

ELEVENTH BOARD MEETING

**Draft Minutes of Meeting held at Parliament House, Hobart
on Friday 30 March 2012**

Present

- Hon Margaret Reynolds, Chairperson
- Prof Attila Brungs, UTS
- Penny Holloway, Local Government Managers Australia
- Prof Frances Shannon, University of Canberra
- Peter Allen, Deputy Dean, ANZSOG
- Stephanie Foster, Department of Regional Australia
- Paul Di Iulio, President, IPWEA
- Adrian Beresford-Wylie, ALGA (representing Cllr Genia McCaffery)

In Attendance

- Prof Graham Sansom, Director ACELG
- Melissa Gibbs, Assistant Director ACELG
- John Ravlic, LGMA
- Chris Champion, IPWEA
- Daniel Grafton, Programs Officer, ACELG

Item 1: Welcome and Apologies

The Chairperson welcomed all those present, particularly Prof Shannon and Paul Di Iulio who were attending their first Board meeting.

Apologies were received from Cllr Genia McCaffery, ALGA; Prof Atique Islam, ECU; Prof Ian Thynne, CDU; and Professor Mark Evans, ANZSIG Institute, UC.

Item 2: Minutes of Meeting held on 15 December 2011

Resolved: That the draft minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2011 be adopted as a correct record, subject to the minor amendment previously requested by Stephanie Foster.

Item 3: Matters Arising

No matters were raised.

Item 4: Board Membership

The Director reported that Prof John Howard has been replaced as the University of Canberra nominee to the Board by Prof Frances Shannon, Deputy Vice Chancellor – Research. In addition, there had

been a change of President of IPWEA, and Mr John Truman has been replaced as its Board nominee by Mr Paul Di Iulio, Chief Executive Officer of the City of Campbelltown, South Australia.

Resolved:

That the Board note the information and welcome Prof Shannon and Mr Di Iulio, and that a letter of appreciation be sent to Mr John Truman.

Item 5: Secretariat Update

The Director reported that two further part-time (and temporary) appointments are being made: a research officer and an administrative assistant. This additional support is required to ensure that the secretariat can deal with the anticipated workload for 2012.

The Director also advised that he had been appointed by the NSW Government to chair a panel undertaking a wide-ranging review of local government in that state. This had been discussed with the Chair and Prof Brungs and no significant disruption to ACELG activities was anticipated.

In addition, the Director also reported on visits to the UK and New Zealand, and on participation by himself and the Assistant Director in recent conferences.

The Chair reported on recent meetings in Perth with the State local government department and ECU. She saw prospects for substantial further collaboration between ACELG and the local government sector in WA. The Assistant Director confirmed that there had been follow-up discussions on a project relating to workforce development, and that Dr Robyn Morris of ECU had recently completed a scoping study on Fly-in, Fly-out issues.

The Assistant Director advised that a draft 2011 Annual Report is almost finalised, and will follow a similar format to 2010. It will be circulated to Board members prior to its release.

Resolved:

That the information be noted and the Director congratulated on his appointment to chair the NSW review panel.

Item 6: Recruitment of New Director

Prof Brungs advised that the Director had decided to extend his full-time appointment for 3 months to the end of December 2012, and to retire then, rather than continuing in a part-time capacity into 2013. The aim now is to have a new Director in place from the beginning of January 2013 at the latest. This requires advertising by late April/early May, and interviews in July/August, so as to finalise an appointment by end September.

Under the ACELG Collaboration Agreement, appointment of the Director is a matter for UTS, but with the decision to be endorsed by the Board. An initial 3-year contract would be offered, and as at present, the position will combine the roles of Director of ACELG and Director of UTS-CLG. Prof Brungs sought the involvement of members of the Board in the selection process, and their assistance in 'head hunting' prospective applicants. He emphasised the importance of finding an appointee with an appropriate blend of academic and practitioner experience. Board members strongly endorsed this approach and sought assurances that sector representatives would play a substantial role in the selection process. This was agreed.

