

22 September 2014

Mr Steve Davies MP  
Chair Finance and Administration Committee  
Parliament House  
George Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

**RECEIVED**  
**23 Sept 2014**  
Finance and  
Administration Committee

Dear Mr Davies,

**Queensland Plan Bill 2014 – LGAQ feedback on Consultation Draft**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Consultation Draft of the Queensland Plan Bill 2014.

LGAQ called for comment from member councils on the content of the Bill and from the responses received there appear to be no critical concerns. As such the Association stands by the position outlined in its preliminary response provided to the Department of Premier and Cabinet on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2014.

To reiterate, the Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) has reviewed all aspects of the Bill and is generally supportive of its intent and the associated references to local government throughout. More specifically, the LGAQ notes section 13 requires a local government to have regard to the Queensland Plan in its corporate plan, and further, section 17 requires a local government's annual report to include a statement about the local government's actions towards achieving any particular goals identified against the Queensland Plan.

The LGAQ believes that local governments will be able to reasonably manage these arrangements on the basis that both the requirements set out in section 13 and 17 are left to the discretion of each individual council and not prescribed in regulation. That is, councils must be left to choose a fit for purpose arrangement that reflects their individual circumstances and capacity to respond to the Queensland Plan foundation areas.

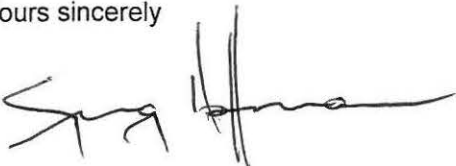
As discussed with the Department, the LGAQ notes the disconnect in timing between the release of councils' annual reports, which cannot be finalised until they receive their audited financial statements from the Auditor General – which typically occurs at the earliest in September. However, this can also often stretch into the next calendar year, which will not align with the requirement under section 14 of the Bill for the Premier to table his report on the implementation of the Queensland Plan in the Legislative Assembly by 30 November each year.

The LGAQ explored the possibility of aligning the requirements of section 17 of the Bill with councils' annual budgets which are required by 31 July each year. However, the LGAQ does not believe this practical as councils' budgeting processes are focussed on the year ahead and do not report in sufficient detail on the previous year's activities. Further, this would require an additional reporting process which would not be welcomed by councils.

Instead, the LGAQ proposed that the Government consider shifting the date on which the Premier must table his report in the Legislative Assembly - such as the following February. By this time, most local government annual reports would be finalised.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide input.

Yours sincerely



Greg Hoffman PSM  
GENERAL MANAGER