



# NATIONAL Growth Areas ALLIANCE

## Annual Meeting of Member Councils

### MINUTES

<b>Date:</b>	Tuesday 8 December, 2020
<b>Time:</b>	12:00pm-1.30pm
<b>Place:</b>	Zoom

**Attendance:** Chris Shannon (Blacktown City Council), Peter McKenna (Camden Council), Cr Collin Ross (Cardinia Shire Council), Noelene Duff, James Collins, Jess Monahan, Claire Polatidis, Kathryn Seirlis (City of Casey), Rachel Pleasant, Daniel Arndt (City of Cockburn), Mayor Glenn Docherty, Sam Green, Phil Harrison (City of Playford), Michael Foley, Daniel Newman (City of Swan), Mayor Tracey Roberts, Daniel Simms, Janet Takarangi (City of Wanneroo), Lydia Wilson, Craig Lloyd, Denise Turner (City of Whittlesea), Roslyn Wai (City of Hume), Mayor Wendy Waller, Cr Charishma Kaliyanda, Eddie Jackson (City of Liverpool), Cr Sophie Ramsey, Kel Tori, Pauline Hobbs (City of Melton), Rebecca Sirianni, Ben Micallef (Mitchell Shire Council), Mayor Ann Ferguson, Greg Sarre (Mount Barker District Council), Nathan Burbridge (Penrith City Council), Cr Matt Deeth, Ben Taylor, Stephen Gardiner, (Wollondilly Shire Council), Cr Peter Maynard, Natalie Walker, Claire Bickerstaff (Wyndham City Council), Helen Wells (NGAA),

Item	
1	<b>Welcome and introduction and apologies</b> Chair declared the meeting open at 12:03pm Apologies noted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mayor Glenn Docherty, City of Playford</li><li>• Cr Theresa Fedeli, Mayor of Camden Council</li><li>• Ron Moore, CEO Camden Council</li><li>• Maria Cooke, City of Kwinana</li><li>• Mary Agostino, Mitchell Shire Council</li></ul>
2	<b>Strategic Advisory Committees Reports</b> Report tabled Cr Deeth acknowledged the issues for the year and thanked everyone for their efforts to stay connected in this environment.
	<b>Motion:</b> Accept the Annual Report as tabled at the AGM (available on NGAA website) <b>Moved:</b> Mayor Tracey Roberts <b>Seconded:</b> Mayor Ann Ferguson <i>Carried</i>
	<b>(i) Advocacy to Federal Government – Cr Deeth</b>

- While the Government’s attention to Cities policy was diverted last financial year by natural disasters and the pandemic, the NGAA maintained our status as a respected voice informing policy development and funding decisions for growth areas.
- With the immediate past Chair of NGAA, Mayor Glenn Docherty of the City of Playford, we held 22 meetings with Ministers, Shadow Ministers, Senators, growth area MPs, cross-benchers and ministerial advisors, along with regular correspondence to parliamentarians and departments.
- In December we hosted a Parliamentary Friends for Better Cities event in Parliament House, taking our place alongside some of the most powerful peak bodies in Australia to present the issues facing growth areas.
- We were invited to contribute the national growth areas perspective to the Infrastructure Australia Priority List and Audit 2020, the COAG briefing on population planning, and the Melbourne City Deals roundtable.
- NGAA made four major submissions including on the Federal Budget and an Economic Recovery Proposal after COVID-19.
- The issue of population policy was advanced after last year’s release of Planning for Australia’s Future Population, with the establishment of the Centre for Population in Federal Treasury in October. NGAA had several discussions with population advisors to the Minister for Population, Cities and Urban Infrastructure, and met with the Centre for Population Director in June.

**(ii) NGAA Research Outcomes – Cr Kaliyanda**

- Last financial year, our newly established Research and Practice Reference Group developed a Roadmap, based on the NGAA Research Strategy, to guide future research activities.
- Thank you to the six members of the “RAP” Group for your contribution:
  - Maria Cooke, City of Kwinana, Steve Marmion, City of Wanneroo, Caralene Moloney, City of Whittlesea, Robin Visser, Wyndham City Council, Dr Anne Hurni, Penrith City Council, Greg Sarre, Mount Barker District Council
- In July 2019 we held the inaugural Research Symposium – Research and Practice from Australia’s Fast Growing Outer Suburbs at Wyndham City Council, taking growth areas research and practice from our members to a wider audience. The symposium was well attended, and it brought together the leading thinking on building liveable and resilient communities, innovative planning, financing and governance which we published in a report.
- In April 2020 the NGAA responded to the impact of the pandemic on our communities and commissioned original research into the lived experience of working from home in growth areas during lockdowns. The widely publicised report was released in August, presented to key Ministers and Shadow Ministers and has been widely referenced in Infrastructure Australia’s 2021 Plan.

