially spent on projects rather than administration and studies and she outlined planning reforms such as priority planning in the Sydney metropolitan area, Far North Coast, Lower Hunter, Illawarra and Sydney – Canberra corridor. The number of planning instruments have been reduced and Section 94 overhauled to allow developer consent agreements

and contributions from more than one Council area. Legislation is being introduced to allow the Minister to be the consent authority on significant projects.

Open discussion on the future of the Association was held. The following motion was passed.

That a working party be established jointly with the LGA of NSW to explore the options identified in the paper titled, "Options of one Local Government Association of NSW, May 2005", with a view to formulating an agreed proposal for the consideration of all Councils. Membership of the working party will be negotiated by the two Presidents.

That as a basis for discussion between the Associations, the Shires Association believes the following matters to be essential components in the constitution of a one Local Government Association in NSW.

- *Continuance of a Divisional or Zone structure in non-metropolitan NSW to ensure effective rural and regional representation.*
- *An equal split between metropolitan and non-metropolitan executive members to ensure equal Executive Representation for metropolitan and non-metropolitan Councils.*

Councillor Colin Sullivan won the ballot for President, Councillors Bruce Miller and Barry Johnston were elected Vice-Presidents Councillor Paul Braybrooks was elected Treasurer and I was fortunate enough to be elected, unopposed, as the "A" Division delegate on the Executive.

Council's motion 96, "That the State Government be requested to implement the recommendations of the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal of NSW (IPART) as from 1 July 2005 to ensure a more equitable allocation of funding for NSW Health Services" was originally referred to the Executive but Conference agreed to debate the issue and the motion was carried. The motion, "That the Shires Association make representation to the Minister for Roads supporting volumetric loading of livestock transport vehicles on the basis that additional funding is provided to Local Government to compensate for the increased damaging effect due to any load increases" was carried.

REPORT IMPLICATIONS:

- ***Environmental***

Nil

- *Social*

Nil

- *Economic (Financial)*

Nil

- *Policy or Statutory*

Nil

RECOMMENDATION:

That the information be noted.

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MAYOR
J A C Hayes