

Report on Attendance at the 2016 WA Local Government Convention

On Tuesday afternoon I attended a Mayor and Presidents forum hosted by WALGA.

There were two topics up for discussion. The first topic was about the gift provisions for Local Government. The point of interest, that the current system is too complex and needs to be reviewed. This probably won't happen until after the next election.

The second topic, RAV networks of our roads. This is a big concern amongst everyone whom attended.

There is funding now going towards commodity routes and main arterial roads, from lime pits on the coast to the wheat belt. This will roll out over the next few years.

The other main problem is the last mile access to the farmers gate, this needs to be addressed. Safety on our roads is a big concern.

Wednesday morning I met with the CEO Paul Martin to attend a session with the Director General of DER, regarding the works approval for SITA.

Also discussed were noise exemptions for Laurelvile.

The next session was with the Director General of the Department of Regional Development about future funding opportunities.

Wednesday afternoon I attended the WALGA AGM

Thursday and Friday I attended a number of sessions listening to key note speakers. This was of great benefit for everyone who attended. These keynote speakers give you ideas and inspiration on how you can improve yourself and your town with some very innovative thinking.

Over the whole week I was able to meet and network with a lot of other Councilors, CEO's and stakeholders of Local Government. I found this invaluable for me as President to understand what other councils are doing and how they deal with certain issues.

I also spent a great deal of time promoting York, the fact that we have come along way over the past 12 months, past issues are getting resolved and we are now moving forward for the better.

Cr David Wallace, Shire President

Local Government Week Report

By Cr Denese Smythe

Local Government Week was held over three days in August 2016. I arrived on Wednesday 3rd August and after registering I attended the Local Government AGM at which I was the Shire of York representative that was able to vote on the motions at the meeting. One of the most contentious motions was the proposed abolishment of the development assessment panels (DAPS), which was put forward by councillors from Claremont and Mosman Park. The following is a brief description of the motions put at this AGM which I attended from 1.30pm to 5.30pm.

Amendments to the WALGA Constitution

- Finalisation of WALGA's periodic governance review that focused on consistency among governance documents

Natural Disaster Recovery Support Funding

- Process to receive funding is difficult.
- Government response is slow.
- New source of funding is required

Non Operational Rail Corridors

- Brookfield Rail has a lease over an extensive network of rail infrastructure in Western Australia
- This lease includes non-operational rail corridors, where in some cases rail use hasn't occurred for 20 years or more.
- There is potential for the non-operational rail corridors to be used by local governments or other third parties for a community benefit however to date it has proven difficult to get Brookfield Rail and the Public Transport Authority to recognise this potential.
- A policy to facilitate such uses should be developed with input from interested local governments
- Planning Systems Review

Issues arising from decisions of Joint Development Assessment Panels needs to be addressed.

- Issues arising from State Administrative Tribunal need to be addressed.
- Local Government Planning Policies are being disregarded in decision making.
- The Planning System is no longer providing for the voice of communities to be effectively heard.
- The State Government continues to support and protect its reforms leaving the LG sector to deal with community dissatisfaction.
- An Independent review will seek to provide a strong basis for improved advocacy in the lead up to a state election

Abolitions of DAPS

- That WALGA advocate for the abolition of Development Assessment Panel (DAPs).

Introduction of Container Deposit Scheme

- WALGA has advocated for a CDS over a number of years
- In 2008 WALGA established a Policy Statement in support of Container Deposit Legislation
- A CDS will assist in litter reduction and improve resource recovery
- Declared Pest Plant C3 Review by DAFWA
- Request for WALGA to lobby the Minister for Agriculture and Food WA to ensure that the BAM Act review results in the Act giving the DAFWA the responsibility to control, manage and facilitate the eradication of pest plants and weeds, including Cotton Bush
- Department be adequately funded to undertake eradication programs

Renewable Energy

- WALGA to advocate for changes to the rules and regulations governing feed in tariffs for renewable energy, providing for a guaranteed fixed feed in tariffs over an extended period.
- Reducing Regulatory Burden on Local Government

The State Government is committed to red tape reduction.

