



Correspondence

CORRESPONDENCE FOR INFORMATION

1. 1180504 * 01-07-08
Senator The Hon George Brandis - Senator For Queensland

Opposing Recognition of Local Government in Australian Constitution.
2. 1180505 * 01-08-13 & 01-07-08
Local Government Association Of Qld Ltd (LGAQ)

Inaugural LGAQ Healthy Leaders Awards.
3. 1180786 * 01-04-05G
Christensen, Sheree Ann & Wunjunga Progress Association Inc

Complaint - Use of Recreational Reserve at Wunjunga.
4. 1180817 * 01-04-05G
Jeynes, Janice Kay

Complaint - Camping at Wunjunga.
5. 1180968 * 01-07-08
Australian Local Government Women's Association - ALGWA

Registrations Open - Australian Local Government Women's Association National Conference - 8-10 November 2012 - Ipswich.
6. 1181340 * 01-07-08
Local Government Association Of Qld Ltd (LGAQ)

LGAQ Circular - 2012-133 - LGAQ Policy Executive Declared.
7. 1183449 * 01-10-17
Lower Burdekin Water

Thank you for Congratulatory Letter - Lower Burdekin Water looks forward to working collaboratively with Council.
8. 1183703 * 01-04-02
Local Government Association Of Qld Ltd (LGAQ)

LGAQ Circular - 2012-138 - State Proposal to Amend Pest Legislation to Include Flying Foxes.

9. 1183948 * 02-02-03

Local Government Association Of Qld Ltd (LGAQ)

LGAQ Circular - 2012-142 - 2012 Elected Member Census.

10. 1184143 * 01-07-08

Local Government Association Of Qld Ltd (LGAQ)

Speaking Notes of Cr Paul Bell at LGAQ/QTC Financial Summit - 4 July 2012.





SENATOR THE HON GEORGE BRANDIS, SC

Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Senate
Shadow Attorney-General
Shadow Minister for the Arts
Senator for Queensland

BURDEKIN SHIRE COUNCIL
Folder No. 178
- 5 JUL 2012
Document No.

3 July 2012

Cr Bill Lewis
Mayor
Burdekin Shire Council
PO Box 974
AYR QLD 4807

VIEW	MAYOR	AGENDA	C14
	CEO	DATE	24.7.12
NOTED		APPLIC #	
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Dear Cr Lewis,

You may have seen reports that last weekend, the Liberal Party's Federal Council passed a motion opposing recognition of local government in the Australian Constitution.

I am writing to you, in my capacity both as the Shadow Attorney-General (with responsibility for constitutional matters), and as the senior LNP Senator for Queensland, to reassure you that the policy of the Federal Coalition remains to support constitutional recognition, so as to ensure that Commonwealth funding of local government is placed on a sure constitutional footing. That is even more important now, in view of the High Court's decision a fortnight ago in the *Williams* case, following the *Pape* case in 2009.

The Federal Coalition's position was set out by Tony Abbott in his speech to the National General Assembly in Canberra on 20 June last year. He said:

"I am very happy as Leader of the Coalition to work with you and to have my members and shadow ministers work with you to try to bring about appropriate recognition of local government in the Constitution. But it should be, I stress, recognition that facilitates existing system of funding, recognition that makes it easy for the federal government to provide funding direct to local government, not recognition which somehow upsets the overall constitutional order in our country."

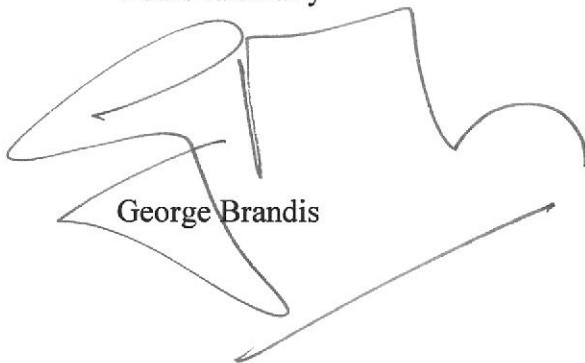
What Tony Abbott said then remains the Coalition's policy. Resolutions of the Liberal Party's organizational wing are non-binding expressions of opinion. They do not determine the policy which the Party takes to an election. Constitutional recognition of local government was the policy we took to the last election and the Federal Council resolution does not have the effect of rescinding it.

