



Government
of South Australia

Media Release

Friday 27th July 2007



Hon Jennifer Rankine

Minister for State/Local Government Relations

Mayor Joy Baluch

President
Local Government Association
of South Australia

COUNCILS ENGAGING COMMUNITIES

Local Council's enthusiasm for engaging communities in diverse ways is celebrated in a new publication developed by the Local Government Association with assistance from State Government.

Twenty-five case studies of Council approaches to engaging their communities are documented in the publication, which has been welcomed by LGA President Mayor Joy Baluch and State/Local Government Relations Minister, Jennifer Rankine.

"Since becoming Minister I've been keen to promote and improve community engagement at a local level. Not only does it enable members of the community to participate in decisions that directly affect them, but it also strengthens and enhances our communities.

Essentially, community engagement is about facilitating participation and expanding the democratic process at a local level. Community engagement is based on principles of democracy, social inclusion and responsible government. It builds confidence in the governing process, and enables more informed decision making," Ms Rankine said.

Mayor Baluch welcomed the publication and indicated that the LGA would continue to work with Minister Rankine on a second stage to the project designed to develop a toolkit for Councils and further thinking.

"Communities change and all governments need to work hard at continuing to listen to community voices," she said.

"I'm pleased that we are working with State Government in this area as I think we can each benefit by sharing our successes and areas where perhaps we have not achieved what we hoped and I acknowledge the work of my predecessor Cr John Rich in this area."

The foreword to the publication is jointly signed by Minister Rankine and Cr Rich (LGA Immediate Past President) who acknowledged the support of Councils and staff who provided information for the case studies presented in the publication including:

- Addressing low school retention rates – City of Playford
 - Grants projects in rural Communities – District Council of Mt Remarkable
 - Inner Southern Social Planning Alliance – Cities of Holdfast Bay, Marion, Mitcham and Unley
 - Consulting on annual program and budget – Adelaide Hills Council
 - New Domestic Waste Collection Service – The Barossa Council and;
 - Engaging new migrant youth through libraries – City of West Torrens
- Addressing low school retention rates – City of Playford

The publication is being sent to all Councils and is available on
www.lga.sa.gov.au/goto/engage