



PRESIDENTIAL FORUM 2023

CANDIDATE STATEMENTS

BACKGROUND

As per the Rules of the Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT), the President shall hold office for a two-year term. The current term is concluding in 2023 and as such, the Electoral Commissioner of Tasmania was requested to appoint a Returning Officer for the election.

Nominations for the role of President closed by 5:00pm on 19 April 2023.

As more than one nomination was received, a poll will be conducted by postal ballot. The ballot will be posted by registered mail to the Mayor of each Member within 10 working days of the close of nominations.

Each Member is entitled to one vote and the Mayor shall complete the ballot paper according to the policy or practice of his or her Council.

The ballot will close at 10.00am on 15 June and the result will be announced by the Tasmanian Electoral Commission.

The purpose of this Presidential Forum is to give candidates an opportunity to engage with members before ballots close.

Each candidate was asked to provide a statement within the following guidelines:

- No more than 900 characters.
- No more than three paragraphs.
- Statements may not include lists or dot points.

During the forum, candidates will be given an opportunity to make a five minute presentation and a further five minutes will be dedicated to answering questions from the audience.

BRENDAN BLOMELEY

City of Clarence



With the Review in full swing, our sector is at a crossroads with the next few years being critically important for the future of local government and the communities we serve. Now, more than ever before, it is essential our Association is professionally and capably led.

As Mayor of the second largest Council, with a mix of urban and rural communities, I have a sound understanding of the breadth of issues facing our diverse communities. Paired with 13 years' local government experience and having previously served on GMC (2019-2021), I am well versed in the issues we face as a sector.

Respected across the political spectrum, with extensive government and corporate experience and professional qualifications, I am well-skilled to deliver the visionary leadership our Association needs. For effective and professional leadership, please vote one - Brendan Blomeley, for LGAT President.

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MICHELLE DRACOULIS

Derwent Valley Council



I have seen extraordinary change and challenges for our state, and I pride myself on being a leader who understands the impact of this on our community and sector. Now is a time for results-based action that is driven by community need and sentiment. We must prioritise actions that will protect our people, our industries and our environment.

I believe the leadership I have modelled in my own electorate has brought us to an unprecedented level of respect and capacity, and I am proud to chair a council that is functional, forward-thinking and inclusive.

With the upcoming Local Government Review, LGAT needs a leader who is not afraid to have frank and fearless conversations. We need a leader who can work in respectful conjunction with all levels of government to represent our sector to deliver the best result for our communities. I have the compassion and courage to represent us in this way.

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LEIGH GRAY

Brighton Council



I was elected to Brighton Council 18 years ago: Mayor 2 years, Chair of Planning 14 years, TasWater representative 5 years. I have the sector experience to effectively represent all councils equally and fairly. I work hard, listen and want to make a difference for our local communities at this important time.

Since elected, my council has grown from 13000 to over 20000 people, from rural to an urban and regional hub. To be effective, the President must understand the different types of councils in Tasmania - the small, medium, large, the urban, rural and fringe. I understand the different characteristics and needs of our diverse range of councils and communities.

I do not have any party affiliations nor state or federal aspirations. My focus will be making our sector fit for purpose and the future. As past presidents have been, I will listen, be available and approachable.

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KELLY SPAULDING

Tasman Council



Our sector is facing extensive reform due to the outcome of the Local Government Review. I have recent experience of the proposed amalgamation of Tasman and Sorell councils and learnt a lot during the process of keeping communities and staff well informed. It is important that the whole municipality is engaged over a longer period to gain key insight before making decisions.

Elected in 2002, I've served as councillor, deputy mayor and mayor, while also serving on the GMC. As mayor, I spent a lot of time engaging with the media; an experience which will serve me well during Presidency. My background in various industries such as hospitality, agriculture and forestry give me a broad understanding of the importance of industry to differing municipalities and the economic role they play.

I believe I have the capacity and experience to best represent our sector during the next two years.

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BEC THOMAS

Glenorchy City Council



I'm running for President because I'm passionate about the local government sector and I care about its people. And I fundamentally believe that local government makes Tasmania a better place to live.

I am genuine, approachable and responsive. I truly listen and I'm always willing to consider differing views with an open mind. Bringing positive relationships all round, I'll work with others to advocate for reform that will make a positive difference for our communities. As a current GMC member, I'll hit the ground running and work with member councils and the LGAT team to build a sustainable, high performing sector.

I'm positive about the future of local government and I'm determined we get it right for you, member councils, and for the people we serve. My leadership will be steady but purposeful, and inclusive. Vote 1 Bec Thomas for LGAT President.

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MICK TUCKER

Break O'Day Council



I have been passionately advocating for local government during my nine years as Mayor and 12 years as councillor. I provide a fiercely independent voice in Tasmania, particularly for regional councils, and have shown commitment to the sector by being appointed Vice President of LGAT in 2021 and being a Board Director of ALGA.

Throughout my 12 years I have worked closely with many elected members from all corners of Tasmania. While I have developed a clear understanding of the challenges that regional and rural councils face, I will utilise my knowledge and experience to be a diverse voice for councils of any size.

I stand ready to take on the Presidency role and to continue advocating for the needs of our local communities. I feel strongly about being a politically unbiased representative so I can work collaboratively with changing governments to ensure that our voice is loud and strong.

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