

Advocacy Report 2021-22

August 2022

Contents

Introduction	3
Advocacy Priorities.....	4
2022 Federal Election Advocacy Action Plan.....	6
Regional Collaboration	7
Council of Mayors (SEQ)	7
SEQ City Deal.....	8
Strategic Grant Management	8
Grant Business Improvement Process.....	9
City of Choice.....	10

Introduction

As Council's Advocacy Strategy 2021-2024 makes clear, the positive outcomes achieved as a result of Council's advocacy efforts are the result of much more than the work of the Advocacy Program. It includes:

- The **Mayor and Councillors**, who are a critical link between Council and the community. They represent their constituents and advocate on their behalf. Collectively, they determine Council's advocacy priorities, develop relationships and networks (including with political stakeholders) and are spokespeople on behalf of the community.
- The **Executive Leadership Team**, who provides strategic advice on advocacy priorities and actions and are champions of Council's advocacy priorities across the organisation and to their networks.
- **Managers, program leaders and council officers**, who are subject matter experts. They work with the Advocacy Program to develop action plans for individual advocacy priorities relevant to their areas of expertise and responsibility. Program teams work with the community to understand their needs and aspirations and build partnerships with other organisations in support of Council's advocacy efforts.

For its part, the **Advocacy Program** leads and coordinates Council's advocacy efforts. The Advocacy Program works with internal stakeholders – elected members, ELT and subject matter experts – to identify advocacy priorities and provides strategic and tactical advocacy advice on achieving Council's advocacy priorities. The Advocacy Program is also responsible for developing, implementing and reporting against Council's advocacy priorities.

In keeping with the role identified in the Advocacy Strategy, the Advocacy Program has produced this report in order to provide an update of the status of Council's advocacy priorities, as well as other high profile Council advocacy initiatives, including:

- the Federal Election Advocacy Action Plan;
- regional collaboration, including the review of the Council of Mayors (SEQ) and the signing of the SEQ City Deal;
- strategic grant management; and
- the City of Choice initiative.

The move of the Advocacy Program to Office of the CEO in July 2022 provides an opportunity to build on the achievements of 2020-21 by more clearly defining the services that the Advocacy Program can provide in support of Council's overall advocacy efforts. The Advocacy Program will also work with internal stakeholders to help foster consistency and coherence in Council's overall advocacy narrative so that it is easy for the community, political leaders, the media and other stakeholders to understand and follow.

To this end, forward planning of Council's advocacy agenda, as well as further developing Council's advocacy platforms to support Council's advocacy, will be priorities for 2022-23.

Advocacy Priorities

Council's Advocacy Strategy 2021-2024 identifies 9 priorities. These priorities are listed below, along with their current status.

1. Salisbury to Beaudesert Rail: Currently undergoing a business case assessment funded 50:50 by the Queensland and Federal governments (\$20 million in total). The business case was started in 2020 and is expected to be released in late 2022. The business case will consider planning for a proposed passenger rail link, taking into consideration future demand for freight and passenger movements including the Inland Rail project.
2. Inland Rail: The Queensland Government is currently determining an approvals pathway for the Kagaru to Acacia Ridge and Bromelton project (K2ARB), with no clear timeline as to when this will be finalised. Council's position is that Acacia Ridge cannot be regarded as a viable terminus and opposes the construction of the Kagaru to Acacia Ridge component of K2ARB as it is currently planned¹. The new Federal Government has indicated that it will be reviewing the Inland Rail project, and this will be an opportunity for advocating that stakeholders are consulted to achieve an open, transparent and rigorous investigation of alternatives to the K2ARB route.
3. Southern Gateway Motorway: the SEQ City Deal includes \$1 million to develop a business case for the Southern Gateway Corridor (Council's contribution to this business case is \$200,000). The details of this business case are being negotiated by the Economic Development & Strategy (ED&S).
4. coLab Growth Hub: The main advocacy priority is to secure ongoing funding for the coLab, with the SEQ City Deal providing a potential avenue for securing this funding. A recent success has been the launch of the US Market Access Program, which is an initiative to assist late-stage scaling businesses build capability and reduce costs to entering the US market. The Advocacy Program also drafted a submission to the State Government 'Innovation Places' review, advocating a more strategic approach to developing the state's innovation ecosystem, including investment in 'soft infrastructure' such as capability development and the development of innovation networks.
5. Digital connectivity: A long-term works program to improve digital infrastructure and connectivity across the City of Logan is underway after the Queensland Government approved a business case developed by Logan City Council and committed \$2.5 million towards its rollout. The works program will include new

¹ Resolution Number: 299/2021 (8 December 2021)

mobile towers to improve coverage, upgrading satellite services to enhance the NBN network, and installing 80km of fibre cabling throughout the city to replace the prevalent use of copper. Advocacy efforts will continue for Queensland and Federal government funding for a Multi-Function Edge Data Centre (MFEDC). The Advocacy Program also drafted a submission to the Regional Telecommunications Review in support of a more strategic approach to Federal Government investment in telecommunications infrastructure, including a partnership approach between Federal, State, and local governments.