I should also point out that constitutional recognition of local government has the strong support of the LNP (which is the Queensland Division of the Liberal Party). At the Liberal Federal Council, Bruce McIver (the LNP President), Joan Sheldon (a former Deputy Premier) and I all spoke strongly in favour of the current policy.

I have spoken about this issue with both Greg Hallam, the CEO of the Local Government Association of Queensland, and David Crisafulli, the Minister for Local Government. Minister Crisafulli and I intend to move an urgency motion at next weekend's LNP State Conference reaffirming the LNP's strong support for constitutional recognition.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to discuss this or any other issue on which I can be of assistance.

Yours faithfully



George Brandis

3 July 2012

Mr Ken Holt
Chief Executive Officer
Burdekin Shire Council
PO Box 974
AYR QLD 4807

VIEW		AGENDA	214
		DATE	24.7.12
NOTED		APPLIC #	
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Dear Mr Holt

Inaugural LGAQ Healthy Leaders Awards

The LGAQ is pleased to advise that the Inaugural LGAQ Healthy leader's Awards will be launched at the Civic Leader's Summit on Friday 6th July 2012.

Nominations will be invited for elected members, senior managers and officers from Queensland councils who have made a significant contribution to leading the creation of healthier communities and / or healthy council workplaces.

Successful nominees will receive recognition for their role as healthy leaders through relevant local government media and promotion in addition to the following:

Elected member: Suite of outdoor fitness equipment for the successful nominee's council to enhance healthy lifestyle opportunities for their community / workforce

Sponsored by KOMPAN - Urban Play to the estimated value of \$40,000

Manager and Officer: Professional development for the successful nominees to build their capacity to lead or inspire future healthy community / council workplace initiatives

Sponsored by Queensland Health to the value of \$2,000 each

Successful nominees will demonstrate leadership attributes including creating vision and direction; inspiring or influencing others; shaping the environment; nurturing healthy partnerships; negotiating resources; role modelling or championing healthy community or council workplace initiatives.

Nominations for elected members must be accompanied by signed consent from a person authorised by council to agree to the Conditions of Entry. This includes agreeing to the equipment's installation and surfacing; related promotion and evaluation activities; and committing appropriate resources to ensure its ongoing activation, maintenance and insurance.

All nominations for must be accompanied by agreement from the nominee to the Conditions of Entry including related promotion and evaluation activities.



Based on feedback from councils, the Healthy Leader Awards seek to raise awareness of the importance of leadership in creating healthy communities and healthy council workplaces and to encourage and reward those in local government who have made an important contribution in this area.

Nomination Form, Conditions of Entry and information about the Sponsors and their prizes are available via LGOnline.

Applications close Friday 3rd August 2012 and successful nominations will be announced in August.

For further information contact Gillian Myers, LGAQ Healthy Communities Advisor, phone 3000 2259 or email gillian_myers@lgaq.asn.au.

Yours sincerely

Brent Reeman

GENERAL MANAGER – BUSINESS ENTERPRISES

Mrs Sheree Christensen
PO Box 525
Home Hill Qld 4806

Mobile: 0427160359
Email: wschristensen@bigpond.com

7th July 2012

Mayor Bill Lewis and Councillors
Burdekin Shire Council
145 Young Street
Ayr Qld 4807

Reference: 'OUT OF CONTROL – use of Recreational Reserve at Wunjunga'

Mayor and Councillors

The ongoing pressures being put on this environment (Wunjunga's Recreational Reserve) is at a point where it is 'out of control'

As a Local Resident and Ratepayer of this Community I implore that this situation be corrected immediately.

Serious issues noted:

Fire hazard – 42 vans / campers on site unregulated, no clear exits to enable escape

Eviro Loo – Capacity is 10 uses per day, this is being extremely overused...

No regulations on volume of camp sites and length of stay

Disposal of greywater – approx. 50,000 kls each week onto the grounds

Illegal collecting of fire wood – Fisheries have already issued warnings and they are not giving any further notice, people will be issued fines as advised from Fisheries Officers

Illegal disposal of rubbish – Rubbish is being found in bags throughout the Wunjunga area and further illegal disposals have been seen (burying in the sand)

Illegal collection of funds for using this camping area – *Someone* is collecting / ensuring donations made within the Reserve

Unofficial on site caretaker – this should be policed and regulated by an appropriate authority

There have recently been visitors to the Wunjunga Beach who have mentioned to Local Residents that when they enter the Reserve they are being told that they cannot camp there and must move on to the next Facility.