- Increased Local Government compliance requirements have not been subject to the same level of scrutiny.
- All new legislation, regulation or quasi-regulation should be subject to a regulatory impact assessment

Most Accessible Regional City in Australia Awards

- Introduce an annual awards program coinciding with LG Week to acknowledge local governments promoting and improving accessibility in Western Australia

Discussion Paper Excessive Force

- There have, in recent years, been some well publicised incidents of property owners being charged for causing injury to intruders in the course of defending family and property.
- This is an issue of concern to the broader community and it has been raised at many community forums across the State.
- Local Government has an advocacy role to take on matters of concern raised by the community even when they are not directly related to local government service provision.
- The Motion is merely seeking the development of a discussion paper in order to allow widespread debate of this issue in the community

Corella Management Strategy

- Development and implementation of a Corella Management Strategy for the Perth metropolitan region is sought – an amendment was put and carried to include all local governments.

The official opening welcome reception was then held in the exhibition pavilion from 5.30pm to 7.00pm and they had some fun entertainment.



Thursday 4th August at 9.00am the program was opened by the President of WALGA, Cr Lynne Craigie and then we had our first session with our opening keynote address from Sir Robin Wales. Sir Robin talked about how he had worked with one of the most underprivileged London boroughs. Sir Robin was the first Labour directly elected Mayor in England and led the way on a number of ground breaking schemes in housing and education. Sir Robin was awarded a knighthood in 2000.

The next session held from 11am to 12pm was presented by Lt General David Morrison AO (retired) and it was called Strong Force for Equality. His presentation was about gender equality, diversity and inclusion. Lt General Morrison's made a video that went viral and started a cultural shift that changed Australia's armed forces forever, growing the number of women joining the army by 2%.

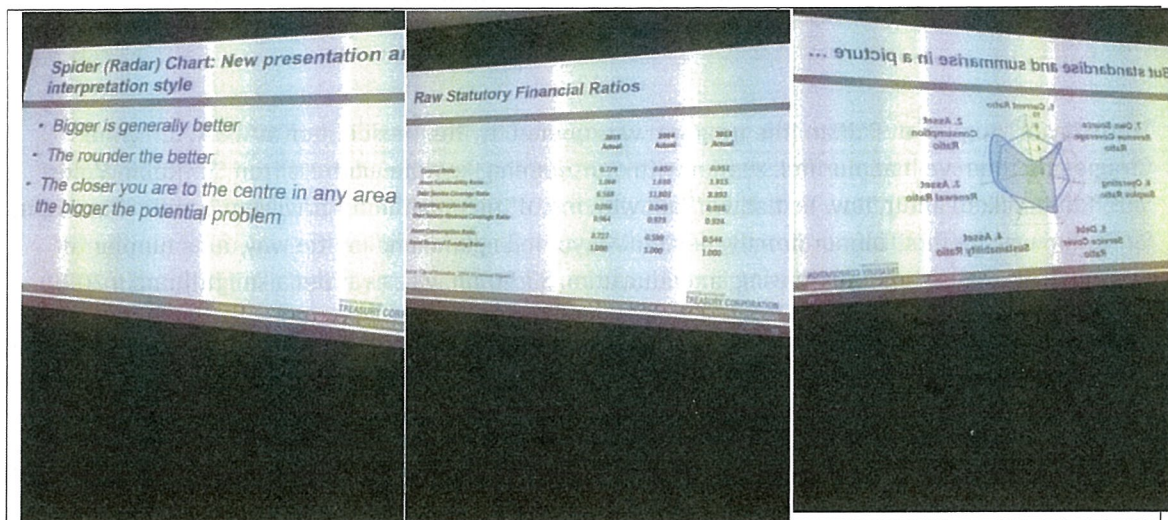
The third session for the morning was "Changing the world – one kid at a time" presented by Tanya Dupagne from Camp Kulin. Tanya was the founder and manager of the Shire of Kulin's nationally recognised Camp Kulin program where she leads a team of over 120 staff and volunteers to provide camps for children, particularly those who have experienced trauma in their lives. Tanya described the program and the impact working with youth has had on her and the community.

