

DATE Friday, 7 August 2020

TO: Cr Bob Manning – Mayor, Cairns Regional Council

SUBJECT LGAQ Policy Executive Update for Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils Board Meeting – Tuesday 11th August 2020

Key Activities Summary

This brief provides an update on the following key LGAQ activities:

- 1. LGAQ 2020 State Election Priorities**
- 2. 2020 Advocacy Action Plan**
- 3. COVID-19 Funding Advocacy:**
- 4. COVID-19 impact on councils**
- 5. Electoral and Other Legislation (Accountability, Integrity and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019**
- 6. Reef Advocacy**
- 7. Waste Update**
- 8. Planning & Development Update**
- 9. 1080 Stockpile Depletion and Commencement of Medicines and Poisons Act 2019**
- 10. Queensland Climate Resilient Councils Program (Q CRC)**
- 11. Event – BioEconomy**
- 12. Investment Attraction Training**
- 13. Wage Freeze**
- 14. Tait v Goondiwindi Regional Council [2019] QDC 208**
- 15. Wages Theft Bill**
- 16. LGAQ Submissions Update**

1. LGAQ 2020 State Election Priorities

- With less than 90 days until the 2020 State Election, LGAQ is finalising its State Election campaign strategy. In June the Policy Executive endorsed 6 key themes for our state election priorities. These themes are consistent with those contained in the LGAQ's 2020 Advocacy Action Plan and include:
 - Sustaining Local Jobs
 - Strengthening our Regions
 - Keeping Communities Safe
 - Protecting the environment
 - Supporting the Bush
 - Advancing First Nations Councils
- The LGAQ's priority funding programs and legislative reform requests will be aligned with these themes. A "report card" will be produced to rate political party responses to the LGAQ's priorities. A #Vote4Local message will be used to encourage voters to vote for a party that best supports the local government sector and their local communities.
- The LGAQ will be emailing councils a survey that asks them to nominate the types of local projects they can fund if parties commit to our statewide funding requests. This information will be used to localise the campaign message by region and by council.
- The LGAQ's campaign will involve traditional and online media, multimedia and a dedicated website and targeted engagement with parliamentary party leaders and party officials.

LGAQ Lead Contact for this matter: Shayne Sutton, Acting Lead – Intergovernmental Relations

2. 2020 Advocacy Action Plan

The LGAQ's [2020 Advocacy Action Plan](#) (AAP) was publicly released and communicated to Member Councils on Tuesday 28 July 2020. The AAP has been developed from policy motions endorsed at the 2019 LGAQ Annual Conference and will inform the development of the LGAQ's State Election priorities. The plan has 8 themes:

- Sustaining Local Jobs
- Strengthening our Regions
- Keeping Communities Safe
- Protecting the environment
- Supporting the Bush
- Advancing First Nations Councils
- Planning for the future
- An effective, efficient, and financially responsible local government sector

These themes have shaped the LGAQ State Election campaign themes.

LGAQ Lead Contact for this matter: Shayne Sutton, Acting Lead – Intergovernmental Relations

3. COVID-19 Funding Advocacy:

- LGAQ continues its COVID-19 related funding advocacy with both the State and Federal Government.
- On 30 June 2020, [the LGAQ made a comprehensive submission](#) to the Economics and Governance Committee's Inquiry into the Queensland Government's response to COVID-19. On

13 July 2020, the LGAQ appeared before the Committee to answer questions about the submission.

Battleplan for Queensland local communities:

- On 19 April, less than a month after the COVID-19 lockdown commenced, the LGAQ released its Battleplan for Queensland Local Communities which proposed a partnership with the Queensland Government to support the economic recovery of Queensland's local communities.
- In response to LGAQ's Battleplan the Queensland Premier requested Queensland 77 Councils provide a list of "shovel-ready" projects to the Government for consideration. The LGAQ co-ordinated the compilation of these projects and submitted a comprehensive list to the Government on 15 May.
- To date, Battleplan related advocacy has resulted in the following funding programs being made available to Queensland Councils:
 - \$200 million [COVID-19 Works for Queensland](#) funding round inc \$50m for SEQ Councils
 - \$50 million [Unite and Recover Community Stimulus Package](#) for South East Queensland councils' to support investment in new infrastructure and community assets that create jobs and deliver economic stimulus to local communities.
 - Up to \$25 million in [Growing Tourism Infrastructure](#) funding
 - Up to \$5 million in grants funding for [cluster fencing in western Queensland](#)
 - Up to \$10 million via the [Reef Assist Program](#) for nature-based projects in Reef Catchment Areas to improve resilience to natural disasters, improve water quality and pursue habitat restoration, weed and pest management
 - Up to \$22.5 million for as part of the [Arts and Cultural Recovery Package](#).