Resolved:

That the Board endorse the proposed approach to recruitment of a new Director, and nominate four advisers for the selection process.

Item 7: Report of Programs Committee

7.1 Outstanding 2011 projects

The Committee reported on progress with incomplete 2011 projects against the target of finishing all outstanding work in the first quarter of 2012. It advised that most will be completed by or shortly after 31 March, but in a few cases there is the possibility or likelihood of significant further delays.

Board members noted the very large volume of research and reports now awaiting dissemination, and the need for a phased program of launches, roundtables etc. The Board was keen to look at ways in which this output could get most traction in the sector, and at pathways for implementation. It was agreed that a summary of ACELG's recent work and outputs should be presented to the next meeting of the Inter-Jurisdictional Working Group of senior state/territory and ALGA officials, and that ACELG should advise local government associations, professional institutes etc of recent reports that could be presented and discussed at their conferences.

Resolved:

That the Board note the information.

7.2 Local Government Reform Fund Update

The Committee reported that work is proceeding as rapidly as possible on the four major LGRF projects being managed by the Centre under specific work orders issued by the Department of Regional Australia. However, some delays are being encountered due to the need to reach agreement with jurisdictions and to consult with sector organisations, and in two cases it appears necessary to negotiate minor amendments to those work orders. Stephanie Foster highlighted the need to ensure the work orders were amended to meet our program management responsibilities in accordance with ANAO requirements.

Resolved:

That ACELG seek amendments to the Work Orders for the Workforce Strategy, National Assessment Framework and Minimum Data Sets as proposed in this report, subject to meeting ANAO standards.

7.3 Women in Local Government Program (confidential report)

The Committee, Chair and Assistant Director reported on recent discussions and developments with regard to ACELG's contract with ALGWA to support delivery of the '50:50 Vision' program.

Resolved:

- **That ACELG offer to extend its contract with ALGWA to 30 June 2012 to enable satisfactory completion of its support for the '50:50 Vision' program, and continue its efforts to promote gender equity through implementation projects under the national Local Government Workforce Strategy.**
- **That the Board express its appreciation of the efforts of the Program Coordinator, Karen Purser.**

7.4 Excellence in Local Government Leadership Program

The Committee, Peter Allen and Mark Evans reported on steps being taken to offer the program for a second time in July-September 2012. Peter Allen advised that the ANZSOG board strongly supported this initiative and this was expected to lead to a number of scholarships again being provided by

state/territory governments. He also indicated that program design work should be completed by Easter, and that marketing could commence in mid-late April.

The Board noted that ANZSOG proposes to use \$100,000 of unspent ACELG funds to top-up the scholarship pool, and that this would include release of the material generated by participants in the 2011 program.

Resolved:

Submitted for consideration

7.5 ALGA Roads Partnership

The Committee reported that, in accordance with a previous Board resolution, ALGA had now advised that it wishes to proceed with an annual report on the state of local government road assets. It was envisaged ACELG would partner with ALGA on a 50:50 basis for 3 years (ie contribute \$16,500 pa), provided ALGA met the upfront cost of \$59,000.

Paul Di Iulio indicated that IPWEA would also be keen to become a partner in this project, and it was agreed IPWEA and ALGA would hold further discussions in that regard.

Resolved:

That the Board confirm its willingness to contribute up to \$16,500 pa over the three years 2012-2014 to the proposed partnership with ALGA.

7.6 Project Monitoring and Reporting

The Committee advised that, in accordance with the approach proposed by the Board at its December meeting, and to ensure effective implementation of the work program, arrangements are being put in place for closer monitoring of projects and progress of work generally in 2012. A dedicated staff resource has been allocated to this task.

Recommendation:

That the information be noted.

7.7 Publication Guidelines

The Committee reported that the secretariat proposes to request program co-ordinators to apply a set of standard guidelines for publication of reports. This will include adherence to a detailed project brief; peer review; a style guide; thorough proof-reading and editing; and a strategy for dissemination and communication of the completed work.

Resolved:

That the information be noted.