**(iii) Governance Report – Mayor Roberts**

- The last financial year was a significant one for NGAA governance. We completed multiple important governance changes for our Alliance which had begun in the previous year.
- These include:
  - Establishing the Strategic Advisory Committee
  - Transitioning from the former Executive Committee to the full Committee of Management with a CEO/GM representative from each state.
- The new structure has made a significant positive difference to NGAA’s impact and the engagement of members and stakeholders and we commend the Executive Officer for her commitment to carrying out the complex changes.
- The Strategic Advisory Committee represented our Alliance at the Parliamentary Friends for Better Cities event in Parliament House in December 2019 and met virtually in February and June 2020.

- Our deliberations included providing advice and approval of the 2021-24 NGAA Strategic Plan which included our expanded membership criteria and fee structure. We also discussed and approved our Alliance's Federal Budget Submission.
- The Committee of Management plays a vital role in the day to day work of our Alliance and provides guidance to our Executive Officer. Together, they produce the draft plan, strategies and submissions that we in the Strategic Advisory Committee approve.
- The transition of our former Executive Committee into a restructured Committee of Management involved some changes to membership.
- I'd like to thank these people for the expertise, commitment and many hours of work they contributed to the Executive Committee and their leadership in guiding the new Committee:
  - Nathan Burbridge, Penrith City Council, Sean McManus, Melton City Council, Phil Harrison, City of Playford, Steve Marmion, City of Wanneroo

**Member and Stakeholder Engagement – Bronwen Clark**

- Our work on policy issues this financial year was greatly enhanced by Member input, for example, in workshops on our research priorities and on the next Strategic Plan; and on our post-COVID-19 Economic Stimulus Proposal.
- This financial year we have engaged with our Members in different ways.
  - We established two new networks for growth area professionals – the Advocacy Network and the Planners Network.
  - More online events and consultations took the place of our planned 'in person' events in 2020.
- We also attracted event and Award sponsorship arrangements with groups such as Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute and ID, the population experts.
- A highlight was NGAA's role in hosting the Parliamentary Friends of Better Cities event in Parliament House in December 2019.

**The Hon. Alan Tudge MP, Minister for Population, Cities and Urban Infrastructure**

Cr Deeth welcomed the Minister to the AGM.

Minister Tudge:

- Focus on the Population Statement which was released last week – first of its kind in Australia and most comprehensive look at what is expected and what is happening now and in next 10 years.
- Impact of COVID 19 - we have gone from positions of fast growth nationally to having the slowest growth since WW1, 0.2% forecast, next year 0.4%
- Border closures have impacted population growth
- On a positive note, this allows communities to catch up
- Government has doubled down on infrastructure while population has slowed
- \$1.5B for Local Government roads

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**Questions:**

Cr Deeth – you mentioned the three P's, we have issues around population, what strategies are you working on to address the other P's?

Minister – we are not thinking that we need to make up for migration, we are looking at other means to encourage participation – regional areas, wage subsidy (under 35), industrial relation changes – helps with jobs growth. Average age of an Australian – we need a large working age population to support the economy – COVID has pushed up the projected average age.

Cr Peter Maynard – as our communities recover from COVID, it is important that all levels of Government work together – update us on how policy and process is evolving – when will Government commit resources to get Melbourne growth areas going?

