

FIFTH BOARD MEETING

Draft Minutes of Meeting held by teleconference on Friday 8 October 2010

Present

- Hon Margaret Reynolds, Chairperson
- Prof Attila Brungs, DVC Research, UTS
- Penny Holloway, Local Government Managers Australia
- Prof John H Howard, Pro-Vice Chancellor (Development) UC
- Peter Allen, Deputy Dean, ANZSOG
- Stephanie Foster, Deputy Secretary, DITRDLG
- Adrian Beresford-Wylie, CEO, ALGA

In Attendance

- Prof Graham Sansom, Director ACELG
- Melissa Gibbs, Acting Assistant Director ACELG
- Prof Ian Thynne, Charles Darwin University

Item 1: Welcome and Apologies

The Chairperson welcomed all those present.

Apologies were received from John Truman, President, IPWEA; and Cllr Geoff Lake, President, ALGA (represented by Adrian Beresford-Wylie).

Item 2: Minutes of Meeting held on 29 July 2010

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 29 July 2010 be adopted as a correct record.

Item 3 Matters Arising

- 3.1 Melissa Gibbs reported that the Collaboration Agreement had now been signed by all parties except the University of Canberra. Prof John Howard advised that the matter was in hand.
- 3.2 Stephanie Foster provided details of the new arrangements for the Department of Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government and associated policy initiatives. She

advised that there would likely be a new ministerial council for regional development and local government, and a need for an effective working relationship between ACELG and the proposed Regional Policy Centre. The Chairperson proposed that ACELG seek a meeting with the new Minister, and also send letters of appreciation/goodwill to the former Minister, former Prime Minister and new Prime Minister.

- 3.3 The Director provided a brief update on liaison with the Australian Services Union, including recent discussions on workforce strategy, data collection and training needs.
- 3.4 The Director reported on further discussions with SAI Global in terms of the pathway agreed at the July Board meeting, and that another meeting would be held shortly with a view to a cooperative project in 2011.
- 3.5 The Director reported on the successful International Roundtable on Metropolitan Governance held in Brisbane in August, noting in particular the support of the Forum of Federations in bringing nine international participants to Australia, and the exceptional hospitality of the Roundtable's hosts in Brisbane.
- 3.6 Penny Holloway sought advice on progress in appointing an additional local government practitioner to the Research Advisory Committee. The Chairperson advised that steps had been taken to appoint Dr Erica Bell of the University of Tasmania to ensure representation from Tasmania and increase the number of women on the committee. The Director indicated that the proposed additional practitioner would be recommended at the December Board meeting.

Resolved:

- **That the Chairperson and Director seek a meeting with the new Minister for Regional Development and Local Government, Hon Simon Crean.**
- **That letters of appreciation/goodwill be sent to the former Minister, former Prime Minister and new Prime Minister.**
- **That letters of appreciation in respect of the Brisbane Roundtable be sent to Brisbane City Council, the South East Queensland Council of Mayors, and the Local Government Association of Queensland.**

Item 4 Report of Programs Committee (see table at Annexure A)

Prof John Howard presented the report of the Programs Committee. He highlighted steps being taken to replace the former coordinator of the Innovation and Best Practice program, who has resigned. Also, funds would be made available for consultancy support. The Director advised that in the meantime Melissa Gibbs was overseeing the program and temporary staffing was being provided by the secretariat.

Melissa Gibbs reported on the positive feedback being received from jurisdictions for development of the Rural-remote and Indigenous Local Government strategy.

The Director advised that further reports on possible adjustments to several items would be presented to the December Board meeting as part of finalising the work program for 2011.

Adrian Beresford-Wylie sought advice on progress with ACELG requests for funding through the Local Government Reform Fund. Stephanie Foster indicated that decisions were likely within a month.

Resolved

That the information be noted.

Item 5 Communications Strategy

Melissa Gibbs advised that the task of preparing a communications strategy had proved more complex than anticipated, due to the broad span of activities and range of stakeholders involved. However, a draft is nearly complete and will be circulated to Board members out of session for feedback and suggestions. The final strategy will then be presented to the December meeting for adoption.