Childcare Funding:

- As a result of strong advocacy by advocacy by both the LGAQ and Longreach Regional Council, the Queensland Government has provided \$2 million to support the deficit in childcare funding created as a result of the Federal Governments decisions to make child care free and deny Councils the ability to access JobKeeper funding. The impact of these decisions was estimated to be costing councils who provide childcare services more than \$150,000 per week.
- The Early Childhood Education and Care Relief package commitment made by the State Government was made directly to eligible Councils (18 in total) and equated to 14 weeks of funding to cover up the extension of free childcare until 13 July 2020.

Federal Government COVID-19 Funding:

- There have been no further Federal Government announcements specifically for local government since the 22 May 2020 announcements (which pre-date the last FNQROC meeting), namely the [\\$500 million Local Road and Community Infrastructure Program](#) for local government and the \$1.3 billion in Financial Assistance Grants which have been brought forward.

LGAQ Lead Contact for this matter: Shayne Sutton, Acting Lead – Intergovernmental Relations

4. COVID-19 impact on councils

- On 22 May 2020 the [Justice and Other Legislation \(COVID-19 Emergency Response\) Amendment Bill 2020](#) was passed. Key features of the bill that relate to local government:

- Regulatory changes to ensure councils can hold council meetings in different ways and different forms while meeting their obligations for accountability and transparency
- Grant administration processes have also been modified to help lighten the load for councils at this time.
- Works for Queensland program guidelines for 2019-21 have been changed, allowing some councils to access their allocations for use in COVID-19 response programs and activities
- Councils have the flexibility to revisit their rates decisions later in the financial year if necessary
- The Bill amends the *City of Brisbane Act* and the *Local Government Act* to provide a temporary regulation-making power until 30 June 2021. A regulation may be made under this head of power that would enable all local governments to decide, by resolution made at a meeting other than the budget meeting for the 2020-21 year, what rates and charges are to be levied for part of the 2020-21 financial year.
- The amendments provide a head of power for necessary regulation amendments to treat this 'extraordinary decision' of the council as an amendment to its budget. Minor technical amendments also provide for the original rates decision and previous extraordinary decisions to cease to have effect for the relevant part of the financial year once an extraordinary decision is made.

Easing of Restrictions

- Queensland's [Roadmap to Easing COVID-19 restrictions](#) outlines a staged recovery approach for various sectors. Queensland is currently under [Stage 3](#) of the [Roadmap to easing restrictions](#).
- Importantly, local government's role is limited to 'complaints' received via the State Government and will NOT require proactive inspections. The State Government is managing the Complaints Management System on 13Q GOV.
- [Stage 3](#) of the [Roadmap to easing restrictions](#) (currently in force) began at midday on 3 July 2020.

Queensland border closed

- As of 1:00am on Saturday August 8, Queensland's border is closed to New South Wales.
- all visitors will be denied entry except for rare exemptions, and returning Queenslanders will have to pay for 14 days mandatory hotel quarantine.
- Queensland's Chief Health Officer has declared all of New South Wales, Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory as hotspots.
- Only residents of border communities and essential workers, such as truck drivers, will be able to cross the border.
- The border closure would be reviewed at the end of August.

LGAQ Lead Contact for this matter: Georgia Stafford, Lead – Intergovernmental Relations

5. Electoral and Other Legislation (Accountability, Integrity and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019

- The Electoral and Other Legislation (Accountability, Integrity and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019 was passed by Parliament, with a series of amendments, on 18 June 2020.
- The Bill introduces expenditure caps and new signage restrictions for state elections, new offences for Ministerial misconduct (the "Trad laws") and a series of significant local government reforms.
- Local government reforms passed by Parliament include:
 - new register of interest provisions (in effect 12 October 2020)
 - new and clarified conflict of interest requirements (in effect 12 October 2020)

