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ABN: 34 728 242 315

**Northern and Yorke Local
Government Association**

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Member Councils:

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Barunga West Council
Clare and Gilbert Valleys Council
Copper Coast Council
District Council of Mount
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The Barossa Council
The Flinders Ranges Council
Wakefield Regional Council
Yorke Peninsula Council

Mr Luke Gosling MP
Chair
Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport

Dear Luke Goslin

Subject: - Inquiry into local government sustainability

The Northern and Yorke Local Government Association (N&YLGA) have been undertaking research with regards matters relating to Regional South Australia Local Government Workforce issues.

There are a series of endorsed recommendations including support to explore potential collaborative partnerships between the regional Local Govt sector and potential state and federal funding to assist and support partnerships and related initiatives with those providing workforce support.

The research has been undertaken in partnership with Torrens University Australia and we have jointly released the Attracting, Developing and Retaining Regional Local Government Workforce Report [Research Report Legatus TUA LG Workforces 31 August 22](#)

Meeting current and future skill needs will be an ongoing challenge for the Local Govt sector and more significantly regional councils. Within the context of a tightening national labour market the regional Local Govt sector will find it difficult to compete against other industry sectors and urban based councils to attract and retain skilled labour.

The N&YLGA partnered with Torrens University to deliver a comprehensive Regional Local Govt Careers Toolkit (released in Feb 2023) to assist regional Local Govt to attract work-forces in Regional SA [Local Government Career Pathways Report](#)

It should be noted that South Australia with no major regional cities is difficult to compare to many other parts of regional Australia who have regional cities with significant population bases and regional universities. South Australia's largest city outside of Adelaide is Mount Gambier (26,000 people) which is 48th nationally in population numbers.

The research shows that regional councils in South Australia face several challenges. Many are the result of competing with Metro councils for talent. The challenges include matching salaries and amenities that are competitive, offering career paths, partnering with education and training providers to develop career and skill development programs, and providing flexible employment options for all including those with family responsibilities or for older workers.

There is also potential to tap into regional secondary school leaver cohorts early to promote career and employment pathways across a wide range of job families and job roles.

The toolkit includes practical advice and strategies on workforce attraction and retention, exploring options for shared services in terms of recruitment and professional services, mapping and actively promoting career pathways both into and within the regional local government sector.

Local Govt was one of the most important employers in remote and regional Australia. Rural and regional local councils provide people in those communities with the opportunity to engage in skilled service employment, yet the challenges of attracting, developing and retaining a skilled workforce are greater in regional and isolated rural areas.

The toolkit is a valuable resource for regional South Aust councils in developing strong and sustainable workforces which ultimately supports the state's economy. Regional South Aust as a whole contributes around \$25.9 billion to the state's economy with just under 30% of the state's population. The resilience of rural and regional communities depends heavily on the strength of their local council

The aim for this toolkit is to help local councils in regional areas with a roadmap to drive workforce attraction and retention and promote and create career pathways for their staff within the local government sector more broadly and work towards regional local government as a regional employer of choice.

The LGA of SA and LG Professionals SA are developing a Building Sector Capability currently that provides a level of continuity in terms of building on this project's resources and advancing these further.

Yours sincerely,



Simon Millcock
CEO