In the meantime, a number of new communications activities aimed at raising the profile of the Centre's program activity are currently underway. Specifically, a new E-newsletter will be circulated to councils and other key stakeholders in the week following the Board meeting, and some simple information sheets are being prepared to provide background and information on the Centre and its program areas.

Penny Holloway noted the importance of ensuring that all ACELG discussion papers are sent to Board members for information. This was agreed.

Resolved

That the information be noted

Item 6 Workforce Development Reference Group

The Director reported on a proposal to appoint an independent chair to the Workforce Development Reference Group, now that the auspice has moved from LGMA to ACELG. He advised that following consultation with members, it is proposed that Professor John Martin of Latrobe University's Centre for Sustainable Rural Communities be appointed to that role. Prof Martin has a strong background in workforce and training issues, and is willing to accept the position on an honorary basis.

Resolved

That the Board endorse the appointment of Prof John Martin as chair of the workforce Development Reference Group.

Item 7a Confidential Item

Item 7b Possible Resignation of Cllr Geoff Lake

Adrian Beresford-Wylie advised that the current President of ALGA, Cllr Geoff Lake, would not be seeking re-election and therefore may be replaced on the ACELG Board.

Resolved:

That a letter of appreciation be sent to Cllr Geoff Lake.

Item 8 Future Meetings

The Director advised that with the deferral of the ANZOG leadership program, the next Board meeting could be re-scheduled and/or relocated. The Chairperson suggested that the Minister be invited to attend and the meeting scheduled at the most suitable location and time on either Thursday 9 or Friday 10 December.

Resolved

That the next meeting be held in Melbourne, Canberra or Sydney on either Thursday 9 or Friday 10 December.

Annexure A Report of the Programs Committee

The Programs Committee met by teleconference on Friday 1 October. The table below summarises the latest position. Key deliverables identified in the approved Project Plan, and comments on areas of concern, are highlighted in red italics.

Program 1: Research and Policy Foresight

Objective: To support evidence-based policy formulation, promote informed debate on key policy issues and help address major challenges facing local government

Component and Lead Partner/s	5-year Outputs and Outcomes	Activities and Milestones	
		Years 0- 1	Progress/Issues
Coordinate, commission and/or undertake research projects to address key issues (UC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Broad dissemination of research studies and papers that support evidence based and effective policy formulation and implementation ▪ Well-supported seminar program ▪ ACELG seen as valued source of research and policy advice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Prepare research strategy discussion paper and convene forum/s to identify gaps/priorities</i> ▪ <i>Establish Research Committee</i> ▪ <i>Formulate program for Years 1-3</i> ▪ <i>Initiate Phase 1 research projects</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Completed ▪ Completed – first meeting held and second planned ▪ Partly completed ▪ Senior Research Officer appointed. 6 projects completed or under way, and 2 under consideration. Some funds to be carried forward to 2011
Provide research-based policy support to ACLG, LGPMC, ALGA, DITRDLG, (UTS/UC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Better informed policy proposals and debate ▪ Research findings demonstrably translated into practice ▪ Positive feedback from stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consult on key policy/research needs and establish frameworks for collaboration ▪ Provide specific policy inputs as required (within resources) ▪ Convene seminars and roundtables to explore key issues and promote policy debate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Some consultation but further work required ▪ Advice provided on a range of issues eg LGRF ▪ Roundtables and reports on metro governance <p><i>More work needed in this area</i></p>

Program 2: Innovation and Best Practice

Objective: To promote exchange of information and ideas, and to identify, showcase and disseminate innovation and best practice in local government

Component and Lead Partner/s	5-year Outputs and Outcomes	Activities and Milestones	
		Years 0- 1	Progress/Issues
Prioritise sector needs and establish and operate Innovation and Knowledge Exchange Network (UC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fully operational IKEN with regularly updated content that provides an adequate data base to facilitate innovation across key areas of local government activity ▪ High level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consult practitioners and stakeholders to prioritise sector needs and interests ▪ Determine most effective methods to fill gaps and source knowledge bases for IKEN ▪ <i>Establish website and populate with information and best practice examples</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consultations held in conjunction with other programs ▪ Preliminary work completed ▪ Pilot website tested; further design and compilation of best practice examples in progress. Aiming for launch in December.

