

# MINUTES

## South Australian Local Government Financial Management Group Executive Committee

25 October 2024

At 9:30am at the City of Tea Tree Gully

Harpers Field Community Centre, 39 One Tree Hill Rd, Golden Grove

### 1. Present

#### Executive Committee

##### Office Bearers:

- Luke Harris (**President**), City of Mitcham
- Jade Bird (**Treasurer**), City of Onkaparinga
- Clive Hempel (**Secretary**), Mid Murray Council

##### Members:

- Alexander Brown, City of Unley
- Chris Birch, City of Burnside
- Kate George, City of Salisbury
- Lisa Gilmartin, City of West Torrens
- Nicole Van Berkel, City of Adelaide
- Rajith Udugampola, Adelaide Plains Council
- Rebecca Baines, City of Tea Tree Gully
- Simon Zbierski, City of Campbelltown
- Trisca Price, City of Playford

#### Proxies:

Nil

#### LGA Representative:

- Michael McCarthy, LGA of SA

#### Observers/Guests:

- Amanda Barber, LGFA
- Erin McGarry, Town of Gawler
- Renee Jericho, Town of Gawler

#### Secretariat:

- Patricia Coonan, TPS

### 2. Apologies

- Annette Martin, City of Charles Sturt
- Alexander Oulianoff, Mount Barker District Council
- Cadel Blunt, City of Holdfast Bay
- Grant Jennings (**Vice President**), Whyalla City Council
- Jodie Summer, District Council of Yankalilla

*It is important to note that on occasion it may be necessary for the Executive Committee to discuss an item in confidence and in those circumstances, observers and guests will be asked to leave the room for that item.*

### 3. Conflicts of Interest

Executive Committee Members are asked to advise if they have any general or material conflicts of interest in relation to the items on this agenda.

Nil

### 4. Confirmation of Minutes

**Moved:** Jade Bird  
**Seconded:** Rebecca Baines

**Recommendation:** *That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2024 be confirmed as a true and correct record of that meeting.*

**CARRIED**

**Moved:** Jade Bird  
**Seconded:** Rebecca Baines

**Recommendation:** *That the minutes of the Special meeting held on 8 October 2024 be confirmed as a true and correct record of that meeting.*

**CARRIED**

### 5. Presentations

Nil

### 6. Standing Items

#### 6.1 Local Government Association Update / Local Government Reform – LGA Representative

Michael McCarthy provided an update and the following was noted:

- Rates Survey – thank you to the Executive Committee for providing feedback. The survey will be sent next week with a deadline of return to the LGA by 13 December 2024.
- Superannuation Compliance – Nathan Petrus has been having conversations with Councils in relation to the information. The public perception around this issue and Local Government's responsibility is something to be mindful of. All feedback is welcome to the LGA on this matter. Luke advised that twenty-one (21) Councils responded to the FMG's survey. The FMG would like to see the LGA supporting the sector and working towards getting a position with the ATO. The FMG will provide a letter to the LGA.
- Model Financial Statements – the preferred consultancy has been selected and the sign-up process is underway.
- Local Government Price Index – the LGA will be meeting with the SA Centre for Economic Studies (SACES) to discuss the current situation, the proposed additional items and the forecasting moving forward.
- Local Government Research & Development Scheme – the FMG would like an update on the successful projects and any involvement required by the FMG. Michael will follow this up.

**Moved:** Simon Zbierski  
**Seconded:** Clive Hempel

**Recommendation:** *That a letter be sent to Clinton Jury at the Local Government Association (LGA) (with a copy to Nathan Petrus (LGA) and David Whiterod (Office of Local Government)) from the SALGFMG President outlining the results of the SALGFMG survey and stress the importance of the LGA supporting a proactive approach for the sector pertaining to the Superannuation Compliance matter.*

**CARRIED**

## **7. Discussion Items**

### **7.1 Strategic Session**

The Executive Committee worked through all sections of the FMG Strategy to establish a shared understanding of the main challenges facing each strategic objective, setting a solid foundation for effective, targeted solutions.

