

Greater Adelaide Regional Organisation of Councils

Strategic Plan 2019-2023

Chair's forward

I have pleasure in presenting the Greater Adelaide Regional Organisation of Councils (GAROC) Committee's Strategic Plan 2019-23 (*revised in May 2020*).

Metropolitan councils play an essential role in the long-term prosperity, sustainability and wellbeing of the Greater Adelaide community. GAROC is a strong, united voice for metropolitan councils and represents their shared interests for the benefit of the Greater Adelaide community.

As a committee of the LGA, GAROC will play a key role in regional advocacy, policy initiation and review, leadership, engagement and capacity building on behalf of the 19 member councils within the metropolitan region. We listen to and represent our members and make decisions openly and transparently.

We will work in close partnership with metropolitan councils, in addition to regional councils, State and Federal Governments and their departments, and other sector and industry bodies as the need arises.

We will also promote and facilitate information sharing, communication and collaboration between metropolitan councils.

GAROC has identified four strategic themes that will guide our work over the next four years. These are:

1. Economic Development
2. Design, Planning and Placemaking
3. Environmental Reform
4. Reform and Innovation

Each year GAROC will consult with metropolitan councils and adopt an Annual Business Plan that outlines the priority actions and outcomes that we will work with our members and strategic partners to progress to progress our strategic objectives.

I look forward to working with our members and key stakeholders on implementing this plan over the next four years.

Mayor Karen Redman

Chair

Greater Adelaide Regional Organisation of Councils

GAROC's Vision

For every South Australian to have the best local government experience

GAROC's Mission

To provide advocacy, policy initiation and review, leadership, engagement and capacity building in collaboration with the LGA for the benefit of metropolitan South Australian councils and their communities

GAROC will undertake the following important roles, which will drive its strategic objectives and underpin achievement of its vision and mission.

Role	GAROC will:
Regional Advocacy	Represent members' interests on issues that matter to all metropolitan councils
Policy Initiation and Review	Develop policy that is of strategic importance to all metropolitan councils. Review items of business put forward by member councils and advise on policy matters as requested by the LGA.
Leadership	Initiate actions and lead activities that provide benefit to all metropolitan councils. Develop and maintain relationships with state and federal governments.
Engagement and Capacity Building in the Region(s)	Engage with members within the GAROC Regional Group and keep them informed of the activities of GAROC Actively promote communication between members and between members and the LGA.

About the LGA

The Local Government Association of South Australia (LGA) is a peak membership body that provides leadership, support and services to member councils.

Membership of the LGA is voluntary, but all 68 of South Australia's councils are members. In 2019, the estimated value of LGA membership has been independently verified by UHY Haines Norton as being almost \$2.5 million per council.

The LGA is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of mayors and councillors, which provides oversight of the Association's corporate governance.

Two separate bodies – the Greater Adelaide Regional Organisation of Councils (GAROC) and the South Australian Regional Organisation of Councils (SAROC) – are established under the LGA's Constitution to review and develop policy positions for the sector and provide strategic advice to the LGA Board.

Member councils have the opportunity to provide input into LGA policies and advocacy through two general meetings every year.

The LGA has also established separate commercial entities to provide services to members, which include LGASA Mutual, LGASA Commercial, and LGA Procurement.

The Local Government Act 1999 specifies that:

The LGA is constituted as a public authority for the purpose of promoting and advancing the interests of local government and has the objects prescribed by its constitution.

The object of the LGA is to achieve public value through the promotion and advancement of the interests of local government by:

- **advocating** to achieve greater influence for local government in matters affecting councils and communities;
- **assisting** Members to build capacity and increase sustainability through integrated and coordinated local government; and
- **advancing** local government through best practice and continuous improvement.

About GAROC – what we do

The Greater Adelaide Regional Organisation of Councils (GAROC) is a committee of the LGA, established under its Constitution. The member councils of GAROC are listed at **Attachment 1**.

We are responsible to the LGA Board of Directors for the discharge of our functions.

Under the Terms of Reference, adopted by the LGA membership, GAROC has a key role in regional advocacy, policy initiation and review, leadership, engagement and capacity building.

The GAROC Committee supports the LGA to ‘advocate, assist, and advance’ the interests of local government by:

1. Supporting the activities of the LGA at a regional level;
2. Promoting communication between Members and between Members and the LGA;
3. Advocating in respect of matters which affect the GAROC Regional Group;
4. Encouraging engagement of Members within the GAROC Regional Group with GAROC and the LGASA; and
5. Participating in policy development and implementation.