After lunch concurrent sessions were held where we had a choice of attending one of three presentations; Emergency Management, Transparency and Empowerment or Finding a Better Way – Childcare in Regional WA.

I attended the Transparency and Empowerment Session which was presented by David Letts and David Hammond. This session was about understanding of council business, particularly the financial realities and how to improve outcomes through service delivery.

Between 4.15 and 5.30pm the 2016 Banners in the Terrace awards were announced followed by "Leading on the Edge" – a session by Rachael Robertson and Antarctic Expedition Leader. Rachel talked about teamwork, resilience and leadership.

After lunch I attend the “Nature of Numbers” session by Gene Tunny from Adept Economics and Dr Paul Maginn, for the Centre of Regional Development at UWA. The two presenters talked about trends, indicators and shifts and cycles of the economic environment.



Thank you for the opportunity to attend.

COUNCILLOR HEATHER SAINT
CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE REPORT
LOCAL GOVERNMENT WEEK - AUGUST 2016

At the 2016 conference, I found some of the keynote speakers to be outstanding and whilst I attended several forums relating to varying discussion topics I would like to focus on one in particular that stood out for me.

INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY - CHANGING LIVES

This forum concentrated on Disability Services in the community with a key message about a good community being one in which everyone can participate, once that is accessible and can change lives.

Until 1992, no disability discrimination legislation was available, kids with disabilities were not allowed to attend mainstream schools and no disability access and inclusion plans (DAIP) existed. All of this was discretionary.

Step forward to 2016 and we have Perth Stadium which will become the most accessible in the country through proud planning rather than necessity.

Disability Services have a reasonably good Local Government employment connection with a ratio of 1:5 (20%) having some form of disability.

Local Governments in general have accepted change with DAIP inclusion but there are still State and Local Government employment issues. The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) looks for better systems and services and adequate overall access for those with a disability without fighting for scarce resources.

Liz Lockyear from the Shire of Manjimup spoke about their engagement in the DAIP since July 2014. She did say that there was an initial impact by way of loss of service, clients, some funding and assessment delays during the transition period. However, the Shire fully engaged in the scheme to provide services as an all inclusive community. Manjimup are only 1 of 8 Australia wide and the only 1 in WA to be accredited.

Obtaining the accreditation has had a profound impact on employment in the Manjimup area, specifically in Parks and Gardens within the community. The Shire received \$22 million in funding for an Access and Inclusion Plan for all ages and abilities together with road and pavement upgrades throughout the Shire.

By the end of June 2017, there will be 25% access to NDIS support across WA, but there will be no success unless all other areas receive focus, such as schools and education as they need to form part of the process.

Speaking about Shire facilities as someone with a disability, Melissa Northcott from Armadale Shire stressed the importance of accessibility, seating at the front of the Shire and seating at the counter area as not everyone can stand. She also suggested large print material to aid the visually impaired. Melissa's key message was:

"Make buildings inclusive not just accessible".

Peter Darch of NDIS spoke about employment opportunities in Australia and reported that Australia was ranked 28th out of 29 by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

He went on to say that there was far too much bureaucracy and rigidity in employment position descriptions when we should actually be looking to have a strong management and support structure in place for people with disabilities looking for employment identifying the need for opportunities to improve productivity, show leadership and share learning with the local community and business.

Prof David Gilchrist of Curtin University Not for Profit Initiative commented on the underlying economics of Human Services and reported on the 2014 national scale and social impact (Values) of WA.

The value of Mining was \$217 Billion with 190,000 employees. Agriculture was valued at \$75 Billion with 500,000 employees and Not for Profit totaled \$100 Billion (of which \$52 Billion is turnover) with 919,000 employees (in charitable organizations).

Of the charity sector, 600,000 are paid staff and 9/10 of the organizations use volunteers.

As an example he said that Not for Profit organizations in the Peel Region employed 680 full time staff, 636 part time staff and 5000 volunteers.

Overall, a common theme of the discussion was the importance of valuing individuals with a disability and providing better facilities in the community.

An opportunity created for a volunteer with a disability today, could provide an exciting pathway to paid employment in the future.