- a system for regulating political advisors (in effect 12 October 2020)
 - the requirement for councils to develop guidelines about councillor administration support staff (in effect 12 October 2020)
 - provisions relating to the dissolution of a local government and administrators (in effect on assent)
 - provisions stopping mayors from giving directions about the appointment or discipline of local government employees (in effect 12 October 2020)
 - changes for filling councillor and mayor vacancies (in effect 12 October 2020).
- The amendments made during consideration in detail of the Bill on 18 June 2020 were not circulated to the LGAQ ahead of their introduction and the LGAQ's assessment of the changes is mixed:
 - The LGAQ welcomes the fact that the element of dishonest intent has been preserved in the new offence provisions for councillor conduct.
 - The new conflict of interest framework strikes a better balance between transparency and operational requirements of councils and fixes a number of issues with the previous regime, particularly in situations where there is no quorum in council meetings.
 - Questions remain over the appropriateness and fairness of the new system for regulating political advisors.
 - The appointment of the runner up as the default method for filling of councillor vacancies in undivided councils has been brought back from the first 36 to 12 months from the original Bill but at the same time has been extended to all mayoral and councillor vacancies except the Lord Mayor (for the first 12 months). The LGAQ remains concerned with this change and will continue to advocate for it to be removed.
 - The commencement date of 12 October 2020 for the bulk of the local government provisions allows sufficient time for training of elected members.
 - In addition to the Bill, there are also a number of regulatory amendments required.
 - Further information about the reforms is available in the Department of Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs' updated [information paper](#).

LGAQ Lead Contact for this matter: Stephan Bohnen, Lead – Intergovernmental Relations

6. Reef Advocacy

- The LGAQ has secured a further \$1 million from the Office of the Great Barrier Reef to progress the commencement of Stage 2 of the Cleaner Wastewater (Wastewater Stewardship) initiative of the Reef Councils Rescue Plan.
- The funding is competitive and is available to the 6 councils whose wastewater quality improvement innovations were previously shortlisted in Stage 1. The EoI invitations have been sent directly to shortlisted councils.
- The LGAQ continues to proactively seek co-investment from government and other potential partners for the Reef Councils' Rescue Plan – Cleaner Water for the Reef priority initiatives.
- The initiative was developed and endorsed by reef-catchment councils and includes a strategic set of three initiatives that can make a real and practical difference to reef water quality and provide opportunities for local communities to participate.
- The Office of the Great Barrier Reef funded Stage 1 of the Cleaner Wastewater project which is working with Reef catchment councils to find alternatives to expensive tertiary treatment and is currently finalising the project products for use by councils. The project is due for completion by end October 2020.
- \$380,000 has been secured through the Great Barrier Reef Foundation to commence the implementation of the Reef Councils Rescue Plan Cleaner Road Runoff (Unsealed Roads) initiative.

- There has been no further information about the likely release date of the Draft Revised Reef 2050 Plan for public consultation.

LGAQ Contact for this matter: Dorean Erhart, Lead – Climate Change and the Great Barrier Reef

7. Waste Update

Waste Levy – Deferral of incremental increase

- On 30 June 2020, the Department of Environment and Science (DES) advised that to assist businesses in dealing with the financial impacts of COVID-19, the Queensland Government will be deferring the increase in waste levy rates originally scheduled to take effect from 1 July 2020.
- A **six-month deferral** to 1 January 2021 has been approved.
- The waste levy will stay at \$75 per tonne for general waste, and \$105 and \$155 per tonne for regulated wastes until 31 December 2020.
- The department has advised that the current levy obligations remain unchanged, including waste measurement and recording, monthly data returns and monthly invoice payments.

Waste levy – advance payments to councils

- On 30 June, DES wrote to councils with details about the waste levy payments and to confirm the tonnages and rates notice wording in relation to advance payments.
- Most councils are now well advanced in these discussions and will be finalising payment arrangements.

Waste management reforms

- Ongoing discussions are occurring between DES, the LGAQ and a number of affected councils on the proposed legislative amendments to Section 7 of the *Waste Reduction and Recycling Regulation 2011*.
- Although the LGAQ welcomed the opportunity to provide feedback, a number of concerns have been raised by affected councils that need to be resolved prior to finalisation of the legislation.
- The LGAQ's overarching position on the matter remains unchanged – i.e. that there should be no interference with such a core public service nor with the autonomy of local governments in establishing facilities, services, rates and charges.
- It appears through discussions to date, that existing contractual arrangements will be respected as part of transitional provisions and that councils will maintain the level of service delivery in designated areas where there is a clear overlap of mixed uses incorporating both residential and commercial areas.
- The LGAQ has reinforced the need for the department to maintain ongoing discussions with affected councils to resolve the outstanding concerns prior to the finalisation of any legislative amendments.