### **7.2 AASB Service Performance Reporting Project Advisory Panel – Invitation to Nominate (Luke Harris)**

The Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) has invited the FMG to nominate an individual for its Service Performance Reporting Project Advisory Panel. This panel will support the reactivated Service Performance Reporting (SPR) project, aiming to improve not-for-profit reporting standards. Luke will advise that the Executive Committee will consider a representative and advise participation accordingly in due course.

### **7.3 Employment Tax Webinar Series (Rebecca Baines)**

KPMG contacted the FMG to seek interest in KPMG hosting an Employment Tax and Indirect Tax update for Finance/HR/Payroll professionals of Local Government Councils.

The Executive Committee acknowledged the offer and discussed our current suppliers. The committee agreed to speak with Pat McCarthy from Genesis first about holding a two hour session the day before the FMG's one day conference early next year.

### **7.4 Buddy Session: Discussion and Networking**

Luke provided a report on the Buddy Session that will be held as part of the FMG's November event.

1. Session Objectives focus on key challenges in local government finance, sharing best practices, and identifying future support needs through a structured and inclusive discussion process.
2. Facilitator and Scribe Roles are designed to ensure smooth, focused discussions at each table, encouraging active participation and prioritizing key takeaways.
3. Preparation and Follow-up will include distributing discussion questions beforehand, grouping attendees effectively, and ensuring that key points are documented and reported back to the group.

The proposed Buddy Session is a 1-hour and 10-minute session at the upcoming conference, with the primary goal of fostering meaningful discussions among Local Government finance professionals. The session is designed to encourage networking, exchange of ideas, and collaborative problem-solving by addressing the following objectives:

- Discussing key local government finance challenges.
- Sharing best practices and resources.
- Exploring future support needs to address emerging challenges.

The session will involve participants seated at tables based on a colour-coding system, which will group regional Councils by buddy groups, while metropolitan Councils will be assigned randomly. Each table will be facilitated by two Executive Committee Members who will guide discussions and document the outcomes.

The Executive Committee discussed the session content and format and agreed to the proposed structure.

**Moved:** Jade Bird  
**Seconded:** Trisca Price

***Recommendation:***

*That the SALGFMG Executive Committee notes the proposed structure and content for the Buddy Session at the upcoming conference, aimed at discussing key Local Government finance challenges, sharing best practices, and exploring future support needs.*

**CARRIED**

## **7.5 Key Legislative Dates**

Luke provided a report on this matter. In recent correspondence with the LGA, the topic of a centralised key dates resource for Local Government processes was discussed. Members have expressed a need for quick access to essential deadlines, such as those for budget reviews and annual report submissions. While a comprehensive Legislative Compliance Support Register was released by the LGA, it may not fully address the need for an easily accessible list of critical dates.

The LGA's recent updates provide legislative compliance requirements, which include key dates but are embedded within broader compliance documentation. This structure may limit the usability for Council Members who primarily seek a quick-reference list of essential deadlines. Prior to 2019, a centralised key dates table existed but was discontinued in favour of the new comprehensive resource. Given the demand for such a tool, managing a simplified, centralised list of key dates could be beneficial for Councils, enabling easier reference and consistent compliance.

The Executive Committee agreed that the Marketing and Communications Workgroup would be the best group to work through the list of dates and take responsibility for keeping it up to date on the FMG's website. The workgroup will first need to review and validate the initial list of dates to ensure relevance and accuracy.

**Moved:** Rebecca Baines  
**Seconded:** Kate George

***Recommendation:***

*That the SALGFMG Executive Committee provides feedback on the proposal to develop and maintain a key dates resource.*