2016 WA Local Government Convention. August 3rd to August 6th

Sessions attended.

The keynote address was given by Sir Robin Wales. He described the processes the Newham (UK) council has adopted to make Newham a place where people want to live. Sir Robin's philosophy is to ensure locals have employment, education and housing opportunities. His talk was stimulating and interesting.

Lt General David Morrison, the Australian of the Year 2016, spoke on equality and change. In his address he listed many instances of inequality within the armed forces and the workplace. He also spoke about domestic violence and praised Ms Batty on her work in the field of domestic violence.

Tanya Dupagne described Camp Kulin and what it is doing for young people. It was interesting to note the reason for selecting Kulin was that she had overwhelming support for the project from the Kulin Shire. And the water slide. It is also interesting that the CWA have adopted Camp Kulin as a recipient for funds the organization raises each year. Tanya was very passionate and the work she is doing with disadvantaged kids is to be admired.

Steve Joske, Ian McCabe and Myra Giardini spoke on managing an emergency in our community. Each speaker examined a different aspect of natural disasters and quoted the cost of disasters in Australia in 2015 exceeded \$9 billion. They estimated the cost would rise in 2030 to be \$18 billion. The main thrust of their talk was to encourage the participation of local communities in managing an emergency.

Trade exhibitions. I toured through the area and noted the diversity of displays and the information available on all the equipment. From electric cars to farm machinery to legal advice. I spoke with many representatives from other Shires including Rob Stewart from the Shire of Plantagenet.

Emergencies.

This presentation was mediated by Liam Bartlett. The speakers were Tony Ahem from St Johns Ambulance, Professor Tarun Weeramanthri, Department of Health and Michael Parker, CEO of the Shire of Harvey. For me, Michael Parker's presentation was most relevant. He spoke on how to prepare for a disaster, eg, a fire in our area. His advice was to put together a list and allot a person to each area of responsibility. For example, a bank account for donations, and an area where donated goods could be left. He offered his time to any Shire to assist them in putting together the list.

WALGA is to be congratulated on the organization and presentation of an interesting convention. The range of speakers was excellent.

Cr Pam Heaton

Shire of York.

WALGA Convention August 2016

When I looked at the variety of presentations on offer in the program for my first WA Local Gov't Authority Convention, I was impressed by the qualifications and backgrounds of the speakers. Some of the sessions were intended for all to attend, while others were by selection from a mix of topics.

One of the highlights for me was the opening keynote address given by Sir Robert Wales, Mayor of London Borough of Newham. What he has accomplished over the course of 14 years has placed Newham at the forefront of public policy. Community engagement was the cornerstone of his successes in areas of housing and education. By building on the strengths of the residents and helping them take responsibility for their lives, he converted an under-privileged borough into a vibrant, innovative place to live and thrive.

Sir Robert obtains jobs for people by linking them directly with their employer rather than simply having them send their CVs. He also brings people together as an investment in their neighbourhood.

To invest in the future, he ensures every child:

- plays an instrument (free or charge)
- plays sport
- learns chess
- goes to the theatre
- is given breakfast

Sir Robert believes local gov't should be able to change lives. He encourages people to be brave, productive, proactive, innovative, push the boundaries, strive for independence and take risks.

His commitment to gender equality diversity and inclusion was the topic of retired Chief of Army, Lt General David Morrison. The words of a mother after her daughter was sexually assaulted in the army provided the tipping point in his attitude towards women's place in the armed services. His current idea of true diversity – gender, race, ethnic background - is everyone having the opportunity to reach their true potential.

Lt Morrison urged us to

- exercise leadership within the human domain
- put our own small world into the context of what is happening around us
- find and stand next to the big challenge in our area
- live in 3 time zones permanently: past (history, ethos, ethical foundation).
present and future (the legacy we leave)

As a leader, he came to realize the standard of behaviour you 'walk past' is the standard you accept.

Cr Jane Ferro

LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONVENTION 2016

Wednesday 03 – Friday 05 August 2016.

