



Local Government State Election Report Card

16 March 2007

This report card is based on information available as at 9am on 16 March 2007 and has been prepared to assist Local Government interpret the Local Government policy platforms of the major parties and candidates standing for the State Election. The key below provides a snapshot of the current position of the major parties in relation to the LGSA's policy platform. The report card is a synopsis and should not be used to comprehensively interpret the substantive policy position of the major parties. Whilst a summary is provided, people are encouraged to review the policy platforms of the respective parties.

Key: Current policy of major party/candidate is

? Unclear. Δ In-principle ✓ Consistent with LGSA policy. ✗ Inconsistent with LGSA policy.

LGSA Policy Platform	ALP	Coalition	Greens
Entering into an intergovernmental agreement (IGA)?	?	✓	✓
Guarantee there will be no forced amalgamations or appropriation of council businesses?	✓	✓	✓
Commitment to \$26 million over four years to improve public library services?	?	✓	?
Reinstatement of the Timber Bridges Program?	✓	✓	?
Long term commitment to the Country Towns Water & Sewerage Program?	Δ	✓	?
Increase Regional Road Block grants to ensure State/regional roads transferred to councils under the road classification review are appropriately funded?	?	?	?
Rolling out an asset management program to help councils manage critical infrastructure worth \$70 billion by committing \$2-3 million?	?	Δ	✓
Work with the Associations to implement and fund a voluntary training program to improve the skills of councillors?	?	Δ	?
Making the development approvals process more transparent and accountable by establishing an independent planning commission to assess major projects?	✗	?	✓
Abandon, relax or review the rate pegging system?	✗	Δ	✓
Commit to supporting the public documentation of total state grant assistance to Local Government in the NSW Budget papers?	✗	✓	?
Saving NSW over \$600 million a year in lost production and control activities by significantly increasing spending on weed control?	?	✓	?
Deliver joint incentives to rural general practitioners and the health services that support them (projected cost: \$4.83m pa)?	?	✓	?
Guarantee all preschool children access to preschool education in the year prior to school. (projected cost: \$57 m pa)?	?	✓	✓
Return the majority of the waste levy for waste reduction related programs and introduce container deposit legislation?	✗	✗	✓
Commit to a water infrastructure fund to support water infrastructure and efficiency projects and incentives (e.g. rainwater tanks) across all NSW?	✗	✓	?

Overview

The Australian Labor Party (Government):

The LGSA welcomed the Government's recently announced State Plan which promotes "effective partnerships" with Local Government and recognises that the "community identified the need for the State Government to work more effectively with local partners on its priorities".

The Plan also says that "...new approaches to regional implementation will see Government agencies, local government and local stakeholders come together in partnership to deliver solutions."

LGSA is committed to working closely with the State Government on the implementation of the State Plan which will guide the delivery of services in NSW over the next 10 years. It marks a new direction for the delivery of Government services and public administration in NSW. The current review of the integrated planning and reporting system for councils presents an important opportunity to link the State Plan with the long term strategic plans of Local Government. An intergovernmental agreement should be an integral part of the delivery of these services, and LGSA urges the Government to commit to the agreement before the election.

Overall the Government's Local Government Policy Platform is a good start but more needs to be done.

The Liberal/National Coalition (Opposition):

The Coalition recognises the significant, growing economic and social contribution that Local Government makes to the State. A Coalition Government has committed to an intergovernmental agreement with Local Government, and will review rate pegging arrangements in consultation with the LGSA. A Coalition Government will end cost shifting by ensuring that State, agency and Local Government plans driving policy setting, budgeting and program delivery complement one another and that new responsibilities allocated to Local Government are funded.

A Coalition Government will review the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act to ensure that it reflects that the land use planning and development assessment system is jointly managed by State and Local Government with both playing important roles.

A Coalition Government will work in partnership with the Local Government and Shires Associations to build the strength and capacity of Local Government.

Overall the Coalition's policy platform is a good deal for Local Government.

The Greens:

The Greens will work towards recognition of local government in the Australian and NSW Constitutions and cooperation and financial sustainability. The Greens are committed to an end to rate pegging and a memorandum of understanding between NSW local and state government setting out responsibilities, appropriate financing and a commitment to cooperation and consultation.

The Greens are also committed to democratic reform including a minimum of three councillors per ward; requiring a referendum in each of the council areas affected for any council amalgamations; and requiring elections to be held within 3 months of any dismissal.

The Greens aim to improve community consultation by mandatory requirements for community consultation on local government issues including development applications, rezonings, programs, budget prioritisation and the sale of public land.

Overall the Greens Local Government Policy Platform is a good deal for Local Government.

Independents:

There are currently 10 Independent MPs in the NSW Legislative Assembly and a significant number of independent candidates standing for the election. A large number of independents, including Ms Clover Moore, MP, have expressed strong support for the LGSA policy platform. It is recommended that people seek the views of their local independent candidates in relation to the LGSA policy platform.