This is not acceptable when there are people who are taking up semi permanent space in that Reserve. These people should be told that THEY MUST move on then this would allow for a steady flow of visitors who would like to stay a few days and continue their journey.

I have seen this Reserve steadily become an 'environmental disaster in the making' and have brought this matter to the attention of DERM previously. DERM has responded previously that I raise these issues with the Local Council (as they are Custodians) and also inform the Wunjunga Progress assoc. Ltd. Over the past 4 years many issues have been raised at the WPAI meetings and passed onto Councillors but there has been no resolution.

This year things seems to have worsened with this Community being made aware of arguments within the Reserve and a recent observation that there is a Caravan which is left on site for the weekend use of its owner...NOT ACCEPTABLE. Residents and Local day visitors are very harshly scrutinised and quite regularly verbally abused if they enter the Reserve, even to use the toilet. This is a disgraceful situation and once again NOT ACCEPTABLE...

Should the above issues not be rectified following Council receiving this advice or NON enforcement of the NEWLY introduced by-laws, I will again contact DERM and other environmental departments and ask for their assistance.

I will Look forward to seeing much needed changes in this Recreational Reserve area in the near future.

Kind regards

Sheree Christensen
(Mobile) 0427160359

24 Aivu Avenue, Wunjunga

TO MAYOR LOWIS AND ALL MEMBERS OF BURDEKIN SHIRE COUNCIL

6th July 2012

We feel that we must say how disappointed we are that the Burdekin Shire Council has little respect for the ratepayers of this Community with the way they pander to the Grey Nomads and their demands allowing them to park wherever they want to with no regard to anyone else, even 30 mts from homes ,they light fires and there are NO SIGNS to stop them.

We need rules and regulations and this needs to be enforced and penalties applied.

Bowen and Mackay regions have no problems with Cavanners and Campers parking illegally, as they have b- laws and these situations are policed. Their enforcement of by-laws have not had a negative impact on their Tourism.

At the time of writing this letter, there are 42 Vans sited in the Recreational Reserve at Wunjunga, 2 vans in the adjacent quarry and 1 van at the first beach access. All of whom have open fires which if one of these was to get away, would have disastrous consequences. Had the recent van fire in the Reserve have occurred in peak season, it would have also destroyed all beach vegetation and protection and this would cause problems for years to come for our Community. The Reserve is in a fire exclusion zone. Who would assume the responsibility if one of their fires escaped control?

A Fisheries representative has already warned the Campers in this Reserve about taking firewood from the Beach (which is a Marine Park). This activity is illegal and the next time it encountered by Fisheries, the people concerned will be fined, according to Fisheries Officers.

It was our understanding that the Recreational Reserve was for day trippers and Local campers, so that they would not need to camp on the dunes and the Enviro Loo located in the Reserve was placed there for public use. This Loo is a 10 use per day eco toilet, which is being extremely misused. It is realised that most of the vans have their own toilet but when these need to be emptied every 3 – 4 days and the vans do not move for 6 months, we need to wonder what they are doing to empty the cassettes or cavities.

The smell within the Reserve is pungent and probably is the effect of overloading the whole environment of this Facility.

We continue to receive reports from Campers and Locals who wish to stay for a few days, being told by other 'long term visitors' within the Reserve that there is no room for them to stay and they need move onto the next Facility. Another unhappy Camper who could not fit into the Reserve recently, then tried to camp at the Helipad but after a Local spoke to him, he then moved onto the next Facility and stated his disappointment at the present situation of the Reserve because he just wanted to stay for a couple of days here.

This is not acceptable when some of the Campers in the Reserve have already been there for 5 months, IT IS TIME **THEY** MOVED ON....

Another environmental concern is that Greywater, from 2 x 23500 lts water tanks, which are being filled every 2 weeks, is being disposed of onto the ground throughout the lengthy stays.

It was attempted at one stage by the prior Wunjunga Progress Assoc. to introduce some planned parking zones in the Reserve in case of a fire or other emergency, as the exits were being blocked by vans. These attempts were met with hostility and threats of physical violence and there was also a threat made to burn a home within the Local Community by a couple of disgruntled long stayers.

