

Cr Mark Jamieson
President
Local Government Association of Queensland
PO Box 2230
FORTITUDE VALLEY BC QLD 4006

Dear Cr Jamieson

LIBERAL NATIONAL PARTY RESPONSE TO LGAQ ELECTION PLAN

Thank you for providing us with the Queensland Local Government 10 Point Election Plan for the 2017 state election, on behalf of your members.

Unfortunately, Queenslanders aren't getting ahead and the community is crying out for leadership because Anastacia Palaszcuk and Labor are doing nothing.

Labor is stuck in neutral and Queenslanders are paying the price, through higher car registration, soaring electricity bills and a lack of congestion busting infrastructure.

When our finances aren't managed properly, governments do not have the funds to provide the services that a growing state needs – in our hospitals, a better education for our children, more resources for our police to protect the community from drugs and crime and investing in infrastructure that creates jobs and improves our standard of living.

A Tim Nicholls-led Liberal National government will **Build a Better Queensland**. The LNP's plan will create jobs, support small business, invest in education to raise standards and provide better services for families and retirees.

An LNP Government has five key priorities to create positive change for Queensland. If elected, we will –

1. Create jobs across Queensland and better manage our finances
2. Take action on the cost of living
3. Better support Queensland families
4. Provide safe and liveable communities
5. Build the roads, bridges and dams we need

Real funding reform for local government

The LNP understands the funding pressures councils are under and welcomes discussion about future reform of local government funding, alongside the Federal Government.

An LNP Government has no plan to change council rates and charges arrangements.

Real support for the environment as a driver of the economy

The LNP is committed to safe and liveable communities, including sustaining our environment. We will work with councils on initiatives to further protect our environment.

The LNP will introduce the container refund for drink bottles and cans to reduce litter and ban single-use, lightweight plastic shopping bags. We will create an alliance to protect the

Great Barrier Reef by supporting the Citizens of the Great Barrier Reef initiative and maintain funding for protection of the Reef.

An LNP Government will ensure strong, rigorous and evidence-based environmental assessments for all mining and resource projects and improve pest and weed management in National Parks to better protect native species.

Real support for indigenous communities

The LNP understand that Queensland's indigenous councils face unique challenges. There are no plans for changes to the State Government Financial Aid program. A future LNP Government will welcome discussion with indigenous councils about how the state can support these communities. The LNP has previously made reforms to introduce freehold land ownership in a number of communities.

Real support for water infrastructure, roads, freight and travel

The LNP wants to build the roads, bridges and dams we need – and will partner with councils to do so.

Our \$500 million Royalties for Regions program will invest in catalytic infrastructure in partnership with local councils. It will be a program which delivers for regional communities to make regional roads safer, provide more community infrastructure, better services and stronger resilience against natural disasters like cyclones and floods. We will ensure the program is flexible enough to ensure all regional councils can benefit from royalties.

We have made a Regional Roads Guarantee which will mean the LNP will not make any changes to the Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme (TIDS).

Our infrastructure commitments so far include a \$60 million Beef Roads Program and an \$80 million Better Bridges fund. The extensive infrastructure plan will build roads, bridges and dams across the state.

We will build the \$600 million Sunshine Coast Rail Duplication and will support the Brisbane Metro project with a \$30 million contribution. The LNP is committed to renewing a 10 year Action Plan for the Bruce Highway.

Our infrastructure plan will deliver \$1.3 billion in dams and water infrastructure – the last time a dam was built in regional Queensland was over a decade ago.

A future LNP Government will always invest more in infrastructure and will work with local government to deliver the infrastructure they need. Further infrastructure announcements will be made throughout the campaign.

Real support for child literacy

The LNP is committed to building on the foundations of our education system.

We will deliver stronger support to teachers to enable them to deliver the best outcomes for our students. Our education system must be focussed on the core elements of reading, writing and mathematics.

An LNP Government will deliver a better education system for Queensland families and welcomes further discussions on how we can partner with councils to improve child literacy.

Real support for resources communities

The LNP is committed to the towns and cities which support our resources industry. We opposed moves to allow 100% fly-in, fly-out mining communities and expect resources companies to work with and support local councils.

A future LNP Government looks forward to working with councils on other initiatives to better support our resource regions.

Real support for planning and better connectivity

The LNP strongly supports the role of councils in the planning process and believe that local government is best placed to deliver better planning outcomes for local communities.

We will work with local government to drive planning innovation and improvement projects in land use management to ensure we are focused on industry best practice design and development.

We will also support local government by:

- Helping local government transition to the new planning scheme;
- Ensuring regional plans are renewed so that all of Queensland prospers;
- Engaging with local governments to facilitate delivery of the 'missing middle' housing product as infill development in established and emerging locations;
- Commencing PlanningQ, an annual state government, council and industry forum to discuss planning issues, including affordability, land use and supply;
- Partnering with the Property Council, UDIA and LGAQ to maximise opportunities created by the rollout of the NDIS with a specialist taskforce to examine how the delivery of housing under the 'Specialist Disability Accommodation' component of the NDIS can be fast-tracked.

Real support for partnerships in government

It was an LNP Government in 2012 which re-signed the *Partners in Government Agreement* after a breakdown in the relationship between councils and the previous Labor Government.

We know councils work best when they are empowered to stand up for their local communities. In government our approach in regards to local government was to listen, then get out of the way.

Devolution of powers to local communities was our priority. We consulted and reviewed the Local Government Act; reduced red tape; listened and partnered with mayors and councillors as equals. We maintain that same consultative and collaborative policy.

An LNP Government will continue to consult with the LGAQ regarding the best ways to implement to the recommendations of the 2016 local government election review.

Real support for transparency, openness and accountability

Illegal behaviour must be condemned and corrupt conduct dealt with by the full force of the law. The LNP appreciates the constructive contribution by the LGAQ, mayors and councillors in response to the recommendations made by the Crime and Corruption Commission's Operation Belcarra report.

We must ensure that there is a proper discussion about these issues instead of tarring everyone with the same brush. Unfortunately, the Palaszczuk Labor Government has sought to use the report as a political tool. Annastacia Palaszczuk isn't prepared to extend the same scrutiny regarding donations to the lawless unions.

The LNP will, in consultation with the LGAQ, resume the legislative changes to the councillor complaints system which lapsed once Annastacia Palaszczuk called an early election.

Real support for the workforce

The LNP has an economic plan that will create 500,000 jobs across Queensland over the next 10 years and improve wage outcomes for workers by cutting taxes.

Queensland public servants and local government workers deserve to be governed by a system which is consistent with private sector workers in Queensland (who are covered by the Fair Work Act). They also deserve to have their rights preserved and privacy respected by a Government that stands up for their interests, over the interest of their union masters.

We will restore the independence of the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission (QIRC) in relation to wage negotiations, following the unprecedented intervention by the Palaszczuk Labor Government in 2016.

We will maintain funding for existing local government employment and traineeship programs. They are proven projects that deliver better outcomes for jobseekers.

Local government boundaries

On the matter of council de-amalgamations, the LNP supported a process when in government of seeking expressions of interest, carefully reviewing the requests and putting de-amalgamation to the vote in four instances. We don't intend to revisit that process.

An LNP government would support local governments negotiating changes to their boundaries, with both parties and the community agreeing. Any dispute resolution could be carried out through the Boundary Commissioner.

We have been travelling the state and listening to the concerns of Queenslanders. They want better government – not more government. It's our commitment to be a common sense government that listens, plans and acts to **Build a Better Queensland**.

Please feel free to share this response directly with your members.

Kind regards

MICHAEL O'DWYER
State Director

