

COUNCIL MOTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE 2026 LGAQ ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN CAIRNS 19-21 OCTOBER 2026

ED&A | 58/6/1 | #7885955

RECOMMENDATION:**That Council:**

- 1. Endorses motions 1 and 2 as outlined in this report for submission to LGAQ and consideration at the 2026 LGAQ Annual Conference;**
- 2. Appoints [COUNCILLOR A] and [COUNCILLOR B] as Cairns Regional Council's delegates for the 2026 LGAQ Annual Conference; and**
- 3. Delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009* to make amendments, if required, to the motions.**

INTERESTED PARTIES:

- Local Government Association of Queensland
- Queensland Government
- Australian Government

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) is calling for motions for the 2026 Annual Conference to be held 19-21 October 2026 in Cairns. All proposed motions require Council endorsement prior to submission to LGAQ and Council is also required to endorse the appointment of two Councillors to attend the annual conference as delegates.

At the LGAQ conference, delegates will consider and vote on advocacy motions put forward by the 77 member councils. Motions passed at the annual conference then inform and underpin the LGAQ advocacy agenda.

Council Officers recommend Council submit the following two motions to LGAQ for consideration:

Motion 1: Regional Plan Infrastructure Delivery Fund

That the LGAQ calls on the Queensland Government to establish a direct funding nexus between Queensland's statutory regional plans and State infrastructure investment programs, ensuring that infrastructure priorities identified within statutory regional plans are supported by dedicated and time-bound funding commitments. Further, that the

Queensland Government develop a Regional Plan Infrastructure Delivery Fund to support local governments in delivering place-based infrastructure essential to achieving the economic, liveability and growth outcomes identified within statutory regional plans, particularly where infrastructure demands and maintenance obligations are disproportionate to the local government revenue base.

Motion 2: Strengthening Local Government input in Liquor Licensing decisions

That the LGAQ calls on the Queensland Government to amend the Liquor Act 1992 and associated regulations to widen the range of matters local governments may provide input on in liquor licensing decisions, strengthen the weight given to that input by the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation when making licensing decisions, and improve the transparency and accountability of the decision-making process. In particular, the decision-making process should clearly demonstrate and provide written response to the local governments on how their feedback has been considered and whether and how that feedback influenced the final decision. Matters where local governments should be able to provide input if they choose to include:

- Proximity to sensitive receptors including residential areas*
- Existing land use rights or development approvals for the premises*
- Security and patron management*
- Number of complaints about this venue or this type of venue*
- Proposed patron capacity and trading hours*
- High risk areas in consideration of anti-social behaviours*
- History of the applicant's ability to manage and operate a licenced venue*
- Concentration of liquor outlets already within the locality*

A third motion was considered, however is not recommended to proceed for the reasons outlined in the Comment section of this report.

Motion 3: Behavioural standards applying to elected members

That the LGAQ calls on the State Government to review the adequacy of behavioural standards and workplace conduct applying to elected members to ensure local governments have practical and enforceable mechanisms to uphold respectful conduct and professional standards amongst elected members in line with the relevant workplace legislation that applies to all Queensland public servants.

This report seeks endorsement of the two recommended motions and the nomination of two Councillors to attend the conference as Council's delegates.

BACKGROUND:

The 2026 LGAQ Annual Conference will be held 19-21 October in Cairns. The event brings together councils from all parts of the state for professional development and networking, and to debate issues of importance to their communities.

Each year the LGAQ calls for motions to be submitted by its 77 member councils for inclusion on the conference agenda for consideration and voting by delegates. Motions

require Council endorsement prior to submission and motions passed at the annual conference inform the LGAQ advocacy agenda.

Council motions for the LGAQ Conference are required to be lodged with the LGAQ by 27 July 2026 through the LGAQ online portal system.

In considering issues to propose, councils are asked to nominate matters where LGAQ is best placed to prosecute/advocate the case for reasons that include:

- matters that significantly impact Council's operations or our community
- matters that are likely to be of relevance to councils across the State
- matters where State and/or Federal Government investment or policy change is required to achieve the desired outcome
- matters where the issue and proposed solution can be clearly articulated.

Council Officers implemented a process to identify potential motions to be considered for submission to LGAQ. As part of this process, both Councillors and Council Officers were invited to put forward potential motions for consideration. This Council report summarises the motions put forward and the associated recommendations of Council Officers following their review of the same.

This report also outlines the voting process that applies at the annual LGAQ conference and recommends that Council formally appoint two Councillors as delegates in accordance with that process.

COMMENT:

Motions put forward for consideration and associated recommendations

A total of four motions were received.