A Local resident recently went to visit a traveller whom he knew was camping in this Reserve and was confronted by other long term campers with abuse and hostility and accused of spying and told to 'get out of the Park'.

It is difficult to observe the abundance of campers occupying this FREE Facility when a look around the Burdekin indicates there are many vacancies in our Local Caravan Parks.


All of the above are of high concern and are just some samples of the abuse of this Facility. These Concerns need to be addressed immediately and this environmental abuse should be stopped now.

We request that Mayor, Councillors and officers of the BSC Health Department attend to these matters.

(2) DISGRUNTLED WUNJUNGA RATEPAYERS AND RESIDENTS

From: Murray, Karen [KarenMurray@logan.qld.gov.au]
[KarenMurray@logan.qld.gov.au]
Sent: Friday, 6 July 2012 5:27 PM
Subject: 2012 Ipswich Australian Local Government Women's Association
(ALGWA) National Conference - registrations now open

Categories: 00_Inward

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2012 ALGWA NATIONAL CONFERENCE - REGISTRATIONS NOW OPEN - Wednesday, 4 July 2012

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

Registrations are now open for the **2012 Australian Local Government Women's Association National Conference** which is being held at the Ipswich Civic Centre, Ipswich, Queensland from 8 - 10 November 2012.

The program will include presentations and workshops on a diverse range of topics including:

The Future of Women in Local Government

Cultural Diversity - Opportunities and Challenges

Critical thinking, Problem solving

Customer Service vs Customer Focus

Global Issues Impacting on Our Work

Techology - A Brave New World

For more information about access to Ipswich, accommodation and registration [click here](#)

We look forward to welcoming you to Ipswich and ask that you share this information with your colleagues.

Kind Regards,

Darriea Turley
ALGWA President

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Circular

LGAQ Policy Executive Declared

For Information/Action

Circular: 2012-133

Release Date: Monday 9 July 2012

Authorised by: Greg Hallam PSM Executive Director

The Policy Executive Election Ballot count occurred at 5pm Friday, 6 July 2012.

At 5pm 6 July 2012 the Policy Executive Election Ballot count occurred and I hereby declare the following have been elected to the Policy Executive for the 2012-2016 quadrennium

District 1 (Brisbane) Cr Margaret de Wit, Brisbane City Council

District 2 (NROC) Cr Allan Sutherland, Mayor, Moreton Bay Regional Council

District 2 (SROC) Cr Pam Parker, Mayor, Logan City Council

District 2 (WROC) Cr Paul Pisasale, Mayor, Ipswich City Council

District 3 (Wide Bay & Burnett) Cr Ron Dyne, Mayor, Gympie Regional Council

District 4 (Darling Downs) Cr Ray Brown, Mayor, Western Downs Regional Council

District 5 (South West) Cr Rob Loughnan, Mayor, Maranoa Regional Council

District 6 (Central Queensland) Cr Greg Belz, Rockhampton Regional Council

District 7 (Whitsunday) Cr Deirdre Comerford, Mayor, Mackay Regional Council

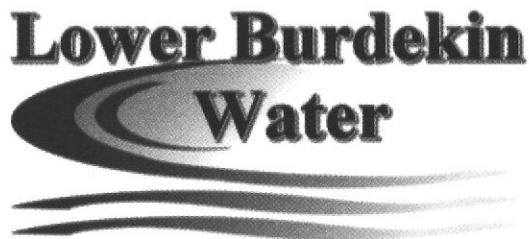
District 8 (Central West) Cr Joe Owens, Mayor, Longreach Regional Council

District 9 (Northern) Cr Jennifer Hill, Mayor, Townsville City Council

District 10 (Far North) Cr Bob Manning, Mayor, Cairns Regional Council

District 11 (North West) Cr Fred Pascoe, Mayor, Carpentaria Shire Council

District 12 (Aboriginal and Island Councils) Cr Fred Gela, Mayor, Torres Strait Island Regional Council
and Cr Alf Lacey, Mayor, Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council



North Burdekin Water Board
112 Airdmillan Road, PO Box 720,
AYR QLD 4807
Ph: 07 47831988 Fax: 0747831264
Email: admin@nbwb.com.au
www.nbwb.com.au

South Burdekin Water Board
28 Ninth Street, PO Box 376
HOME HILL QLD 4806
Ph: 07 47821703 Fax: 0747822039
Email: info@sbwb.com.au
www.sbwb.com.au

BURDEKIN SHIRE COUNCIL	
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Mr. Bill Lowis
Mayor
Burdekin shire Council
PO Box 974
AYR QLD 4807

Dear Bill,

Thank you very much for your letter of congratulations on my appointment to the Executive Officer position at Lower Burdekin Water. I am excited about the position and understand the importance of the role that the North and South Burdekin Water Boards play with in our region.