**CARRIED**

Discussion Items			
Action Items	Meeting	Responsible	Status
Comprehensive income statements AASB standard changes.	27/09/24	Luke and Patricia	Chase up Sabine Schuhrer for further information.
Initial contact with Councils regarding the buddy system.	27/09/24	Grant	Draft email for each Buddy Region and provide to Patricia for distribution.
Prepare a letter to be sent to Clinton Jury at the Local Government Association (LGA) (with a copy to Nathan Petrus (LGA) and David Whiterod (Office of Local Government)) regarding the Superannuation Compliance matter.	25/10/24	President	
AASB Service Performance Reporting Project Advisory Panel – Invitation to Nominate. Advise the AASB that we will consider a representative.	25/10/24	President	
Speak with Pat McCarthy from Genesis about holding a two hour session on Employment Tax and Indirect Tax update the day before the FMG’s one day conference early next year and advise KPMG that we will be speaking with our current suppliers first.	25/10/24	President	
Buddy Session for November Conference – provide session logistics and outline to Patricia.	25/10/24	President	

## 8. Work Groups – Update/Status

### 8.1 Asset Management – Grant Jennings (Chairperson), Alex Brown (Deputy Chairperson)

Alex advised that there is an Asset Management session being held at the conference with Michele Bennetts.

### 8.2 Costing Principles – Alex Oulianoff (Chairperson), Jade Bird (Deputy Chairperson)

There is no update for this meeting.

### 8.3 Events & Membership – Luke Harris (Chairperson), Grant Jennings (Deputy Chairperson)

Patricia advised that registration are steadily coming in for the November Workshop and Conference. At the last meeting of the workgroup, the workgroup discussed the program, decorations for the 35 year celebrations and new software to capture feedback in real time at the event.

**Moved:** Kate George

**Seconded:** Lisa Gilmartin

**Recommendation:** That the SALGFMG Events and Membership Workgroup be delegated authority to exceed the November 2024 Workshop and Conference Budget if necessary to purchase items to celebrate the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, items being:

- Decorations

- *Gifts for delegates*
- *Entertainment*

**CARRIED**

<b>Events and Membership</b>			
<b>Action Items</b>	<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Status</b>
Discuss FMG KPI's, an annual Member Survey and presentation of achievements at each AGM.	19/01/24	Workgroup	Data for past events and memberships to be provided to Events Workgroup for discussion. Data for KPI's needs to include information received in event surveys.
Discuss innovation awards to be incorporated in the FMG major conference – discuss with the LGFA process and potential categories Collaboration, Innovation, Regional, Most Improved etc.	16/02/24	Workgroup / LGFA	To be discussed as part of the FMG Strategy.

**8.4 Financial Management Framework – Clive Hempel (Chairperson), Lisa Gilmartin (Deputy Chairperson)**

Clive advised that an email has been received from John Wright providing a brief of alterations to the Model Financial Statements. The Executive Committee agreed that it would be worth emailing Members to seek feedback on the statements while it's still fresh in their minds.

<b>Financial Management Framework</b>			
<b>Action Items</b>	<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Status</b>
AASB: ED SR1 Disclosure of Climate-related Financial Information. The SALGFMG is trying to get some influence in relation to the Model Financial Statements and disclosures that we may be committed to in the future.	17/11/23	Workgroup	
Email FMG Members to seek feedback on the Model Financial Statements.	25/10/24	Secretariat	

**8.5 Internal Financial Controls (Better Practice Framework) – Kate George (Chairperson) and Jodie Summer (Deputy Chairperson)**

Kate advised that the workgroup met on 15 October and is continuing to work through the sections of the framework and currently focusing on the Assets section. The next meeting will be held on 14 November 2024. The workgroup will contact the LGA and the Office of Local Government to ensure they are formally aware of the review, they have been verbally advised thus far.

<b>Internal Financial Controls (Better Practice Framework)</b>			
<b>Action Items</b>	<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Status</b>
Advise the LGA and Office of Local Government in writing of the review being undertake of the Internal Financial Controls (Better Practice Framework).	25/10/24	Workgroup	

**8.6 Local Government Price Index / Grants Commission – Chris Birch (Chairperson), Rajith Udugampola (Deputy Chairperson)**

Chris advised that he has spoken with Peter Ilee regarding updating the purpose codes naming and descriptions within Appendix B of the Model Financial Statements and a timeframe for this will be established soon.