7.8 Roundtable with Victorian Stakeholders

The Committee reported on an informal roundtable with a range of representatives of Victorian local government held on the evening of Thursday 22nd. It observed that the discussion confirmed that ACELG's work program is broadly on the right track, but some fine-tuning is desirable to ensure that 'cutting edge' issues and opportunities are being adequately addressed.

Peter Allen commented that the roundtable had pointed to a focus on the need for generational change and renewal in local government.

Resolved:

That the information be noted and the themes arising from the roundtable be taken forward in ACELG's strategic planning and program development.

That a note of appreciation be sent to participants in the roundtable, as well as to the Municipal Association of Victoria for hosting the event.

Item 8: Research Advisory Committee Report

The Research Program Manager reported on the meeting of the Advisory Committee held on 22 March 2012. She highlighted:

- Emerging research partnerships with the City of Melbourne and LGASA
- Consideration being given to including an elected representative on the committee, and a representative of ALGA
- Completion of 8 research papers in 2011
- Anticipated release of a further 7 papers shortly
- The final report on the 2011 Researchers Forum, with around 40 papers from the forum now available on the ACELG website
- Development of the 2012 research strategy, with 7 projects currently under consideration in addition to a further round of projects under the Research Partnerships Scheme.

Board members again emphasised the importance of an effective dissemination strategy. Prof Shannon reflected on the need to measure research impact.

Resolved:

That the information be noted, and the Research Advisory Committee requested to give further attention to dissemination strategies and measurement of research impact.

Item 9: Programs and Budget for 2012

The Director presented details of the proposed 2012 budget and work programs. He advised that these update the draft budget adopted by the Board at its December meeting, based on final outcomes for 2011. He also indicated that while much of the 2012 program focuses on consolidating initiatives taken in 2010 and 2011, and the program is less ambitious than 2011, it nevertheless involves a very substantial commitment and some projects are likely to flow over into 2013.

Board members commented on the importance of including further work on councillor training in the 2012 program, and on the need for a short report identifying key issues and potential risks inherent in the budget.

Resolved:

That the Board approve the proposed work programs and budgets for 2012, subject to provision of a supplementary report at the next meeting on key issues and potential risks.

Item 10: Longer Term Budget Strategy

The Director presented a report on progress in implementing the 5-year budget strategy set out in ACELG's Project Plan and the funding agreement with the federal government. He indicated that

whilst the current position was very satisfactory, experience to date suggested that the strategy for generating supplementary income over the years 2013-2014 through subscriptions appears unrealistic and a different approach is required. As a basis for discussion he provided 'baseline estimates' to show the implications of failing to generate substantial supplementary revenues, and proposed that consideration be given to seeking a 'top slice' of federal financial assistance grants as a means of ensuring long term sustainability.

Board members agreed that seeking subscriptions is unlikely to prove successful, and that a 'top slice' of financial assistance grants is one alternative that warrants further discussion. However, they also emphasised the need to explore a broader range of sustainability options, linked to review and re-validation of ACELG's fundamental purpose and how it can best serve the local government sector.

Resolved:

That a further report evaluating a range of long term budget options be presented to a special Board meeting to be held in late April/early May.

Item 11: Mid-Term Review

This item was deferred to the proposed special Board meeting.

Item 12: ACELG Awareness and Impact

This item was deferred to the proposed special Board meeting.

Item 13: Other Business

Stephanie Foster indicated that she would be seeking ACELG's assistance to establish a performance monitoring framework around the Inter-government Agreement on Local Government. This work follows a request from jurisdictions at last year's local government ministerial forum. There may be scope to build on ACELG's work on the National Assessment Framework for asset and financial management and minimum data sets.

Item 14: Meetings for 2012

Resolved:

- **That the next regular Board meeting be held on Friday 6 July**
- **That further meetings be held in conjunction with the second block of the Excellence in Leadership program (provisionally Friday 14 September in Canberra), and in early December**
- **That the secretariat explore options to hold meetings in Perth and Brisbane.**