I look forward to meeting you and working collaboratively with the Burdekin Shire Council to ensure the prosperity of the district is not only maintained but improved. Please contact me at any time to discuss any issues which Lower Burdekin Water can assist the Burdekin Shire Council.

Yours sincerely,

David Sartori
Executive Officer
Lower Burdekin Water

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Circular

State Proposal to Amend Pest Legislation to Include Flying Foxes

For Information/Action

Circular: 2012-138

Release Date: Thursday 12 July 2012

Authorised by: Greg Hallam PSM Executive Director

Flying foxes to be able to be destroyed or driven away under proposed changes.

On 21 June, the State introduced the Land Protection Legislation (Flying-fox Control) Amendment Bill 2012 which amends the Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002 and the Nature Conservation Act 1992.

The policy intent of these amendments is to empower a landowner to destroy, disturb or drive away a flying-fox or to destroy or disturb a flying-fox roost if the landowner reasonably believes that it is necessary to reduce the risk of disease or harm to a resident or stock. The Bill would also empower the Minister to direct a local government to take these actions under certain conditions.

The Bill was referred to the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee to examine the policies the Bill seeks to give effect to as well as the Bill's lawfulness and the application of fundamental legislative principles, as set out in s.4 of the Legislative Standards Act 1992.

The committee's timetable will be available on its website once finalised.

Documents available:

[Land Protection Legislation \(Flying-fox Control\) Amendment Bill 2012](#)

[Explanatory Notes to the Bill](#)

Queensland Parliamentary Library Blog post on [Flying Foxes in Australia's Urban Environment](#) for useful background information.

Your LGAQ contact for this matter is, **Dorean Erhart - Principal Advisor Natural Assets, NRM & Climate Change** on (07) 3000 2202 or email Dorean_Erhart@lgaq.asn.au.

Circular

2012 Elected Member Census

For Information/Action

Circular: 2012-142

Release Date: Monday 16 July 2012

Authorised by: Greg Hallam PSM Executive Director

Elected members census to better understand the range of issues important to councillors as well as help to profile mayors and councillors.

The LGAQ has mailed a census to Queensland's 561 elected members to better understand the range of issues important to councillors as well as help to profile mayors and councillors.

The Census is run every four years following the local government elections. This is the fourth time the Association has run the Census.

The Census will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

Individual responses will be kept strictly confidential and will not be released or published.

A summary of the broad themes and trends from the Census will, however, be collated and made available through the Association's websites LG Online and Councillor Webdesk, and through the Council Leader magazine.

Councillors are encouraged to complete the census and return it to the LGAQ in the reply paid envelope at their earliest convenience.

For any questions please contact the Members' Hotline on 1300 542 700.



BURDEKIN SHIRE COUNCIL	
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Speaking Notes

for

CR PAUL BELL

President

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION OF QUEENSLAND

to

LGAQ/QTC FINANCIAL SUMMIT
4 July 2012

Premier Campbell Newman, Sunshine Coast Mayor Cr Mark Jamieson, Lord Mayor Graham Quirk, our co-collaborators in organising today's event - Queensland Treasury Corporation Chairman Gerard Bradley and CEO Mr Phillip Noble - our distinguished international and interstate visitors, and my colleagues in local government: It's great to have you here to discuss the major issue facing our state - winning tonight's third and deciding State of Origin match at Suncorp Stadium...

Oops, I meant, of course, the job of repairing the state's and council finances, sorting out public sector debt and deficits, and improving our collective balance sheets here in the Sunshine State.

Can I say how delighted we are to have the Premier address this event - his first major gathering of councils across the state. It's very appropriate that his first address to us is on the subject of finance. We all face the collective challenge of achieving the most efficient and effective use of the resources the public has entrusted to us, and restoring our financial standing in world markets. We look forward to your address, Premier.