Local Government Price Index			
Action Items	Meeting	Responsible	Status
Work with the Local Government Grants Commission to modernise/update the purpose codes naming and descriptions within Appendix B of the Model Financial Statements.	28/04/23	Workgroup	In progress – the LG Grants Commission is happy to discuss updates to Appendix B of the MFS.

**8.7 Marketing & Communications – Rebecca Baines (Chairperson) Jade Bird (Deputy Chairperson)**

Rebecca advised that a meeting has been organised for 5 November 2024 with Red Bass to discuss progressing the FMG membership tool. Patricia advised that the application with the ACNC to be recognised as a not for profit entity is progressing. We should receive their final assessment of the application soon.

Marketing and Communications			
Action Items	Meeting	Responsible	Status
Setup Microsoft Tennant after the ACNC application status is known.	27/09/24	Workgroup	
Create an email template to introduce Members to their FMG buddies.	19/01/24	Grant Jennings	
Discuss further the setup of the Long Term Financial Plan User Group and Strategic Group.	19/01/24	Workgroup	Potentially hold a LTFP Online Session / Forum. See if this can be a channel through Yammer.
Key Legislative Dates - work through the list of dates and take responsibility for keeping it up to date on the FMG’s website.	25/10/24	Workgroup	

**8.8 Rating and Valuation – Simon Zbierski (Chairperson), Cadel Blunt (Deputy Chairperson)**

Simon provided an update report from the last meeting of the workgroup and the following was noted from that meeting:

Valuer General & Land Services SA Update

- Objections:
  - Volumes sitting below 10-year average.
  - Currently have 1,200 objections submitted, which is on par with numbers normally received at this time of the year.
  - Expect another spike when land tax goes out in November.
- Industry Engagement has started; used to collate a lot of anecdotal information to help inform their valuations.

- Valuations:
  - Residential – gap between good stock and stock that requires work; days on market and volumes of stock are increasing; demand still exceeding supply.
  - Primary Production – poor yields with crops, however land is still desirable.

#### RPSA Update

- Next conference is scheduled for 5 – 7 February 2025 at the Barossa Novatel.
- Draft Program being finalised, with registrations to commence shortly.

#### LGA Update

- Michael McCarthy introduced himself as the Manager Governance at the LGA.
- Rates survey – how is the data used by Councils?
  - Responses from the group included using data for rating reviews, what other Councils do, NRM Levy, sense of what other rates mechanisms are used to make contact, benchmarking, contact names.

#### Open Session/Q&A

- Port Adelaide Enfield – Presentation on Rates Arrears Debt Treatment Plan:
  - how PAE have been able to reduce rate arrears from during Covid to the end of August 2024.
  - Personal approach rather than using debt collection upfront.
- Pensioner Concession rebates – discussion regarding if Councils are providing an additional rebate.

The next meeting of the workgroup will be held on 10 December 2024.

**Moved:** Kate George  
**Seconded:** Rebecca Baines

#### **Recommendation:**

*That the SALGFMG Executive Committee notes the minutes of the Rating & Valuation Working Group meeting held on 8 October 2024.*

**CARRIED**

### **8.9 Student Placement Program – Luke Harris (Chairperson), Kate George (Deputy Chairperson)**

There is no update for this meeting.

<b>Student Placement Program</b>			
<b>Action Items</b>	<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Status</b>
Negotiate and discuss the future of the Student Placement Program and the leftover funds with the LGFA.	19/01/24	President & Vice President	In progress.
Prepare a newsletter article about grad timings with Uni SA for this year with contact details.	19/01/24	Vice President	
Organise a presentation at the November/December Workshop on Luke's experience with a graduate to encourage uptake.	19/01/24	Vice President	



## 9. Treasurer's Report

Jade provided a report and the following was noted:

- The year-to-date financial result at the end of September 2024 is a deficit of \$23,105.88. Similar to last month's report, this is largely due to the timing of invoices for expenses relating to the November 2024 conference.
- Income from memberships and conference registrations will begin to flow through in October and November.
- The balance sheet remains in a very strong position.