Motion 1: Regional Plan Infrastructure Delivery Fund

Submitted by: Mayor Amy Eden

That the LGAQ calls on the Queensland Government to establish a direct funding nexus between Queensland's statutory regional plans and State infrastructure investment programs, ensuring that infrastructure priorities identified within statutory regional plans are supported by dedicated and time-bound funding commitments. Further, that the Queensland Government develop a Regional Plan Infrastructure Delivery Fund to support local governments in delivering place-based infrastructure essential to achieving the economic, liveability and growth outcomes identified within statutory regional plans, particularly where infrastructure demands and maintenance obligations are disproportionate to the local government revenue base.

Rationale: Officers recommend Motion 1 as it seeks to address the current gap between Queensland's statutory regional planning framework and State infrastructure investment. While regional plans identify infrastructure priorities to support growth, liveability, tourism and economic development, there is no dedicated funding mechanism to support

delivery. Establishing a Regional Plan Infrastructure Delivery Fund would provide a clearer pathway for progressing these priorities, particularly for regional councils with limited revenue bases. The motion is recommended for Council's approval, noting that regional plans are high-level documents and funding allocation to specific projects may require further consideration.

Officer recommendation: Recommended for submission to the LGAQ

Motion 2A: Strengthening Local Government input into Liquor Licensing decisions
Submitted by: Cr Cathy Zeiger

That the LGAQ calls on the Queensland Government to amend the liquor licensing framework to strengthen the role of local governments in liquor licensing decisions by:

- Requiring the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation (OLGR) to give greater weight to formal local government submissions and planning considerations when assessing liquor licence applications, including those for detached bottle shops, and variations*
- Providing clear legislative recognition of local government planning schemes, community safety concerns and local amenity impacts within licensing assessments*
- Requiring OLGR to provide transparent written reasons where local government objections or recommendations are not supported in final decisions.*

Motion 2B: Place-based liquor licensing framework
Submitted by: Mayor Amy Eden

That the LGAQ calls on the Queensland Government to review the detached bottle shop provisions within the Liquor Act 1992 and associated regulations to ensure Queensland's liquor licensing framework appropriately reflects differing settlement patterns, urban forms and community contexts across the state.

Further, that consideration be given to the introduction of place-based assessment categories that better account for cumulative outlet concentration impacts within differing local government environments, including linear coastal cities, regional centres, rural and remote communities, tourism-intensive regions and metropolitan areas.

Motion 2A & 2B combined

The two motions received in relation to liquor licensing both sought to strengthen the input local government has in the liquor licensing decision-making process. While the motions approached the issue from different perspectives, one focusing on greater weight being given to local government submissions and planning considerations, and the other seeking a more place-based approach to detached bottle shop assessments, they shared a common objective of ensuring local context, community safety, amenity impacts and planning outcomes are better reflected in State licensing decisions.

Following review by Planning, Growth and Sustainability, it was recommended that the two motions should be consolidated into a single motion to avoid duplication and present a clearer, more comprehensive advocacy position. The combined motion also reflects

Council's recently updated General Policy – Liquor Licensing, Gaming Machine Licensing and Adult Entertainment Permits.

Proposed motion 2: (motion 2A & 2B consolidated) Strengthening Local Government input in Liquor Licensing decisions

That the LGAQ calls on the Queensland Government to amend the Liquor Act 1992 and associated regulations to widen the range of matters local governments may provide input on in liquor licensing decisions, strengthen the weight given to that input by the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation when making licensing decisions, and improve the transparency and accountability of the decision-making process. In particular, the decision-making process should clearly demonstrate and provide written response to the local governments on how their feedback has been considered and whether and how that feedback influenced the final decision. Matters where local governments should be able to provide input if they choose to include:

- *Proximity to sensitive receptors including residential areas*
- *Existing land use rights or development approvals for the premises*
- *Security and patron management*
- *Number of complaints about this venue or this type of venue*
- *Proposed patron capacity and trading hours*
- *High risk areas in consideration of anti-social behaviours*
- *History of the applicant's ability to manage and operate a licenced venue*
- *Concentration of liquor outlets already within the locality*

Rationale: The motion seeks to strengthen the input local government has in liquor licensing decisions and ensure local planning, amenity, community safety and place-based impacts are given appropriate consideration by the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation. Councils are well placed to understand local conditions, including proximity to sensitive uses, land use impacts, complaints, trading hours, patron management and areas experiencing anti-social behaviour. The motion supports a more transparent and accountable decision-making process by requiring clearer consideration of council feedback and written advice on how that feedback has influenced licensing outcomes, while maintaining the State Government's role as the liquor licensing authority.

