



SOUTHERN DOWNS REGIONAL COUNCIL

SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL

Dear Councillors

Your attendance is hereby requested at the Special Meeting of Council to be held in the Council Chambers, Southern Downs Regional Council, 64 Fitzroy Street, Warwick on **Monday, 13 April 2015 at 1:30pm.**

Notice is hereby given of the business to be transacted at the meeting.

David Keenan

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

9 April 2015

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- 1. ATTENDANCE**
- 2. APOLOGIES**
- 3. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

4. BUSINESS & COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT REPORTS

4.1 BCS - National General Assembly of Local Government - Motions

Document Information

 Southern Downs REGIONAL COUNCIL	Report To: Special Council Meeting	
	Reporting Officer:	Meeting Date: 13 April 2015
	Director Business & Community Services	File Ref: 14.10.01

Recommendation

THAT Council adopt that the following three motions be submitted to the 2015 National General Assembly (NGA) of Local Government for inclusion into their Business Papers:

1. The inability of local government to fund repairs following natural disasters and that the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) threshold is not reduced and is maintained at the current levels.
2. The core business of the three levels of government needs to be made clearer which would include how funds are distributed between Federal, State and Local Government and would alleviate cost shifting from occurring.
3. The Federal Assistance Grants (FAGs) freeze to Local Government be lifted.

Report

A report was provided to Council at its March 2015 meeting advising that the National General Assembly (NGA) of Local Government will be held from 14 – 17 June 2015 at the National Convention Centre in Canberra.

At the Council meeting in March 2015 it adopted to :

1. *Submit motions to the NGA that fall under the following principles:*
 - *The NGA theme - "Closest to the Community: Local Government in the Federation".*
 - *Be relevant to the work of Local Government nationally.*
 - *Compliment or build on the policy objectives of state and Territory associations.*
2. *Adopt the motions proposed to be included in the NGA Business Papers.*

The Call for Motions closes at 11:59pm AEST on Friday, 17 April 2015. All proposed motions from Council need to be adopted and submitted prior to the closing date.

The proposed motions are as follows:

1. **The inability of local government to fund repairs following natural disasters and that the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) threshold is not reduced and is maintained at the current levels.**

Motion

That the day labour component of any emergent and restoration works that occur during a natural disaster becomes claimable under NDRRA Guidelines which will allow council's to ensure the safety of their communities in the aftermath of any natural disaster.

Also, that pressure is maintained on the Federal Government to ensure that the current threshold and assistance rates level of funding provided under the NDRRA banner is not reduced and is maintained at the current levels.

2. **The core business of the three levels of government needs to be made clearer which would include how funds are distributed between Federal, State and Local Government and would alleviate cost shifting from occurring.**

Motion

Clearer guidelines need to be established to determine the core business of the three levels of government. Adequate funding needs to be distributed to all three levels of government to ensure the roles and responsibilities of Federal, State and Local Governments are clearly understood and funded accordingly.

Cost shifting describes a situation where the responsibility for or merely the costs of providing a certain service, concession, asset or regulatory function are 'shifted' from a higher level of government on to a lower level of government without providing corresponding funding or the conferral of corresponding and adequate revenue raising capacity.

It is not always easy to know which government is responsible for which service therefore clearer guidelines would alleviate cost shifting from occurring.

3. **The Federal Assistance Grants (FAGs) freeze to Local Government be lifted.**

Motion

That the Federal Government maintains the system of payments to support Local Government through FAGs and lifts the current freeze on indexation of FAGs to Local Governments.

All council's use FAGs to build and maintain community assets and provide services to their communities. They form a large part of the revenue base to many council's across Australia. The current indexation freeze is restricting council's in service delivery to their communities and placing added pressure for council's to consider rate increases to compensate for the lost revenue associated with the indexation freeze.

Budget Implications

There are no budget or financial implications as a result of this report.

Policy Consideration

Corporate Plan 2014-2019

4. The Economically Strong, Sustainable and Diverse Southern Downs.
 - 4.7 Lobby State and Federal Governments on issues of concern to the regional community.
 - 4.8 Maximise private and government funding opportunities to foster both community and business growth throughout the region.

Community Engagement

Nil.

Legislation/Local Law

Nil.

Options

1. Submit all three motions to the 2015 NGA.
2. Amend one or all of the three motions and then submit them to the 2015 NGA.
3. Do not submit any of the three motions to the 2015 NGA.

Attachments

Nil