	utilisation of Exchange database and free flow of information and ideas		<i>Fully functional website likely to be delayed due to resignation of program coordinator. Recruitment under way, temporary staff support in interim</i>
Showcase successful models and examples of best practice (UC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Documentation and dissemination of a wide range of examples of innovation and best practice ▪ Increased sector participation in showcasing and awards programs ▪ Increased sector uptake of innovation and best practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Undertake and publish case studies of best practice models in key areas ▪ Establish peer review mechanism to validate best practice examples ▪ Assist practitioners to showcase best practice ▪ Link to national awards programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pending ▪ Pending: unlikely in 2010 ▪ Pending: unlikely in 2010 ▪ Pending <p><i>These activities are well behind schedule due to resignation of program coordinator</i></p>
Instigate practice-based innovation pilot programs (UC)	Implementation of a series of pilot programs focused on specific areas of service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Determine key area/s of deficiency/need ▪ Establish partnerships with interested organisations ▪ Secure support for and implement at least one pilot program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deferred ▪ Deferred ▪ Deferred <p><i>This activity needs to be reviewed</i></p>

Program 3: Governance and Strategic Leadership

Objective: To increase understanding of effective strategic leadership, and to build the capacity of local government to achieve consistently high standards in leadership and governance.

Component and Lead Partner/s	5-year Outputs and Outcomes	Activities and Milestones	
		Years 0- 1	Progress/Issues
Develop and deliver a prestigious national executive governance and leadership program for senior managers and elected members, benchmarked against leading Australian and international practice (ANZSOG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ongoing annual delivery of a self-funding program ▪ Improved understanding of the need for excellence in strategic leadership and management ▪ Positive feedback and strengthening of sector leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish Steering Committee, International Reference Group and Program Design Group ▪ Conduct extensive consultations as and complete program design ▪ <i>Hold first program in late 2010</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Completed ▪ Completed and program designed ▪ Scheduled late Nov-early Dec <p><i>Very slow take-up of places on course: may need to be re-scheduled and/or modified to reduce cost and switch to shorter, multiple blocks</i></p>
Develop and deliver a national emerging leaders program for middle managers (LGMA/UTS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ongoing annual delivery of self-funding programs ▪ Emergence of a future generation of leaders in local government committed to the pursuit of excellence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Upgrade and re-position LGMA Management Challenge</i> ▪ <i>Consult with sector to design nationally - networked Emerging Leaders and Graduate Certificate (see Program 6)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Completed – special Challenge held for Year of Women in Local Government and Challenge incorporated in Aspiring Leaders framework ▪ Discussion paper circulated. Graduate Certificate designed. Pilot program to be held in WA in December under aegis of ECU/LGMA/WALGA.

Identify and address specific governance issues (UTS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Completion of a series of studies, workshops, seminars etc that explore issues in leadership and governance and provide clear directions for improvement ▪ Issues are clearly articulated and practitioners have access to a range of useful resources to support better governance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review existing frameworks for business excellence in local government and determine future needs ▪ Scope a range of models for enhanced strategic leadership and local governance ▪ Assemble data base on women in local government and support initiatives to enhance women's participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Completed. Discussions under way with SAI Global to upgrade Australian Business Excellence Framework for local government ▪ Initial scoping completed, further research under way ▪ Work commenced on database. Management agreement with ALGWA for 50:50 Vision program.
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Program 4: Organisation Capacity Building

Objective: To build local government capacity in key areas of planning, management and service delivery