Officer recommendation: Recommended for submission to the LGAQ

Motion 3: Behavioural standards applying to elected members
Submitted by: Mayor Amy Eden

A proposed motion was submitted by Mayor Eden on this matter and discussed at a Council Workshop on 1 July 2026. Following that workshop, on 8 July 2026, Mayor Eden submitted a revised motion for consideration (as set out below). This revised motion is largely consistent with the original motion submitted.

That the LGAQ calls on the State Government to review the adequacy of behavioural standards and workplace conduct applying to elected members to ensure local governments have practical and enforceable mechanisms to uphold respectful conduct

and professional standards amongst elected members in line with the relevant workplace legislation that applies to all Queensland public servants.

Rationale: Officers acknowledge the intent of the motion and the importance of ensuring elected members uphold respectful conduct and professional standards. However, as behavioural standards for councillors are already addressed through the existing Code of Conduct and the councillor conduct framework has recently been reviewed and amended, officers consider it appropriate to allow the recent reforms and current review processes to progress before considering whether further legislative change is needed or should be advocated for. It is also important to note that Councillors are elected officials and not employees which significantly alters the industrial environment in which they operate.

Council previously made a submission to the Empowering Local Government Bill that, amongst other changes, removed behavioural conduct breaches from the auspices of the OIA while expanding the definition of misconduct to include harassment and bullying. These changes have only taken effect on 1 July 2026.

Additionally, the broader operation and effectiveness of the OIA and councillor conduct framework is currently the subject of a Parliamentary Inquiry. In this context, officers consider it would be premature to seek a further review before the recent legislative changes have been implemented and the outcomes of the Parliamentary Inquiry are known. It is recommended that Council monitor the implementation of the amended framework and consider its position in response to these changes (including what, if any, further advocacy for legislative change may be required) once the Inquiry has reported and the impacts of the reforms can be assessed.

Officer recommendation: ***Not recommended*** for submission to the LGAQ

The final conference agenda is expected to be released by LGAQ in late September. In addition to detailing plenary sessions and conference events, the agenda will contain a consolidated list of all the motions proposed by councils through the submission process. In consolidating this list of motions, LGAQ may seek to combine similar motions proposed by different councils into a single motion to avoid/minimise duplication and/or make other refinements. This may result in some amendment to the wording of motions originally submitted. LGAQ liaises with councils impacted in this regard and the delegation limb of the recommended resolution provides Council's Chief Executive Officer with authority to make such amendments where considered appropriate.

Conference voting process and Council delegates

As LGAQ Annual Conference delegates are required to vote on proposed advocacy motions on Council's behalf, under Council's Expense Reimbursement and Support for Elected members policy, authorisation to attend the Conference and act as Council's delegate is a decision of the full Council.

Cairns Regional Council has six votes at the LGAQ annual conference and is eligible to send two delegates to participate in the voting. However, additional Councillors are able to attend the conference as observers. The recommended resolution contained in this report includes a limb to facilitate the appointment of two Councillors to attend the LGAQ annual conference and vote on behalf of Council on motions.

OPTIONS:

Option 1 (Recommended):

That Council:

1. Endorses motions 1 and 2 as outlined in this report for submission to LGAQ and consideration at the 2026 LGAQ Annual Conference;
2. Appoints [COUNCILLOR A] and [COUNCILLOR B] as Cairns Regional Council's delegates for the 2026 LGAQ Annual Conference; and
3. Delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009* to make amendments, if required, to the motions.

Option 2:

That Council:

1. Endorses motions 1, 2 and 3 as outlined in the report for submission to LGAQ and consideration at the 2026 LGAQ Annual Conference;
2. Appoints [COUNCILLOR A] and [COUNCILLOR B] as Cairns Regional Council's delegates for the 2026 LGAQ Annual Conference; and
3. Delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009* to make amendments, if required, to the motions.

Option 3:

That Council **does not** endorse some or all of the motions attached to this report and/or chooses to make changes to some or all of the motions.

CONSIDERATIONS:

Council Finance and the Local Economy:

There is adequate budget provision in the 2026/2027 budget for conference attendance by Council delegates.

Corporate and Operational Plans:

Council's activities relating to the formulation and submission of LGAQ motions are consistent with Council's 2025-2030 Corporate Plan Focus 5 – Focused Council: *Delivering for community through strong governance and informed decision making.*

Statutory:

Council representation at the LGAQ conference is in accordance with the Councillors responsibilities as defined within the *Local Government Act 2009*.

Policy:

Councillor representation at this conference is in accordance with Council's Expense Reimbursement and Support for Elected Members general policy.

CONSULTATION:

Representatives of LGAQ were consulted in the development of the proposed motions outlined in this report.

ATTACHMENTS:



Nick Masasso
Director - Economic Development and Advocacy