**Moved:** Kate George

**Seconded:** Trisca Price

### **Recommendation:**

*That the SALGFMG Executive Committee notes the Finance report for the period ending 30 September 2024.*

**CARRIED**

Treasurer			
Action Items	Meeting	Responsible	Status
Submit an LGA News Article regarding discounted FMG membership.	31/05/24	Secretariat	
Organise for the NAB account signatories to be updated.	27/09/24	Secretariat and Treasurer	In Progress

## 10. Other Business

Other Business			
Action Items	Meeting	Responsible	Status
Finalisation of the Fees and Charges ATO Class Rulings.	28/04/23	President & Treasurer	Grant has finalised the funding acquittal. The first final ruling has been completed but the second has not been completed. Alex Oulianoff is the contact for the second part.
Key Dates Calendar for Local Government. Luke will see if he can find one and speak with the LGA.	27/09/24	Luke Harris	

## 11. Monthly Member Update Email: Key Dates and Key Information

Reminder regarding the November Workshop and Conference

## 12. Confidential Discussion Items

Nil

### 13. Next Meeting

6 December 2024 – District Council of Yankalilla

### 14. Close

The meeting closed at 12:45pm.

Standing and Future Items	Meeting	Frequency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Consider topics for the upcoming LG Research and Development Scheme funding round – usually opens in June and ends in August</li></ul>	February	Annually
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Presentation from the Local Government Grants Commission</li></ul>	April	Annually
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Sponsorship Proposal for the next financial year</li><li>Review Auditor ahead of recommendation at July meeting</li></ul>	April/May	Annually
AGM Matters and Recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Constitution Draft</li><li>Membership Guidelines Draft for adoption</li><li>Membership Fees Recommendation to AGM</li><li>Honorary &amp; Life Member Nominations</li><li>Auditor Approach Recommendation</li><li>Executive Committee Nominations</li></ul>	June	Annually
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Davin Lambert – LGFA update</li><li>Constitution Recommendation to AGM</li><li>Auditor Appointment Recommendation to AGM</li><li>Honorary &amp; Life Member Recommendation</li><li>Event Registration Fees for the Financial Year</li><li>Consider Victorian Conference Representation – interstate reciprocal arrangement</li></ul>	July	Annually
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Buddy List</li><li>New Committee Members</li><li>Workgroup allocations including Chair and Deputy Chair</li><li>Meeting dates for next 12 months</li><li>Consider Conference Representation – interstate reciprocal arrangements</li></ul>	September	Annually

**For further information regarding topics raised at the FMG Executive Committee meetings, please see contact details below:**

FMG President, Luke Harris: [lharris@mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au](mailto:lharris@mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au)

- Asset Management Workgroup Chairperson, Grant Jennings: [grant.jennings@whyalla.sa.gov.au](mailto:grant.jennings@whyalla.sa.gov.au)
- Costing Principles Workgroup Chairperson, Alex Oulianoff: [aoulianoff@dcmtbarker.sa.gov.au](mailto:aoulianoff@dcmtbarker.sa.gov.au)
- Events & Membership Workgroup Chairperson, Luke Harris: [lharris@mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au](mailto:lharris@mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au)
- Financial Management Framework Workgroup Chairperson, Clive Hempel: [chempel@mid-murray.sa.gov.au](mailto:chempel@mid-murray.sa.gov.au)
- Internal Financial Controls (Better Practice Framework) Workgroup Chairperson, Kate George: [kgeorge@salisbury.sa.gov.au](mailto:kgeorge@salisbury.sa.gov.au)
- Local Government Price Index Workgroup Chairperson, Chris Birch: [chris.birch@prospect.sa.gov.au](mailto:chris.birch@prospect.sa.gov.au)
- Marketing & Communications Workgroup Chairperson, Rebecca Baines: [rebecca.baines@cttg.sa.gov.au](mailto:rebecca.baines@cttg.sa.gov.au)
- Rating and Valuation Workgroup Chairperson, Simon Zbierski: [szbierski@campbelltown.sa.gov.au](mailto:szbierski@campbelltown.sa.gov.au)
- Student Placement Program Workgroup Chairperson: Luke Harris: [lharris@mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au](mailto:lharris@mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au)