I again acknowledge and thank the Queensland Treasury Corporation for their financial and intellectual support in organising and conducting this event. The speaking program and workshops go to the heart of the challenges, to which we all have to rise over the next four years - i.e. doing more, and better, with less. It's that simple, folks.

As an elected member for the past 28 years, I have seen this cycle at least twice, albeit never framed by a Global Financial Crisis, and ongoing global credit issues. When I started in local government in the mid 1980s, Australia was in a stock market boom, with a decent equities asset bubble driven by overpriced stocks that collapsed in 1987 - followed by a period of recession and relative austerity. Then we had what was the biggest and longest bull run cycle in world economic history - again to be cut short by an asset bubble burst, this time in the property sector - which shook the foundation of the global private banking system. Thankfully, Australia's four pillar banking model did not succumb.

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I've seen a very constrained public sector, where infrastructure delivery substantially lagged growth for more than a decade, leading to water and power crises - then everyone playing catch up footy where state infrastructure spending trebled over seven or eight years. That only meant we spent money that we didn't have and maxed out the bankcard.

I can recall endless council-led battles to secure meagre increases in state and federal capital funding, especially for roads. I'd been around this game for 15 years before Roads to Recovery or the states TIDS program eventuated. I've also seen how the state-funded local government capital works subsidy scheme was first reduced, then doubled and eventually abolished altogether.

I've witnessed every economic reform known to man being applied to us, or wired up to our nether regions - remember accrual accounting, national competition policy, asset management, tax reform and the GST, carbon tax, amalgamation, valuation reform, road reform, water reform, etc, etc, etc...

Out of all of that, there are now 73 cauterised, sanitised, pasteurised and homogenised councils left standing in Queensland. As a sphere of government we raise over 80 percent of our own revenue, as opposed to the states, which raise less than 50 per cent of their revenue, and are heavily dependant upon the Federal Government.

After each economic upturn and down turn councils' support from other levels of government falls.

When I started in this game Queensland councils were, in terms of State Government assistance, middle of the pack on a per capita basis, they rose to the top from the mid 1990s and now lag the entire country - NDRRA one off payments aside.

The fundamental issue for us in local government is that councils do not have a growth tax and, as a consequence, do not prosper in booms. Indeed, we suffer in trying to keep up service and infrastructure provision - but perversely feel the chills of recession and downturns as state and federal governments wind in what ever support they offer us when their budgets are under pressure.

There is, and continues to be, a fundamental mismatch in the Australian federation between the taxing and spending powers of the three levels of government. I am sure whoever invented our intergovernmental financial relations system was a left-handed, mung-bean-eating Irish economist. Or, as was put to me by a sage councillor early in my local government career, *"Son, Canberra has the money, the State has the legal power and Councils have the problem."*

For the past twenty years, council finances pretty much meandered along, albeit the infrastructure backlog grew and grew and grew. Debt was declining in actual and real terms, rates income over the long run increased annually by around 1.5 per cent greater than CPI, with largely natural increase from new lots being created. Our workforce grew, but below the growth rate in the rest of the public sector. According to both the Grants Commission and Productivity Commission we were under-borrowed and under-rating.

Then between 2008 and 2012 it all went skewiff. We quickly caught up with our under-taxing and under-borrowing and some.

During that four year period our collective debt trebled from \$1.8 billion to \$5.3 billion. Council general rates increased by 27 percent or 10 percent real, water charges - especially in SEQ - disappeared off the chart due to state interference, while fortunately our workforce figures remained static at 40-thousand.

Of course, the net reaction to those developments that occurred amid a backlash against amalgamation and the new system of local government, being foisted upon us, was 44 new mayors elected and 250 new councillors joining them - the biggest electoral clean out in council-land since World War 2.

Don't let anyone kid you that the cost of living was not the SINGLE biggest issue in the community in those elections. It remains so today. House prices have fallen, as have superannuation balances, while real wage growth has stagnated and government charges of all make and type have soared - the result being lots of grumpy punters.

As it turns out, most of this change occurred in the finances of the top 25 councils in Queensland, those with high growth.

So where does that leave us? Moreover, what's the challenge ahead?

As Greg Hallam, our CEO, has written in various journals in recent times, local government is faced with a stark challenge of having to, in part or whole, drop our standards, cut back significantly on capital spending, reduce - or pull out of entirely - many of the services councils have provided over decades - especially in social services, economic development, sport and recreation and cultural pursuits.

