

SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S STRATEGIC PLAN

1. Purpose

This paper summarises the consultation process that has recently been undertaken by the Department of Premier and Cabinet, in close conjunction with the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Office for State/Local Government Relations (OSLGR), to inform the preparation of a new edition of South Australia's Strategic Plan (SASP) in late 2006. It also proposes methods by which the SASP Update Team that is overseeing the preparation of the new edition of SASP can be fully informed of the Local Government sector's views on potential changes and revisions to the current plan.

2. Background

2.1 SASP Consultation

In late 2004, after the workshop on SASP sponsored by the Minister's Local Government Forum, it was agreed between the Minister for State/Local Government Relations and the President of the LGA that the Forum would be the appropriate body to progress continuing Local Government input into the Plan. To this end, the Forum has endorsed full consultation with the Local Government sector during the preparation of the next edition of SASP, and recommended that the President of the LGA be included as a representative of the Local Government sector on the SASP Update Team.

It is expected that a new edition of SASP will be prepared in late 2006. In preparation for this, the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC), through the Community Connections Unit, has undertaken an extensive consultation process. This has involved nine regional consultation forums, 'Talking Regions', to gain the perspective of regional communities on the Plan as a whole, and six 'Talking Targets' consultation forums, focusing on each of the six overall objectives of the Plan. The results of these forums will be considered at a Community Congress to be held on 8 July, before final recommendations for a reviewed Plan are referred to the SASP Update team for consideration and recommendation to the Executive Committee of Cabinet (ExComm). A full report on the progress made on the implementation of the current targets will also be presented at the Community Congress.

Throughout the consultation process, the Community Connections Unit has made clear its intention to closely involve the Local Government sector. To this end, the LGA has worked closely with the Unit on the regional consultation forums, and the OSLGR organised a consultation forum on Objective Five of the Plan, 'Building Communities', that contains the targets that directly refer to Local Government. As recommended by the Forum, the President of the LGA, Mayor John Rich, is also a member of the SASP Update Team.

2.2 Making the Connections - Update

As the Forum has been previously informed, the first stage of the LGA project, *Making the Connections* was completed in August 2005. This assessed the current degree of alignment between State and Local Government strategic plans, and

identified barriers that hinder better coordination between the two spheres of government. A full Making the Connections report was provided by the LGA to the Premier, and to the former Minister for State/ Local Government Relations at this time. The issues identified by this process will form part of the LGA's submission to the Community Connections Unit, outlined in part 3 below.

The second stage of the Making the Connections project has been underway since late 2005. This stage, which is to identify and prioritise specific strategic priorities on a regional basis, began with a pilot project in northern metropolitan Adelaide managed by the Office of the North, and involving the Salisbury, Playford and Gawler councils and relevant State agencies.

The pilot project has identified five key priorities for northern Adelaide that have been agreed upon by all parties involved. These are:

- A joint land and infrastructure project - to establish industrial land and infrastructure, identification of housing/land and infrastructure plan for the next 20 years and the future needs of horticulture.
- Waterproofing the north - mapping the sources of supply and demand for water and ensuring the overall coordination of water projects in the north.
- Workforce development - long-term skills education and training, and short-term workforce skills development/ workforce development.
- Business development - an agreed overall strategy for coordination of business attraction and support identifying functional roles for economic development agencies and targeting of key industries.
- Health and wellbeing - to establish an agreed health and wellbeing strategy across Northern Adelaide including key stakeholders and key industries.

3. Actions

Further to its involvement in the consultation forums, the LGA has made a detailed submission to the Community Connections Unit summarising the viewpoints of the Local Government sector as expressed both throughout the consultation period and in the Making the Connections report. This will ensure that the views of Local Government, as another sphere of government, are clearly expressed to the SASP Update Team as it undertakes the process of making final recommendations to ExComm.

While this submission provides a detailed exposition of the many points raised by Local Government throughout the consultation period, the key issues raised in the submission are:

- Support for the concept of a State-wide Strategic Plan for South Australia, and for the extensive consultation process associated with the first review of the Plan
- A recommendation that the next edition of SASP be prepared on a regional basis, that is, expressing a vision and key targets for each region of the State. This will enable better coordination with the strategic plans of regional Local Government Associations, Regional Development Boards, and other regionally based bodies, and will also help identify actions and partnerships at the regional level which will contribute to the achievement of strategic outcomes for the State.

- A greater emphasis on the development of partnerships outside of State Government (including, in particular, partnerships with Councils, Local Government Regional Organisations, Regional Development Boards and other corporate entities operating at a regional level) to further the implementation of the Plan's targets
- A recommendation that SASP is recognised formally in legislation, with a possible requirement for the State Government to produce and regularly review a strategic plan, (as is the case for Local Government strategic management plans and for other State Government Plans including the Planning Strategy).

The submission will also refer to a resolution passed by the LGA State Executive at its meeting on 18 May 2006, to consult with member Councils about the Local Government sector 'adopting' one or more targets from South Australia's Strategic Plan. Target number 5.5, which relates to voter participation in Council elections, has been suggested as one of several SASP targets which might be suitable for adoption by the Local Government Sector.

If the proposal to adopt one or more targets is supported by Councils, then the LGA would take a lead role in identifying and encouraging specific action by individual Councils, to help achieve the adopted target(s).

A copy of the Executive Summary of the LGA submission on South Australia's Strategic Plan is attached.

4. Recommendations

That the Minister's Local Government Forum:

- 1. Note the engagement of the Local Government sector in the consultation process leading to the revision of SASP;**
- 2. Note the submission by the LGA to the SASP Update Team summarising the viewpoints of the Local Government sector on the revision of SASP as expressed in this consultation process; and**
- 3. Continue to monitor the SASP review process at subsequent meetings, with particular focus on developments relevant to Local Government, including any feedback received from the LGA on this submission.**