6. Logan Central Youth Centre: Concept design is currently being finalised for the delivery of an integrated community and youth centre in Wilbur Street, Logan Central. Council allocated \$2 million of SEQ Community Stimulus Program funding to the project, while \$840,000 in funding was committed by the Australian Labor Party (ALP) as part of the 2022 Federal election.
7. Park Ridge Leisure Centre: The project will provide the growing Park Ridge and surrounding communities with a suitable community space, an aquatic centre and indoor sports facility. The feasibility study is complete with an options analysis currently being undertaken to determine any site constraints and alternatives. Project timeframes have been delayed slightly due to funding. Funding for this project was included as a priority in the Federal Election, as well as in Council's 2022-2023 State and Federal budget submissions.
8. Rosia Park Multi-Sport and Recreational Precinct: This project involves the delivery of a new metropolitan sport and recreation park to respond to emerging community needs. The project is awaiting the outcome of an assessment under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999. Council allocated \$9 million in funding under the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program (Phase 2) (LRCIP) to this project. The Advocacy Program has facilitated a request for an extension of time for the delivery of this project under the LRCIP and Council is awaiting a response to this request.
9. Waterford-Tamborine Road: This road is being upgraded in stages and funding has been allocated in the 2022-2023 Queensland State budget for the continuation of existing road and intersection improvement works as well as planning work for future projects. Further advocacy will be required to flood proof and completely upgrade the road to 4 lanes.

In addition to these priorities, the Advocacy Program also provided support and advice to branches on other issues. In particular, the Advocacy Program provided support to ED&S in drafting Council's submission to the Queensland Parliamentary inquiry into *The provision of primary, allied and private health care, aged care and NDIS care services and its impact on the Queensland public health system*. This submission will provide the foundation for further advocacy work with ED&S on improving access to public health and disability services in Logan.

2022 Federal Election Advocacy Action Plan

A major advocacy activity in the last half of 2021-22 was Council's 2022 Federal Election Advocacy Action Plan (AAP). Implemented using the slogan **Stand Up for Logan. This our Moment.**, the AAP called on local candidates, political parties and party leaders to commit to funding projects that would enhance the liveability of the City of Logan.

An Evaluation Report was prepared and presented to the City Governance Committee on 20 July 2022 and the findings and conclusions of this report were endorsed by Council². The Evaluation Report demonstrated that Council was successful in achieving its AAP objectives, with the partial exception of the objective of encouraging the community to talk about priority election themes and projects.

The purpose of the 2022 Federal Election AAP was not to influence which party is elected to government. Instead, its objective was both more modest and politically neutral: namely, to influence candidates and parties to commit funding to Council's priority projects. This objective was achieved with \$24,497,500 committed by the Australian Labor Party (ALP) to Council priority projects and \$2 million committed by the Liberal National Party (LNP).

Three objectives of the 2022 Federal Election AAP related to community education and awareness:

- Position Council as an organisation advocating for what matters to the community.
- Create awareness, educate, and encourage community members to use their vote to support candidates that commit to delivering on campaign priorities.
- Reinforce the perception that Council is doing great work for the community.

Data analysis demonstrates that these objectives were achieved:

- 3,940,579 views of advertisements by City of Logan residents and business owners
- 5,121 clicks through to educational materials on Council's website and social media pages
- 39 articles published across print, online and radio.

When benchmarked against Council's 2019 Federal Election 'Fair Share 4 Logan' campaign, these outcomes represent good value for money.

The final objective of the 2022 Federal Election AAP was to encourage the community to talk about local campaign issues. This objective was only partially achieved, with two ABC Radio talkback segments aired on internet connectivity, along with ABC Facebook coverage. The level of engagement was lower than expected due to a change in approach by Facebook that saw it reject all political and social advertising throughout the election period.

² Resolution Number: 69/2022 (27 July 2022)

Regional Collaboration

Collaboration with other local government bodies is one of the ways the Advocacy Program pursues Council's advocacy priorities. Key relationships include Council of Mayors (SEQ), the Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) and the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA).