Economic recovery - waste management and resource recovery

- Councils have been meeting since April 2020 in response to COVID 19 issue and the need for ongoing communications on the challenges they faced and maintaining their existing operations through the **Local Government Waste Management (COVID 19) Consultation Group**.
- Following on from the local government COVID 19 meetings, councils have since met on 4 August for a discussion on economic recovery for waste and resource recovery activities.
- The range of initiatives identified by councils include new and upgrades to MRF's, improvements to facilities, glass and plastic processing facilities, mattress and solar panels recycling facilities.

- This information will be further consolidated and prioritised and will form the basis of further discussions with the Department of Environment and Science to assist in guiding the response to the current challenges and the introduction of export waste bans.

LGAQ Waste Forum

- The LGAQ Waste Forum proposed for August 2020 has now been postponed until February 2021.

LGAQ Lead Contact for this matter: Robert Ferguson, Lead – Public Health and Waste

8. Planning & Development Update

Planning regulatory changes in response to COVID-19

- On 8 July 2020, the Treasurer and Minister for Infrastructure and Planning:
 - issued an [extension notice](#) under the *Planning Act 2016* for the COVID-19 emergency applicable event to provide for a six-month extension to timeframes for undertaking approved development. This notice does not apply to building development approvals for building works to which section 71 of the *Building Act 1975* applies.
 - [released](#) for public consultation, a package of proposed planning initiatives to support economic recovery in response to COVID-19. These include proposed amendments to the Development Assessment Rules, Minister's Guidelines and Rules, and the *Planning Regulation 2017*. The closing date for submissions was 7 August 2020.
- The proposed changes follow the other planning regulatory amendments previously made in response to COVID-19 including:
 - the [planning legislation amendments](#) made in mid-March 2020 under the *Public Health & Other Legislation (Public Health Emergency) Amendment Act 2020*, in relation to declared uses and temporary use licences,
 - the [announcement](#) on 11 June 2020 to extend the COVID-19 emergency applicable event under the *Planning Act 2016* to 31 October 2020, and
 - the [Planning \(COVID-19 Emergency Response\) Regulation 2020](#) made on 26 June 2020 to establish new temporary requirements (in effect until 31 December 2020) in relation to public notification for development applications and the public availability of documents
- The [Fact Sheet 'Temporary Use Licences – COVID-19 Applicable Event'](#) has also been updated recently to clarify:
 - the level of information required to accompany an application for a temporary use licence (TUL) to the State Government
 - that responsibility for compliance and enforcement of an approved TUL (including any conditions imposed), rest with the relevant local government
 - that an application for a TUL seeking to change hours of construction will no longer be accepted by the State Government.
- The LGAQ is continuing to engage with the Queensland Treasury (Planning Group) on a regular basis and through the Planning System Reference Group regarding planning regulatory changes in response to COVID-19 and economic recovery responses.

Plan sealing changes

- On 8 June 2020, the Titles Registry [confirmed](#) the electronic lodgement (eLodgement) of survey plans is now available. The eLodgement functionality follows ongoing advocacy by the LGAQ and Queensland councils, and the [earlier changes](#) that took effect on 27 April 2020 to enable electronic approval and transmission of survey plans.
- The LGAQ is currently in further discussions with the Titles Registry regarding expansion of eLodgement functionality for other survey plans.

Building matters update

- The LGAQ has been [appointed](#) as a permanent, ongoing member of the Ministerial Construction Council (MCC) chaired by the Hon. Mick de Brenni MP, Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport.
- The LGAQ attended the latest meeting of the MCC on 7 July 2020, during which Minister de Brenni announced the temporary measures that allow building certifiers to hold a licence, even if they hold professional indemnity insurance with certain cladding exclusions, would be extended to 30 June 2022. See a copy of the communique for the meeting [here](#).
- The Minister also updated MCC members that a range of economic recovery measures were also being considered for a 'building and construction industry blueprint' to further complement the [Queensland Economic Recovery Strategy 'Unite and Recover'](#) and to sustain, transition and transform the building and construction sector.
- The LGAQ understands that further temporary building regulatory amendments are also being considered using the broad powers under the [COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020](#), including to provide greater flexibility in relation to methods for undertaking building inspections, timeframes for commencing proceedings and the giving/serving documents by electronic means.
- The [Building Industry Fairness \(Security of Payments\) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020](#) was also passed by the Queensland Parliament, with amendment, on 15 July 2020. The Bill had been delayed in Parliament due to COVID-19.
- The Bill was assented to on 23 July 2020 and amends various building related legislation, however key changes of particular note for local government include:
 - amendments to the *Building Act 1975* to implement reforms arising from the Queensland Building Plan (QBP) to strengthen the building certification and inspection processes and improve professional standards and compliance in the certification sector
 - amendments to the *Building Industry Fairness (Security of Payment) Act 2017* to extend the application of the project trust framework requirements to progressively include certain local government and private sector contracts in a staged manner (based on project value).
- The majority of provisions will commence on a day to be fixed by proclamation. The LGAQ will prepare further member communications on this in the coming weeks and is continuing to engage with the Department of Housing and Public Works, and through the MCC, regarding building reforms and the range of other economic recovery responses under consideration.

