

7.4 Local Government NSW Membership

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR COMMUNITY
TO 20 APRIL 2022 ORDINARY MEETING
GOV400098, A0040005

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. **receive the report by the Director Community on the Local Government NSW Membership ;**
2. **re-join Local Government NSW ; and**
3. **amend the 2021/22 budget to increase expenditure by \$8,295 and amend the 2022/23 budget to increase expenditure by \$46,151 for LGNSW membership fees to be funded from unrestricted cash.**

Executive summary

Mid-Western Regional Council has previously been a member of Local Government NSW. Council resolved not to renew its membership for the 2021/22 financial year. This report recommends that Council re-join Local Government NSW. Mid-Western Regional Council is now the only Council in NSW that is not a member. The benefits of membership are considerable across a broad range of areas.

Disclosure of Interest

Nil

Detailed report

Local Government NSW has provided Council with a quote for membership for the 22/23 financial year. The cost to Council for a basic membership is \$46,151.00 (Ex. GST).

Local Government NSW have provided information on the benefits of membership. Information is included in the attachment and includes reference to:

Advocacy representation

Advocating and making representations to all spheres of government, industry, and business on issues of importance to local government and their communities to ensure your voice is heard

Learning and Development

Best value, specifically designed local government training to up-skill your staff and ensure they are kept up-to-date with the latest sector developments.

Professional Networking Opportunities

Conferences, workshops and professional forums to allow you to gain mutually beneficial connections - even during the social-distancing era.

Grant Support

Capacity building and development support across important local government functions to bring you resources that may otherwise not be available.

Industrial Relations and Workplace Support

Representation in industrial disputes and award matters, and specialist industrial relations advice to best equip you to deal with any issues that arise.

Policy Advice

Advice to Mayors, Councillors, General Managers and staff across a range of local government matters to help you to determine your best course of action.

Management Services

Executive recruitment, facilitated performance reviews, salary and HR benchmarking surveys and organisation reviews to help you obtain and retain the best people for your council.

Legal Advice

Advice on legal matters and policy across a wide range of areas to assist you with compliance.

Member Mentoring

Access to guidance and support from highly experienced and well regarded colleagues to become more empowered to make decisions.

One of the biggest areas of concern is the coming negotiations over the Local Government Award. These negotiations will be led by Local Government NSW on behalf of Councils. It will be extremely concerning if these types of advocacy and representation were happening without our Council having involvement or the capacity to put forward its views and be represented. It would be a costly exercise for Council to seek its own legal advice on Award negotiations. Ultimately, the next twelve months would be a concerning time for Council to not be a member of LGNSW.

The Executive is of the strong view that membership of Local Government NSW is a necessity and is required for Council to meet its relevant community plan objectives relating to lobbying and advocacy.

It was also noted during recent financial years where Council was not a member, that there was an impact on some costs and the availability of some professional advice services that would have been beneficial to Council. This is particularly true for areas of industrial relations support and advice as well as training and development costs.

Community Plan implications

Theme	Good Governance
Goal	Strong civic leadership
Strategy	Provide strong representation for the community at Regional, State and Federal levels

Strategic implications

Council Strategies

Community Strategic Plan

Council Policies

Not applicable

Legislation

Not applicable

Financial implications

The cost of membership is \$46,151.00 ex GST for the 2022/23 financial year. This needs to be included into the budget. A smaller pro rata amount of \$8,295 for the remainder of the 2021/22 financial year is also included.

Associated Risks

A decision to not be a member of Local Government NSW could lead to Council becoming isolated from other Councils across NSW. This may lead to Council spending more on their own lobbying efforts as well as on training opportunities, procurement services and industrial legal advice.

SIMON JONES
DIRECTOR COMMUNITY

18 March 2022

Attachments: 1. Local Government NSW Member Benefits.

APPROVED FOR SUBMISSION:

BRAD CAM
GENERAL MANAGER



Our ref: R90/0292-04 Out-34144

22 March 2022

Mr Brad Cam
General Manager
Mid Western Regional Council

Via email: brad.cam@midwestern.nsw.gov.au

Dear Brad

Local Government NSW member benefits

I am pleased to provide information regarding the value councils receive for their Local Government NSW (LGNSW) membership fee.

Each and every one of LGNSW programs and services are designed to deliver value to our membership. The most recent **Value Audit commissioned by LGNSW concluded that we deliver \$9.56 of benefits for every dollar collected in membership – but we are committed to driving the value of those membership dollars further still.**

As part of our advocacy efforts, LGNSW influences decision makers on matters that affect and improve our sector. Our extensive government relationships enable us to act swiftly in the best interest of councils, as demonstrated by the State's recent response to the unacceptable baseline rate peg of 0.7%.

Our advocacy work on your behalf is broad and deep, with more than 118 significant submissions on behalf of members made to the NSW Government and policy makers since January 2020. This is work our individual members do not have to undertake themselves: it not only prevents the diversion of resources but ensures we speak with a strong and united voice that cannot be ignored.

That voice has helped grow the funding support available to councils and our communities from around \$2 billion in 2018-19 to \$8.2 billion in 2020-21, helping to progress recovery from drought, bushfires, and the COVID-19 pandemic. As the recent flood waters recede across NSW and councils face the herculean tasks ahead, a cohesive and unified approach will be more important than ever. Mid-Western Regional Council is an integral part of our sector, and LGNSW would welcome your support in 2022 and beyond.

The collective power of our sector is critical, but as your Association, LGNSW is also committed to supporting you at an individual level. Membership services available to councillors and staff include:

- **industrial relations and workplace support** (representing councils in industrial disputes and award matters, making and varying industrial awards, advising on legal policy matters and legislation) and HR support;
- **Legal and policy advice;**

- **organisational development and capacity building**, including mentor programs, professional development networks);
- access to **grants and grant support**;
- **professional development and training specifically designed for Councillors and staff**;
- **professional networking and learning opportunities** (through conferences, workshops and professional forums);
- **executive recruitment and performance reviews**;
- **management consulting and structure reviews**; and
- **procurement services and bulk supply arrangements** through Local Government Procurement (LGP), saving you time and money.

Should you have any further questions, I can be contacted at scott.phillips@lgnsw.org.au or 0419 469 023.

Yours sincerely



Scott Phillips
Chief Executive