Our guiding principles

As an organisation working to promote and deliver on behalf of metropolitan South Australia, GAROC has developed the following guiding principles we will operate under.

We will:

1. Be community centered and put people first in our decision making.
2. Prioritise and address issues that are common across the metropolitan region.
3. Carefully consider items of business from any member of the metropolitan area or items raised independently by GAROC members, for consideration by the LGA Board of Directors or at a General Meeting.
4. Collaborate closely with the LGA and SAROC on issues that matter to metropolitan councils.
5. To be nimble, agile and responsive to the needs of metropolitan councils.

Our stakeholders & partners

GAROC recognises that to be successful and deliver value for metropolitan councils we need to work in close collaboration and engagement with our key stakeholders and partners. These are:

- Metropolitan councils.
- The South Australian Regional Organisation of Councils (SAROC) Committee.
- State Government
- Federal Government
- Members of Parliament
- Other peak bodies, associations and statutory authorities

Strategic themes and objectives

This Strategic Plan identifies four themes and objectives for GAROC to deliver on over the next four years. They have been identified having considered LGA annual member surveys, a broad ranging environmental scan and developed in consultation with metropolitan councils.

These themes and objectives will form the basis of GAROC's Annual Business Plans, which will be developed each year to guide the activities, actions and engagement of GAROC.

Theme 1: Economic Development

GAROC recognises that local government's significant investment in infrastructure and services is a driver of the local economy. A strong state economy is underpinned by a financially sustainable local government sector that promotes its area and provides an attractive climate and locations for the development of business, commerce, industry and tourism.

GAROC recognises the important role of councils to enable, facilitate and enhance local economic opportunities. With the right policy settings and partnerships, councils can help to create the best conditions for local businesses to grow and thrive.

Objective: Enable advocacy and partnership opportunities that recognise the specific needs and opportunities in metropolitan Adelaide and assist councils to contribute to creating conditions for productivity that supports sustainable job growth and pathways to employment.

Objective: Support member councils to play their important role in stimulating the economic and social recovery of their communities in post COVID-19 recovery.

Theme 2: Design, Planning and Placemaking

GAROC recognises the importance of good decision making that enhances the built environment and supports well-considered planning processes that achieve quality design outcomes and the preservation of character and local heritage.

Objective: Advocate to the State Government and Parliament to ensure that South Australia's planning system reflects leading practice, facilitates better design outcomes and supports local decision making.

Objective: Provide assistance and resources to metropolitan councils that support their important role as local place makers and custodians of public spaces.

Theme 3: Environmental Reform

GAROC acknowledges local government's role in protecting and enhancing the environment and recognises that climate change poses a serious risk to local communities and ecosystems. GAROC also recognises the important role councils play in providing high quality, innovative and sustainable waste management services that meet the needs of the community

Objective: Support LGA advocacy to State and Federal Government and assists member councils to ensure that all levels of government undertake mitigation and adaptation actions that reduce climate risks and build community resilience.

Objective: Support councils to improve waste and recycling practices and deliver viable and innovative waste services that meet the needs of the community and grow the Circular Economy and advocate for State and Federal Government legislation, policies, funding and programs that will enable and support these outcomes.

Theme 4: Reform and Innovation

GAROC recognises the opportunity to work with metropolitan councils to lead reform and innovations that enhance decision making, build community trust and drive downward pressure on council rates.

Objective: Assist councils to enhance local government through innovations in benchmarking, systems thinking, data management and engagement processes.

Strategic Plan Implementation and Review

Under GAROC's Terms of Reference, the Committee is required to:

- develop an Annual Business Plan which supports the delivery of the Strategic Plan;
- present its Strategic Plan and Annual Business Plan to the Board of Directors for approval by June each year;
- assess its performance against this Strategic Plan and the Annual Business Plan each quarter; and
- provide an Annual Report to the Board of Directors by September each year summarising its performance against the Strategic Plan and Annual Business Plan.

The GAROC 2019-20 Annual Business Plan provides the specific actions against which the activities of GAROC may be monitored.

Attachment 1

Regional Groupings of Members within GAROC – effective 29 October 2020.

GAROC Regional Grouping	Members
North	Gawler Playford Salisbury Tea Tree Gully
West	Charles Sturt Holdfast Bay Port Adelaide Enfield West Torrens
South	Marion Mitcham Onkaparinga
East	Adelaide Hills Burnside Campbelltown Norwood Payneham & St Peters Prospect Unley Walkerville
	Adelaide