Council representatives attended the annual general meeting of LGAQ in 2021-22 and the Advocacy Program provided administrative support for delegate attendance, including coordinating travel bookings and briefings on conference motions.

Council of Mayors (SEQ)

On 15 September 2021, as a result of ongoing concerns regarding the value of its membership of the Council of Mayors SEQ (CoMSEQ), Council decided to give 12 months' notice of its intention to resign from the organisation.

On the advice of the Advocacy Program, Council sought to resolve its concerns over the 12-month notice period by requesting that CoMSEQ fund an independent review of its operations. The following were key concerns that Council wanted this review to address:

1. Ensure CoMSEQ has a clear work program, including objectives, milestones and performance indicators for key projects and areas of work.
2. Improve the transparency of CoMSEQ's advocacy efforts and clarifying decision-making protocols.
3. Improve CoMSEQ engagement with members and increasing the involvement of councils' subject matter experts in identifying CoMSEQ advocacy objectives and participating in the oversight of CoMSEQ projects.

CoMSEQ commissioned KPMG to undertake this review and the report recommendations addressed most of the issues that were of concern to Council. The first point was addressed by recommendations relating to having a clear advocacy agenda centred on regional priorities and developing project plans with measurable milestones and KPIs.

The other two points were addressed indirectly by recommendations relating to reinvigorating the CoMSEQ Working Groups, formalising increased engagement with councillors and council executives, and streamlining communication and materials, including an increased focus on decision making activities.

Based on the outcome of this review, the successful signing of the SEQ City Deal, as well as the value of CoMSEQ initiatives such as Resilient Rivers and the SEQ Waste Management Implementation Plan, Council withdrew its resignation in May 2022³.

³ Resolution Number: 45/2022 (25 May 2022)

SEQ City Deal

In March 2022, CoMSEQ has successfully concluded the SEQ City Deal with the Federal and Queensland governments. Overall, the deal provides considerable benefits to the City of Logan including:

- \$45 million towards transport infrastructure for the Meadowbrook Health Precinct (this is in addition to the relocation of the Loganlea train station).
- \$1 million to develop the business case for the Southern Gateway Corridor to open up employment land in Logan. This project is one of nine priorities in Council's Advocacy Strategy 2021-2024.
- \$32.46 million investment in community infrastructure (sport centres, pools, libraries and performing arts centres).

Additionally, the following regional projects could also provide benefits to Logan, depending on funding eligibility requirements:

- \$40 million over the next 5 years for the Resilient Rivers Initiative (including a contribution by local government of 25 per cent of the total amount).
- \$105 million towards improving the region's waste infrastructure, with Logan well positioned to secure funding from this program for a new Material Recovery Facility (MRF) as part of a sub-regional waste alliance with Redlands City Council and Ipswich City Council.
- \$40 million for local digital priority projects. Logan is well positioned to access funding from this program having already completed a business case on digital connectivity in the city.
- \$10 million for public art initiatives.
- \$20 million for green urban infrastructure to address urban heat and create more walkable neighbourhoods.

There are also three regional initiatives which SEQ councils will need to contribute to in order to quality of City Deal funding:

- \$2.1 million Regional Freight Movement Study (which would include the Southern Gateway Corridor, the Mt Lindesay Highway and M1)
- \$750,000 Smart Regional Digital Plan
- \$5 million fund for Planning for Regional Infrastructure (aimed at identifying infrastructure and land use planning needed to support projected population growth).

Strategic Grant Management

The Advocacy Program coordinates large competitive and allocative grant funding applications and reporting where multiple Council branches/directorates are involved. This requires extensive internal engagement by the Advocacy Program across Council business areas, as well as structured administrative processes to support Council decisions regarding individual grant applications. All external funding received by Council also entails strict reporting obligations to the State and Federal governments.

In support of this function, the Advocacy Program also liaises with State and Federal departments and provides advice to council officers on positioning Council grant applications to ensure that they meet grant criteria and timeframes. In 2021-2022, this included advice on the successful applications made by Council to the highly competitive Local Government Grants and Subsidies Program 2022-2024.

In 2021-22, the Advocacy Program provides strategic coordination and advice on the following programs:

- COVID Works for Queensland
- Unite and Recover Community Stimulus Package
- Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program (Phase 1, Phase 2 and Phase 3)
- South East Queensland Community Stimulus Package
- Local Government Grants and Subsidies Program 2022-2024.