The alternative is to embark on wholesale reform to reduce our costs of operation by around 12 per cent in real terms. That's 12 per cent more efficient in a few short years.

Greg has made the case that the cumulative impact of decisions of the former Bligh Government over its final term of office robbed councils - mainly the larger ones - of around \$900 million in revenue.

That's against annual aggregate expenditure by Queensland councils of around 8 billion dollars recurrent, and 3.5 billion dollars capital. A very large bitter pill to swallow.

What's clear is that if we stick to our current path, council debt will increase by around a billion dollars a year to an entirely unsustainable 23 billion by 2031. Those are QTC and Department of Local Government figures - believe them.

In that scenario, there would be an electoral massacre of councillors and mayors every four years, as rates soared to ridiculous levels to sustain that debt. Indeed, we councillors would be lucky to last four years at that rate.

Those urgers who say "*let's use special rates or charges to pay for the new infrastructure*" are fanciful. Let them face the ratepayers' wrath every four years.

Something has to give. There'll be no white knight from George St or Canberra bestowing bountiful grants upon us. Their finances are worse than ours - at least we balance our budgets and fully fund our liabilities.

This is for us to sort on our own - or at least collectively as a sector.

Drastically cutting our capital spending will kill the property industry stone dead in a few short years, and our infrastructure will also start to crumble.

Slashing services has its own political and community hardship joys.

So we have to look to where can we re-engineer our business processes, where can we make savings - where are the new smarter ways of doing things?

I can tell you right now, that I'm not a fan of the UK model, which amounts to a 27 to 40 per cent annual cut-and-shut approach to council spending. Drastic stuff.

If you have not seen the dirty streets, closed swimming pools, libraries and other community facilities in the UK, hop online and see what's occurring - not pretty.

So my challenge for you today, and every other day for the next four years, is to ask the WHAT IF questions.

Invent new, cheaper, smarter ways of doing things. Look outside the box folks - this isn't one we can just muddle through. We don't have ten or even five years - immediate action is needed.

Fortunately, as you will hear over the balance of the day, genuine solutions to the challenge I've laid down exist already - here in Queensland.

The QTC/LGIS team have done amazing things, putting together the biggest geographical waste contract in Australia - throughout the entirety of Central Queensland. It saw individual bin lift prices cut by 25 per cent. On a number of big ticket infrastructure projects in recent years they've saved an amazing 30 per cent of project management costs, on what was originally pencilled in as the final price.

Likewise, the savings that are coming through migrating council IT systems into the so called "Cloud" are quite staggering.

Have a look at what Ipswich City has done in its customer services area over the past four years - by working with your association's company Propel Partnerships they have reduced their operating costs by half, while at the same time improving the way they service the community. This is not just trimming a few dollars here and there, it's a total transformation of how they do business - and it is saving them millions of dollars a year.

Why are some councils still running separate tenders for goods or services when Local Buy has existing panels with better pricing and conditions? Why? Because we think we are different or unique. We're not!

Why are there still 73 different rates functions, 73 different call centres, 73 different payroll processing centres, 73 different finance systems? Again because we think we are special. Let's see who sticks their hand up first and says, *"you know what? we're not different, we don't need to do this ourselves I'm going to go and talk to my neighbours about this"*.

Believe me when the music stops you don't want to be the last one to take a seat!

What's required is the political acumen, will and determination to grasp the nettles.

For the past four or five years the early adopters of these approaches did it through altruism - from here on in it will be a political and financial necessity.

Colleagues, listen, learn, and think even harder, as to what you and your council will do to achieve those 12 per cent efficiencies I've talked about. Suck the marrow out of the day, then go back to your council and start the job of finding those efficiencies.

To prove we are fair dinkum, LGAQ has done exactly what I'm preaching today, and found around 12 per cent savings (around one million dollars) in its running costs over the past two years - through outsourcing, new procurement arrangements and migrating our IT operations to the Cloud. It enabled us to fund new improved services for you - as well as build a new building - all without putting up subscriptions beyond CPI. So, it is do-able.

Most of all, this is now a forever changed playing field - a new term and a new Queensland. Where are you and your council in this new order of things?

I urge you again, make the most of the day.

Thank you