Local Government Planning & Development COVID-19 Meetings

- Between mid-April and end-June 2020, the LGAQ convened fortnightly *Local Government Planning & Development COVID-19* virtual meetings, involving representatives from approximately 20 Queensland councils, to:
 - provide for regular LGAQ updates in relation to planning and development matters associated with COVID-19
 - identify and consider COVID-19 related planning and development issues and responses, and support information sharing between councils, and
 - inform ongoing COVID-19 related advocacy/engagement activities.
- Meeting participants have agreed to reconvene on a monthly basis to continue discussions regarding local economic recovery responses and any new/emerging planning and development issues related to COVID-19.
- The most recent meeting was held on 30 July 2020 and a further meeting will be scheduled for late August/early September 2020. All councils are welcome to participate. If your council would like to be involved, please contact Crystal Baker – Lead Planning & Development.

LGAQ Lead Contact for this matter: Crystal Baker, Lead – Planning and Development

9. 1080 Stockpile Depletion and Commencement of Medicines and Poisons Act 2019

- The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) sought feedback from councils in November 2019 on the future supply of sodium fluoroacetate, known as 1080, a pesticide used to control feral animals.
- As a schedule 7 poison, 1080 manufacture, supply and use in Queensland is regulated by Queensland Health and the supply of fresh meat baits to landholders is by authorised State or local government officers.
- Since the 1970s, DAF has provided 1080 concentrate, associated stores, and a 1080 bait preparation service at no cost to local governments, using a stockpile of 1080 powder. The original purchase of this stockpile was a Queensland Government commitment to exotic disease preparedness that was current at the time and was purchased using funds provided by Queensland Treasury. The intent was that, should an exotic emergency disease outbreak occur in Queensland, then large amounts of 1080 could be used during intensive baiting campaigns to reduce the risk of disease spread by invasive animals.
- Since then, a nationally agreed approach has been developed for the response to emergency animal disease incidents in Australia, which is the Australian Veterinary Emergency Plan (AUSVETPLAN). The focus of control is now prevention of spread to invasive animals, strategic control, and vaccination of animals, rather than large scale 1080 baiting programs.
- The current stockpile is estimated to last until July 2021 at current usage rates, due to weather conditions. Once the stockpile is exhausted, 1080 concentrate will only be available from commercial 1080 providers.
- DAF is currently considering a range of approaches for the future supply of 1080 concentrate to local governments, including a detailed examination of the impacts of the cessation of the no-cost 1080 service. One of the options being considered is to continue providing 1080 to councils at no cost.
- The review has been delayed by the delay in the State Budget. That is, DAF are unable to determine exact options until they have a clear understanding of the funds available. It is hoped that the options paper will be provided to councils by October 2020 for review.
- The LGAQ met with the Hon. Mark Furner, Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries about this matter on Tuesday 14 July 2020 noting the importance of continuing to supply 1080 at no cost to councils.
- The LGAQ will continue to update councils in relation to this matter as further information becomes available.

LGAQ Lead Contact for this matter: Kristy Gooding, Lead – Natural Assets and NRM

10. Queensland Climate Resilient Councils Program (Q CRC)

- The Q CRC program is a State-funded, LGAQ-delivered partnership which builds council capability to take action to respond to a changing climate through a range of services and resource
- 40 councils are currently participating in the Program.
- The program is making **\$125K available for two grants to pilot the preparation of a Climate Risk Management Strategy** between September 2020 and September 2021.
- The call for applications will be released shortly.
- To be eligible, councils not currently in the program will need to join and have committed to receiving their climate implications briefing and governance assessment by no later than 31 August 2020.
- **Councils are urged to join as soon as possible to be eligible for a grant.**
- For more information, contact the program manager at: Dorean_Erhart@lgaq.asn.au

LGAQ Lead Contact for this matter: Dorean Erhart, Lead – Climate Change and the Great Barrier Reef and Program Manager – Q CRC

11. Event – BioEconomy

- The LGAQ launched the first of a series of webinars called the Future Economy Series, designed to inform, educate, and connect local councils on economic opportunities surrounding emerging and key industries for Queensland.
- The first event of this two-part series was on Thursday 24th of June 2020 and the second part was on 1 July. You can watch here: [Part 1 \(Government and Academia\)](#) and [Part 2 \(Industry\)](#)
- The next series is planned for the Hydrogen Industry and dates are to be determined.