In support of its strategic coordination function, the Advocacy Program maintained Council's Grants and Subsidies Register, a financial software system used across the organisation to track external funding and help ensure that Council meets its annual external audit obligations. The Advocacy Program also provides quarterly reporting to the Executive Leadership Team on the status of active grant-funded projects and submissions.

Grant Business Improvement Process

At its February Governance Committee meeting, Council requested that the CEO provide a report back to Council through the City Planning, Economic Development and Environment Committee on the Advocacy Program's management of government grant schemes requiring a decision of Council. The CEO delegated responsibility for oversight of this review to the Director - Innovation & City Transformation.

A report was presented and endorsed by Council in May⁴. In summary, the report found:

- The government grants process is not well documented, transparent and understood by the majority of the process participants.
- There is significant confusion in process roles and responsibilities across process participants.
- Because the Grants Officer role is highly specialised and the incumbent officer is highly experienced/skilled, there is a significant 'key person' risk associated with the role/position.
- Branch process participants were supportive of the Advocacy Program's centralised coordinating role in management of the government grant process as it was considered a non-routine or standard branch activity that was both a complex and time-consuming impost that adversely impacted business-as-usual branch commitments.

⁴ Resolution Number: 45/2022 (25 May 2022)

There report identified 18 business process improvement opportunities for improving efficiency and effectiveness benefits for the government grants process. In response, the Advocacy Program developed a proposed 'interim future state' (or "To be") government grants business process involving the initial implementation of 4 of the identified business process improvement opportunities. These initial improvements will include:

- Transparent and agreed criteria for determining when the Advocacy Program is to coordinate program applications/reporting for a particular grant program.
- Transparent and agreed criteria for determining when Council is the decision-maker on grant program submissions and agreement that the CEO decides when this process is to be used.
- Transparent and agreed standard business process including process performance or success metrics to be documented, stored centrally in ProMapp and then communicated to all potential process participants when Council is the decision-maker on a grant program application, with agreement that the CEO decides if the standard process must be altered in a particular instance.
- Development and implementation of a single email distribution list of positions that any grant opportunities should be communicated to as part of the standard business process.

More fundamental improvements to the grants management process hinge on improvements at the enterprise-level and relate to Council's prioritisation processes and program and project management capability. Improvements in this area will be the responsibility of the new Portfolio Management Office (PMO) and the Advocacy Program will work with the PMO on further grant process business improvement opportunities as the PMO's work program allows.

City of Choice

Council at its meeting in February 2021, agreed that 'jobs and job pathways' should be the focus of Phase 3 of the City of Choice initiative and that an internal steering group should be established to provide advice and direction to the Advocacy Program on progressing the project plan, with any material changes to this plan to be the subject of Council endorsement.

A meeting of the internal Steering Group was held on 1 March 2021 at which it was agreed that:

1. Advocacy Program to engage with relevant State and Federal Government departments to determine their level of interest in becoming a partner in a Memorandum of Understanding for the proposed City of Choice initiative. A letter will be drafted by the Advocacy team within 5 business days.
2. Advocacy Program to draft a report for submission to a future City Planning, Economic Development & Environment Committee to provide an update on the engagement with State and Federal Governments.

The Mayor wrote to the Prime Minister and Queensland Premier requesting that they nominate a representative each to participate in discussions on developing an MOU for Phase 3 of City of Choice, with a focus on jobs and jobs pathways. The response received from the Federal Government was non-committal in relation to participating in City of Choice, while no response was received from the Queensland Government.

Since Council made its decision in February 2021 to pursue a tripartite MOU on City of Choice, the SEQ City Deal has been signed between CoMSEQ, the Queensland and Federal governments. This agreement provides an avenue that did not previously exist for pursuing tripartite collaboration (including funding) on issues of mutual interest.

Based on the non-committal response of the State and Federal governments, and with the signing of the SEQ City Deal, in May 2022 Council accepted the recommendation of the Advocacy Program that the City of Choice initiative be discontinued⁵.

As an alternative to City of Choice, the Advocacy Program suggested that Council pursue an alternative approach for achieving transformational change in the city over a 15 to 20-year period. The Advocacy Program is working with ED&S to support the CEO in developing options for an approach based on the following parameters:

- measuring key liveability, economic and environmental attributes of the City of Logan, and
- identifying a portfolio of existing and new Council projects that will enable transformational improvements in these metrics over the next 10-15 years.

The CEO aims to present these options to Council in November 2022.

⁵ Resolution Number: 45/2022 (25 May 2022)