Attendance to the Local Government Convention and Trade Exhibition enables elected members and senior staff to “... *explore the way in which individual contributions can markedly influence communities, with their effect moving beyond just the activity taken..*” as well as networking and viewing the Trade Exhibition . The Convention programme consists of set programmes as well as concurrent sessions. The following report is provided from notes taken at the presentations and a synopsis of the Convention Introduction.

Opening Keynote address from Sir Robin Wales, Mayor, London Borough of Newham, has led community engagement and development of one of the most underprivileged London boroughs. He became the first Labour directly elected Mayor in England his leadership is a forerunner of public policy and has led the way on a number of ground breaking schemes in housing and education. Private tenants in Newham were the first in England to enjoy more protection as a result of the borough-wide licensing of private rented properties and the first to offer free school meals to all primary school children.

Sir Robin made it very clear that the approach to take was not based on the amount of revenue the Borough could raise but on what benefits the community most. Newham was an amalgamation of the two poorest districts in London – East Ham and West Ham – dockland areas that had served their purpose. It also had the greatest unemployment rate, poor services, high suicide, vandalism, poor housing, disaffected youth and isolated due to a total lack of road/rails access – in fact not a place you would choose to live it. The bridge that would have connected Newham to the City of London had been on the books to build for seventy-five years.

The suggested approach to take was (1) get good transport; (2) all residents must benefit; (3) not a lack of money but a lack of ambition and vision; (4) Local government look after the most vulnerable; (5) focus on resilience; (6) economic resilience – get a job – mental health – strength from those around us; (7) refused to be held hostage by so called “wisdom”; (8) generate profit that will make you independent from Government; (9) Investing to achieve a profit; (10) be free of Government; (11) deliver lasting change and (12) invest in the long term. When asked how much profit was generated from the housing the Borough had provided the response was “the reason for building new housing was to provide good affordable accommodation for the community and the rental income received will never cover the cost of building the houses”.

The main stadium for the Olympics was built at Newham, there is now affordable housing, low unemployment and a successful Every Child programme.

Strong Force for Equality - Lt. General David Morrison AO (ret). Recognised internationally for his commitment to gender equality, diversity and inclusion.

Lt. General Morrison made the following points (1) respects to Country; (2) support victims and survivors of domestic violence; (3) realising potential will make Australia a great country; (4) all people should be able to reach their potential but this is prevented due to discrimination, bullying, and exclusion; (5) important to define culture; (6) essential that everybody should be able to put their views forward in robust discussion without their views being dismissed as irrelevant; (7) three essential elements for leadership.

A good leader - (1) knows leadership is a human demand – only lead other people – only lead because we are appointed or elected; we are social animals who form communities; (2) continue to put own views into the context around you (don't focus on just getting elected) what is happening around you is essential; (3) true effective leadership is what is important for them not you.

The Chief of the Army have always lived in the past, but he lives in the future and needs to address the issues around culture. What you do in your term will be there long after you have gone.

Culture – white male anglo saxon = aussie male. Male domination – in a masculine way. Bronze ANZAC. Need to contribute to a cause greater than ourselves; there will be active resistance; encourage and need people who are able to contribute; the existing order of things not necessarily what you need for the future; what is the legacy you are going to leave?

Changing the World – One Kid at a Time – Tanya Dupagne, Camp Kulin Manager.

Tanya is a very energetic worker who has identified a need to provide leadership and support for children who have experienced trauma. Working with youth overseas she recognised that children suffering from trauma could benefit from being given the opportunity to learn coping mechanism through attendance at places like Camp Kulin.

Transparency & Empowerment.

This was a 'round table' type of discussion with Cr. Wayne Sanford, President, Shire of Collie in the Chair.

Richard McKenzie, Head of Client Debt Finance & Investment, W.A. Treasury Corp. Central borrowing for the State of Western Australia offering financial solutions for the benefit of the Western Australian Public Sector.

Advisor Foreign Exchange Transaction. Small staff unable to reach the 186 Local Governments. Education article series available on 'goals'. Note: A Local Government loan is different to a home loan.

There was an informed debate on what is a responsible loan (rate) of debt. Debts that will be self supporting loans and do not have a profit maximising policy.