LGAQ Lead Contact for this event: Paul Cranch Lead – Trade and Investment

12. Investment Attraction Training

- The LGAQ is offering its highly regarded investment attraction training, which is perfect for regions seeking a more sophisticated understanding of, and the practical skills needed for, success in appealing to investors.
- This training offering is suitable for professional practitioners and elected members who are keen to identify and maximise investment opportunities. Further, it is fully funded under an MoU between TIQ and the LGAQ and is available to members at no cost.
- We are currently delivering to our member councils in western regions and have a full group with members from Longreach, Black-all Tambo, Winton, Paroo, Quilpie, Balonne, Flinders, Maranoa, Western Downs, and Mt Isa. We are planning for the next round and will be going out to our members again to see who is interested in the August/September sessions.

LGAQ Lead Contact for this event: Paul Cranch Lead – Trade and Investment

13. Wage Freeze

- The State has legislated to defer wage rises for a number of public service employees. Other areas of the public service will receive prescribed rises, with some specified areas actually being given a pay-rise back-dated to 2019.
- At the same time, the State has introduced temporary amendments to the *Industrial Relations Act* relating to future enterprise bargaining.
- This wage deferral and temporary legislative amendments do not cover local government in any way.
- The state is also providing additional leave entitlements for some areas of the public service workforce.

LGAQ Lead Contact for this matter: Tony Goode - Workforce Strategy Executive

14. Tait v Goondiwindi Regional Council [2019] QDC 208

- The appeal made by the Goondiwindi Council against an initial verdict, which ruled a motorcyclist's injuries from a pothole crash were due to council negligence, has been dismissed with the judgement delivered on 5 June 2020. This means the Council lost the case on appeal.
- The damages awarded to the plaintiff in the sum of \$304,138.11 from Goondiwindi Regional Council have been upheld.
- The LGAQ believes this sets a dangerous precedent. The LGAQ has engaged Bret Walker QC and has sought special leave in the High Court of Australia to appeal the decision.

LGAQ Lead Contact for this matter: Georgia Stafford, Lead – Intergovernmental Relations

15. Wages Theft Bill

- The state introduced into Parliament on 15 July a bill to criminalise wage theft by an employer and provide a simpler, accessible and less costly process for employees to recover unpaid wages and entitlements through the Industrial Magistrate courts.
- The legislation is intended to target unscrupulous employers who deliberately do not pay their employees their lawful entitlements by making this activity a stealing offence under the Criminal Code. Employers or directors of companies who do deliberately and wilfully withhold payments from employees can now be personally prosecuted with penalties ranging up to 10 years imprisonment.
- The LGAQ in their submission to the Committee has not opposed the legislation but sought clarification on whom within a local government context might be liable for personal prosecution. It has further sought amendments to ensure the legislation correctly targets unscrupulous employers and does not add additional governance requirements, nor lead to unintended consequences, for those employers who genuinely try to do the right thing by their employees. More information will be circulated to councils once the bill has passed through the house.
- Given the nature of the legislation, the legislation is expected to flow unchanged through the committee system and be passed by Parliament before the state election.

LGAQ Lead Contact for this matter: Tony Goode - Workforce Strategy Executive

16. LGAQ Submissions Update

Recent Submissions

- *Mobile Black Spot Program (Round 5A) (due 19 June)*
- *Inquiry into the Queensland Government's economic response to COVID-19 (due 30 June)*
- *Inquiry into the Queensland Government's health response to COVID-19 (due 3 July)*
- *Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements (multiple - June/July 2020)*
- *Waste Reduction and Recycling (Plastic Items) Amendment Bill 2020 (due 27 July)*
- *Planning initiatives to support economic recovery – Proposed amendments to the Development Assessment Rules, Minister's Guidelines and Rules and Planning Regulation 2017 (due 7 August)*

Upcoming Submissions

- *Productivity Commission: National Water Reform 2020 – Issues Paper (due 21 August)*