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## Sector advocacy in the lead-up to the local government elections

Dear colleagues,

As we all know, local government is a critically important tier of government in achieving adequate housing supply to meet community needs. Local governments around the state also often work closely with our sector and other government partners in responding to homelessness. Highlighting the role and impact councils have in our sector has been important during the Queensland local government election campaign.

In the lead-up to this Saturday's local government elections in Queensland, Q Shelter has:

- Contacted candidates, including Mayoral candidates, in all 77 Queensland local government areas, and provided a statement of [Q Shelter's priority actions](#) for local governments in the next term.
- Hosted two well-attended online forums to provide candidates with an orientation of the housing and homelessness sector, and to outline the scope of roles that local governments can play in addressing housing needs and homelessness. [You can view the presentation delivered in the forums via this link.](#)
- Met directly with various candidates, including Mayoral candidates, to further outline how local governments can play a key role in addressing unmet housing needs and homelessness
- Engaged with media across the state to discuss and promote the critical role of local governments throughout the next term

- Developed an educational workshop to support frontline council staff to understand homelessness, its causes, and how to respond. This work is ongoing and has already been delivered in some local government areas.

## We have come a long way

Local governments around the state are working hard on housing and homelessness responses. The work varies by region and council, but actions include:

- Developing housing strategies
- Integrating housing and homelessness policies and action plans
- Adjusting planning schemes to reflect housing targets by region
- Delivering social programs such as Homeless Connect and community development responses
- Identifying infrastructure such as libraries as vital community hubs and safe spaces where people can participate in a range of activities, including accessing digital services.
- Elected representatives and council administration staff liaising with communities about population growth, housing needs, and future planning to meet local needs.

The state government's [Homes for Queenslanders plan](#) also advances several reforms that will help local governments play an pivotal role. It includes not just investment in social and affordable housing and funding to cover infrastructure costs, but deeper system reforms designed to help build homes faster.

## What matters now, and what you can do to help

While the election will be over by Saturday evening and results may take some time to be known, our sector's proactive engagement with local government can and must continue. We urge our members and stakeholders to:

- Encourage all elected candidates to make housing a top priority for their local government and council
- Help newly elected candidates at all levels to understand how they can contribute to housing and homelessness solutions
- Nurture your partnerships with local government to develop social and affordable housing solutions
- Continue collaboration through Service Integration initiatives that include and involve Public Space Liaison staff
- Contribute, where possible, to the development of local government housing and homelessness strategies and policies
- Continue to inform local government about community needs for housing and support services

- Raise the profile of community services responding to local housing needs and homelessness
- Help local governments in educating communities about future population needs for homes, including the need for housing density and diversity
- Amplify and celebrate successes in your community.

## How Q Shelter can help

We are here to assist with information and strategies to advance and promote housing and homelessness solutions that sit within the role and remit of local government. For your convenience and reference, we have included links in this email to the [presentation](#) and [priority statement](#) Q Shelter provided to local government candidates.

[You can contact Q Shelter at any time for input and advice.](#) We are more than happy to help members and stakeholders in structuring their advocacy plans and to engage with local government authorities, when required.

We can also offer training to council staff in your area on homelessness and housing needs and solutions. In some areas, Council staff are using other Q Shelter training resources and programs such as [Trauma Informed Practice Training](#) and our recently released video [Understanding Homelessness](#).

Congratulations to all of you for your continued efforts to deliver housing and support, and for amplifying the challenges and their solutions to leaders throughout your communities. We look forward to continuing to work with you to improve housing outcomes for all Queenslanders.

Yours sincerely  
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