Financial Advisory Services have a financial health indicator – there are seven financial ratios that constitute the reporting require. No ‘one solution fits all’ but there is a need to make informed decisions. Bigger is generally thought to be better, but depends on how close you are to the centre of the better.

The Financial Health Indicator is scored out of 100 with a score of 70 being the benchmark. This information is published on the MyCouncil Website, so each Council can have a look at what their current Financial Health score looks like.

David Hammond, Director Hammond Robertson Ltd.

Co-designing Communities – putting the ‘local’ back into Local Government. There needs to be a shift in the way that we are dealing with communities starting with using the word ‘consumer’ rather than ‘rate payer’. People don’t want rate savings at the cost of losing local voice.

Glen Leech (only in an advisory role) – Councils should strive to be the countries best run, most proactive Council.

Emergency

Round table discussion with Liam Bartlett in the Chair. Tony Ahern, CEO St. John’s Ambulance, Professor Tarun Weeramanthri, Assistant Director General, Public Health Division, Department of Health and Michael Parker, CEO, Shire of Harvey.

Professor Tarun Weeramanthri. There are very important things that need to be done in the case of an emergency. Tell people (1) What you know; (2) What you don’t know; (3) What you are doing, and (4) What you need to know.

Michael Parker – In regard to the recent fare at Yarloop there was a large difference between the planning stage and the actual event. The fire started on Friday 08 January 2016, ran for 17 days and burnt 69,000 Ha. The evacuation centre dealt with 1,100 people. The Recovery structure had four sub Committees:- community, finance, environment and infrastructure. In addition Rural Outreach, an outside agency dealt with 206 requests in two days. On financial issues there were 273 payments made. As far as communications went the fire was a very visible event being covered by all television and radio stations on a daily basis.

With all tragedies of this nature – community fund raising came into full swing. Donations started to flow in and there needs to be strategies in place to identify what is required and what is not required (e.g. a second hand wedding dress was donated).

Changing the Face of Tourism

Evan Hall, Tourism Council of W.A. – 1,300 members across the State, there are also small business and Not For Profit organisations in tourism. Tourism is about journeys and destinations and from an economical development perspective 9M stay overnight, 72M nights of accommodation sold. \$9.3M is spent. 95% are small or micro businesses.

Tourism brings customers into the local area, this can be hard to manage but it is “essential”. People choose destination before looking for accommodation and disperse their money across the journey. Distinct markets have been developed e.g. Perth/Margaret and Tasmania. The destination may need to be broader than your area. Look at 500,000 visitors; 400 bookable tourism sites. Once a hotel has been booked the tourist will then need to have places to visit to keep them within your area for maximum financial benefit.

So what makes a destination? (1) Identify the destination; (2) fund the local Visitor Centre – the longer the stay the better the financial return; (3) look at partnerships and finally identify the target market. Look at how a destination was developed by Margaret River Tourism – they sell everything. (1) Planning and infrastructure (supply and demand – look at capacity constraints); (2) focus on product (book on line); (3) Information is broadcast every Thursday across the State.

Nicole Nelson – Shire of Irwin (4 years). Don't underestimate the value of the local Visitor Centre – they are the frontline contact and can provide valuable information. There are 112 Centres across the State. Send your Visitor Centre staff to the Annual Visitor Service Conference. Visitor Centres need not be \$ based. A web site is very important.

Roge Kempe, EM Community Engagement, Shire of Exmouth.

There is a lot of competition for the visitor dollar so the experience needs to be very special, provide unexpected encounters with rare marine life – e.g. whale sharks and a coral reef to rival the Great Barrier Reef. 100,000 tourists visit Exmouth every year and the Exmouth life style is like that of a tourist, but, tourists spend money differently and don't pay rates. The Visitor Centre gets 120 people a day through the door. With everything there is a down side and some residents resent the influx of visitors but the self same visitors are providing jobs and security for the residents.

SUMMARY

The speakers at the Conference all share a vision of looking at the needs of the consumer coupled with the tenacity to go forward against all adversity. Tourism is seen to be a potential money earner for Shires and information on available funding and promotion has been provided.

Cr Tricia Walters
20 November 2016