	<p>Minister – City deals need to be based on the overall objective we are trying to achieve – it is important that city deals have a definite purpose and that all three levels of Government work together to achieve this objective.</p> <p>Stephen Gardner – With a push from state governments to streamline planning in response to COVID this year to help stimulate the economy (which is working well in some respects) here in NSW an independent report delivered to the NSW Planning Minister last week is calling for a user pays system (i.e. all rate payers) rather than developer pays, I am interested in hearing your thoughts on what role the Federal Government can play, on how we can plan better places and communities and build upon the great traction we have started.</p> <p>Minister – Our ambition to speed up process for these assessments – halve the time without diminishing the standards, facilitate sharing best practice across country, Productivity commission “Shifting the dial” Report – streamlined mechanism to deal with agencies.</p>
4	<p><b>Committee of Management report</b></p> <p>Questions from Members: Nil questions</p> <p><b>Resolution to Accept the NGAA 2019-20 Annual Report</b> <b>Moved</b> Charishma Kaliyanda <b>Seconded</b> Ann Ferguson <b>Carried</b></p>
5	<p><b>Looking forward – 2021 Priorities</b></p> <p>2021 is shaping up to be a pivotal year for our Members.</p> <p>The ongoing economic stimulus in response to natural disasters and the pandemic and the impact of short-term changes to population growth will combine with a Federal Government and Opposition who are already moving into election mode. Our priorities will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing the profile of growth area issues in Federal and State parliament and with the bureaucracy, with clear advocacy asks based on our policy platform.</li> <li>• It is worth noting here that the Federal Budget handed down on 7 October contained many initiatives that are very closely aligned with NGAA’s advocacy – which shows we are being listened to and we are influencing decisions at the highest level.</li> <li>• Another priority is expanding our membership and reach, by acknowledging the important role of Councils just beyond the metropolitan boundaries who are also experiencing the impact of rapid population growth.</li> <li>• We will also continue connecting our member councils and learning from each other through our professional networks and events, in particular our Symposium in Liverpool and our Congress in Wyndham.</li> <li>• Our Research Plan for 2021 will be developed with the input of members and our Research and Practice Reference Group. Where there are gaps in our evidence base, we will commission research to fill it, and where there is an existing evidence base within our Member Councils, we will collate it into policy briefs.</li> </ul> <p><b>2021 Policy Platform</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At its October 2020 meeting, the Strategic Advisory Committee endorsed the 2021 Policy Platform, which was reviewed, to take into account the Federal Budget commitments, policy changes and recent research findings.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The events of 2020 mean a temporary pause in the rapid and sustained population growth that has shaped our communities over the past generation.</li> <li>• There has been a dramatic increase in vulnerable communities brought on by natural disaster, pandemic and recession – those facing health and mental health problems, unemployment, small business failure, mortgage and rental stress to name but a few challenges.</li> <li>• NGAA has set out a refined set of priorities that first focus on council, community and business needs and then set out a plan for growth areas to lead Australia’s longer-term economic recovery.</li> </ul> <p><b>Next Federal Election – Cr Maynard</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members will know that NGAA has delivered two very successful election advocacy campaigns in 2019 and 2016.</li> <li>• During those elections we ran grassroots campaigns at the local level across Australia, as well as secured widespread media coverage and engagement with Ministers, Shadow Ministers, cross benchers and local MPs from growth areas nationally.</li> <li>• The Catch Up with the Outer Suburbs campaign saw the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition referencing our campaign material – the message really got through.</li> <li>• We saw major commitments from the Coalition in terms of City Deals, and Urban Congestion</li> <li>• The Opposition’s Cities Policy had an unprecedented focus on outer urban areas which had been directly impacted by our advocacy.</li> <li>• For a small organisation with limited resources – NGAA definitely punches above its weight!</li> <li>• The next Federal Election will take place sometime between August 2021 and May 2022.</li> <li>• Our communities and our Councils are very different today than they were in 2019 given the impact of bushfires and the pandemic.</li> <li>• As such, we are planning for our next election advocacy campaign to also be different.</li> <li>• Given the challenges our communities are facing, it would not be appropriate to expect widespread engagement at the local level.</li> <li>• Instead, we will be using the power of you – our Members – and our political influence to campaign for major commitments to improve planning and delivery of infrastructure and services in growth areas.</li> <li>• In coming months, we will be calling for your input to help shape our next campaign – from identifying your highest priority projects, attending our events, engaging with your local MPs and contributing to our small resource base.</li> </ul> <p>Question and Answer session on 2021 priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Matthew acknowledged the Committee of Management</li> <li>• Rachel thanked Bronwen and the strategic range of people involved in the Committee</li> <li>• Bronwen thanked everyone, great to see Minister Tudge attend and provide response</li> <li>• Mayor Tracey Roberts thanked Bronwen and Helen for all their efforts</li> </ul>
11	<p><b>Committee of Management report</b></p> <p>Thanks to everyone for joining us Meeting closed at 1.25pm</p>