

Item 3.1

Local Government NSW: NSW Election Priorities 2019

File No: S051491

Minute by the Lord Mayor

To Council:

Local Government NSW has called upon all parties and candidates contesting the 2019 state election to commit to 12 priority areas to improve liveability and help local government deliver better infrastructure, services and outcomes for communities.

The 12 priority areas are grouped around four themes:

- Improve quality of life
- Support local decision-making
- Promote financial stability and independence
- Promote strong governance and democracy

Priorities for improving the quality of life are:

- **Save recycling:** Reinvest 100% of the NSW Waste Levy, collected from community and industry, in a coordinated state-wide recycling and waste management approach and drive a circular economy. (Priority 1)
- **Funding public libraries properly:** Fund public libraries so they are sustainable. Double current funding commitments by providing an additional \$94 million over the next four years, with indexation. In line with NSW law, provide 50% of funding required for NSW public libraries, in perpetuity. (Priority 2)
- **Funding local infrastructure:** Establish an infrastructure funding program so councils can plan, build and maintain local roads, freight routes, cycling and pedestrian infrastructure, green space and sporting facilities, to meet rapid population growth and movements in NSW. (Priority 3)

Local decision-making is to be supported by:

Restoring planning powers to communities including restoring the right of metropolitan councils to choose whether to use local planning panels; allowing councils and neighbourhoods to make decisions about developments that affect them; fixing the NSW private certification system and setting housing targets with local governments, not for them (Priority 4).

Financial stability and independence is to be promoted by:

- **Ending cost shifting** with a public inquiry into cost shifting so that no new, increased or transferred responsibilities will be imposed on local government without a sufficient corresponding source of revenue or revenue-raising capacity (Priority 5).

- **Allowing greater financial independence** with Councils being able to levy rates up to 2 per cent over the rate peg limit, without having to seek special rate variation approval, so councils can meet community needs with less red tape (Priority 6).
- **Supporting disadvantaged communities** with Councils being provided with untied, recurrent grants for councils serving the most socio-economically disadvantaged areas in NSW so they can meet community needs (Priority 7).
- **Protecting ownership of local water utilities:** Commit to protecting local ownership and management of council-owned water utilities, to secure water supply and sewerage services for more than 1.8 million people in regional NSW (Priority 8).

Strong governance and democracy is to be promoted by:

- **Renewal of the intergovernmental agreement** between the NSW Government and Local Government NSW to reaffirm the NSW Government's intention to work as an equal partner with local government across all issues affecting councils and communities (Priority 9).
- **Fixing local government electoral expenditure laws** by amending local government electoral expenditure provisions of the Electoral Funding Act 2018 well before the 2020 elections (in line with NSW parliamentary committee recommendations) (Priority 10).
- **Allowing fair superannuation for mayors and councillors**, in line with elected federal and state parliamentarians and everyone else in the Australian workforce (Priority 11).
- **Address skills shortages** by funding a new, annual \$10 million program to increase the number of cadets, apprentices, trainees and university graduates employed by councils.

These 12 priorities provide a foundation for sensible, practical local government reform. I therefore recommend that Council endorse them and call upon all parties and candidates contesting the 2019 state election to commit to them.

Recommendation

It is resolved that Council:

- (A) endorse Local Government NSW document, NSW Election Priorities 2019 (Attachment A to this Minute); and
- (B) call upon all parties and candidates contesting the 2019 state election to commit to 12 priority areas identified in NSW Election Priorities 2019.

COUNCILLOR CLOVER MOORE

Lord Mayor

Attachment A. Local Government NSW Document, NSW Election Priorities 2019