Component and Lead Partner/s	5-year Outputs and Outcomes	Activities and Milestones	
		Years 0- 1	Progress/Issues
Identify sector capacity gaps and support development of national frameworks and standards in priority areas (IPWEA, LGMA, UTS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more consistent and better coordinated national approach to improving local government performance • National standards or guidelines adopted in key areas of planning, management and service delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify and assemble necessary baseline data[^] ▪ Formulate national assessment framework for improved asset and financial management ▪ Support implementation of federal Reform Fund ▪ Establish working relationship with LGPJC and LGPMC ▪ Consult widely to identify further priority areas for capacity building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Awaiting federal decision re LGRF funds ▪ Preliminary work completed and agreement with MAV re STEP program link. Awaiting federal decision re LGRF funds for next stage ▪ Advice provided and scoping projects completed ▪ Commenced – awaiting decisions on future of LGPMC ▪ Extensive consultations held
Develop specific capacity building resources (IPWEA, LGMA, UTS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Availability of a range of operational tools, guidelines and other capacity building resources to facilitate improved performance ▪ Capacity building resources widely utilised and demonstrable improvement in skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Asset management for small communities[^] ▪ Tools and guidelines for long term financial planning[^] ▪ Examine impacts of climate change and responses required[^] ▪ Establish frameworks for regional collaboration[^] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Draft completed and being tested in sample councils. Likely release in November ▪ Scoping completed. Awaiting federal decision re LGRF funds for next stage. ▪ Scoping completed. Possible linkage to proposed LGRF projects – otherwise program for 2011 ▪ Awaiting commencement of LGRF state/territory projects <p>National networking of LGRF projects will be vital to get best value in these areas of activity. ACELG could convene roundtables as a first step</p>

[^] Subject to supplementary funding

Program 5: Rural-Remote and Indigenous Local Government

Objective: To identify and address specific governance and capacity building issues facing rural, remote and Indigenous councils

Component and Lead Partner/s	5-year Outputs and Outcomes	Activities and Milestones	
		Years 0- 1	Progress/Issues
Identify priority capacity building needs and feasible delivery options for small rural-remote and Indigenous local governments (ANU/CDU/ECU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accurate assessments of needs and issues ▪ An agreed ongoing program of policy development and capacity building focused on those distinctive needs and issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complete scoping studies of priority needs and options to deliver training and capacity building support ▪ National roundtable to review findings and determine initial priorities ▪ Formulate national strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Completed ▪ Completed ▪ Key elements of strategy circulated for comment; strategy document in preparation. Likely release in December
Coordinate, commission and/or deliver tailored activities to address specific issues and needs (ANU/CDU/ECU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Timely and effective completion of a series of agreed activities ▪ Good uptake of tailored programs and positive feedback ▪ Observable improvements in capacity and governance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish reference group to plan and oversee activities and engage partners ▪ Commence design of specific activities to respond to identified priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To be established based on strategy: report to December Board meeting ▪ To be included in strategy document

Program 6: Workforce Development

Objective: To address specific skills shortages and gaps in the professional workforce, as well as broader requirements for enhanced expertise, and to establish local government as an 'employer of choice'

Component and Lead Partner/s	5-year Outputs and Outcomes	Activities and Milestones	
		Years 0- 1	Progress/Issues
Formulate and implement national workforce development strategy and related measures to make local government an employer of choice (LGMA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ongoing implementation of tailored programs to address workforce and skills issues, as part of a national strategy to ensure that the sector has the necessary expertise to match its responsibilities ▪ Local government adopts 'New Ways of Working' and is broadly regarded as an employer of choice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish Practice Unit and reference group ▪ Convene third Skills Forum ▪ Finalise Local Government Workforce Development Blueprint linked to LGPMC's national workforce strategy ▪ Develop minimum national data set[^] ▪ Implement Workforce Blueprint priorities to address skills gaps and other needs for enhanced expertise, and to promote 'New Ways of Working' ▪ Formulate Indigenous Employment Program ('Green Paper') 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Completed. Also exploratory meeting of strategic liaison group with ASU, GSA ▪ Completed ▪ Draft blueprint finalised. Awaiting federal decision re LGRF funds for further work on LGPMC strategy ▪ Awaiting federal decision re LGRF funds ▪ Priority projects to be selected and commenced ▪ Draft program proposal ('Green Paper') circulated for comment

<p>Coordinate, commission and/or deliver training programs to address priority needs (UTS)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased availability across Australia of education and professional development programs that address workforce priorities ▪ Programs better coordinated and delivered appropriately to different target groups ▪ Strong positive response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inventory of current programs to identify gaps and options for additional programs and preferred delivery modes ▪ Survey, issues paper and consultations to determine priorities ▪ Design new Graduate Certificate in Local Government Leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Draft inventory and issues paper completed and circulated for comment ▪ Online survey under way ▪ Program designed and accredited by UTS for offer in 2011. Discussions well advanced for program to be offered in WA under auspice of ECU. National networking to be explored after that.
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^ Subject to supplementary funding