November 2026

Business Plan

Progress Update



SHLGA 2026/27 Business Plan – Progress Report

November 2026

1. ADVOCACY – Influencing issues of significance for our region

Ref.	Activity / commitment	Status	Progress Report
A1	Implement, monitor and review the Advocacy Plan.	Ongoing	The Advocacy Plan continues to guide SHLGA priorities and actions. The first review of the Advocacy Plan will be undertaken in 2027, alongside the 2027/28 Business Plan. Policy statements on Fair Federal Funding and Digital Connectivity have been adopted by the Board to enable SHLGA to be proactive in its advocacy on related matters.
A2	Prepare Federal and State pre-budget submissions.	Ongoing	A Board workshop on federal advocacy, including priorities for a Federal Budget submission, will be held at the November meeting. A Federal Budget submission will be lodged in January 2027. A State Budget submission will be prepared in early 2027 and include priorities from the Advocacy Plan that are already being advanced with the State Government.
A3	Undertake stakeholder engagement and develop partnerships aligned with SHLGA priorities.	Ongoing	Recent stakeholder engagement has included: • Attending Country Cabinet in Victor Harbor – Presentation by the SHLGA President • Attending a SCFC roundtable with the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure – hosted by RDA AHFKI • Meeting with Telstra to discuss digital connectivity and inclusion in the region • Meeting with the Member for Kavel • Meeting with the Shadow Minister for Local Government The Executive Officer meets regularly with the CEO of RDA AHFKI and engages with the Landscape Boards as required.

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A4	Prepare submissions on topics relevant to the region.	Ongoing	Recent submissions have included: • Short-stay Accommodation Register • Productivity Commission Interim Report on Housing Supply • Senate inquiry into early childhood education and care in rural, regional and remote communities • National Disaster Recovery Funding Framework
A5	Participate in forums and events that advance the Advocacy Plan.	Ongoing	The President and Executive Officer have participated in a range of forums and events, such as the Federal Inquiry into Local Government Sustainability hearing, Country Cabinet and ministerial meetings. Two representatives from the region attended a Housing Strategy Workshop at the LGA in November 2026.
A6	Communicate regularly with members and stakeholders about advocacy actions and outcomes.	Ongoing	A monthly newsletter is distributed to all constituent councils and key stakeholders, published on the SHLGA website and promoted via social media. There is a standing offer for SHLGA to present to councils. Presentations have been made to Mount Baker, KI and Yankalilla.
A7	Research and prepare Growth, Housing and Liveability position statements.	Commenced	Work has commenced to prepare a suite of evidence-based policy statements on growth, housing and liveability to support SHLGA and council advocacy. Four key topics are under development: • Enabling Growth – Infrastructure for Housing • Housing Choice for a Changing Region • Liveable Growth – Building Communities, Not just Houses • Connected Communities – Transport and Access

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A8	Build councils' advocacy capacity through training and resources.	Commenced	A SHaRe webinar on engaging with the SA Parliament was held for council officers with presentations from the Executive Officer and LGA Director Advocacy, Andrew Lamb. SHLGA has provided constituent councils with information papers and resources to support their own advocacy on topics such as FA Grants and potential changes to federal road funding formulas. Advocacy training for the SHLGA Board will be considered after the council elections.
A9	Facilitate engagement with decision-makers on Local Area Plans.	Commenced	Support to councils on Local Areas Plans is primarily being facilitated by the LGA working in partnership with the DHUD. SHLGA continues to monitor for any gaps or specific issues to be addressed for constituent councils. Discussions have been held with DHUD about facilitating engagement between councils and utility providers to understand current and future network capacity in the region. The Executive Officer attended a briefing session by DHUD with KI Council of their Local Area Plan.
A10	Contribute to a sector-led Local Government Reform Agenda.	Commenced	The Executive Officer attends regular meetings with the LGA and other Regional LGAs to progress shared reform / advocacy goals. Recent discussions have included equitable rating for electricity generators, Little Corella Management and Federal Funding reform. Constituent Councils are encouraged to bring forward Items of Business on sector reform ideas.

2. SHARING – Collaborating on matters of common interest

Ref.	Activity / commitment	Status	Progress Report
S1	Convene at least four Board meetings hosted by constituent councils.	Ongoing	Three meetings have been scheduled for 2026/27. Further meetings will be scheduled following the April 2027 council elections.
S2	Facilitate Working Group meetings to encourage information sharing and collaboration on health, wellbeing and transport priorities.	Ongoing	Regular meetings of the Regional Public Health Plan (RPHP) Working Group and Roads Working Group have been held. Egon Loh from the Mount Barker District Council has been appointed as the Chair of the RPHP Working Group for a 12-month term following the retirement of outgoing Chair, Leann Symonds from the City of Victor Harbor. Working Group meeting notes are published on the SHLGA website.
S3	Participate in the Regional Drought Resilience Plan Steering Committee.	Ongoing	The Executive Officer participates in the Steering Committee. A Regional Drought Resilience Plan (RDRP) implementation plan is currently being finalised, with SHLGA nominated as the lead for initiatives with a broader community wellbeing focus. SHLGA applied for funding through the Regional Drought Resilience Plan Social Outcome Grants program for a 'Drought Aware Councils' program to assist frontline council staff to support and connect community members affected by drought. Unfortunately the grant application was not successful, but good feedback was received about how a revised proposal may be supported in the future. A SHaRe webinar was held of November to provide members with an update on the implementation of the RDRP.

S4	Invite regional partners and stakeholders to SHLGA meetings and forums to share information on joint priorities.	Ongoing	Stakeholders are invited to attend SHLGA Board meetings and provide written reports.
S5	Maintain up-to-date information on the SHLGA website.	Ongoing	The website is kept up to date, with easy access to key governance documents, plans, reports and submission. All required information is published in accordance with the requirements of the Act.
S6	Host, support or participate in forums that inform councils and encourage collaboration on regional priorities.	Ongoing	Recent activities are included in this report.
S7	Scope and launch a regional best practice and innovation forum.	Completed	The Southern and Hills Region Exchange (SHaRe) initiative has been launched. Four online forums have been held to facilitate the exchange of information and ideas with approximately 70 attendances. Further programming will be announced following the summer holiday season.
S8	Undertake post-election engagement with new councils.	Not commenced	Post-election engagement will commence in April 2027.
S9	Review the SHLGA website and enhance user experience.	Completed	The Executive Officer and Corporate Support Officer have reviewed the content and usability of the SHLGA website and made targeted improvements, such as removing outdated content, consolidating pages, and enhancing the presentation of information. More comprehensive upgrades, and a potential shift to an alternative platform, are scheduled for next financial year.
S10	Review and update the memorandum of understanding with RDA Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island.	Commenced	An EO / CEO level review of the MOU is underway. Potential changes relate to a clearer description of our respective roles and the relationship between them. An agreed draft will be presented to the respective Boards by the end of the financial year for review and endorsement.

3. DELIVERY – Coordinating the delivery of services or projects that meet regional needs or advance regional priorities

Ref.	Activity / commitment	Status	Progress Report
D1	Monitor and review the Regional Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.	Ongoing	The 2024-2026 Section 52 report was completed and submitted to the Chief Public Health Officer in September 2026. A summary document was also prepared to communicate to councils, stakeholders and communities about the work being progressed across the region to support health and wellbeing. A SHLGA Regional Trails Planning Framework has been released as an initiative under the Regional Public Health Plan. This is an advisory resource for councils to use when considering a trail opportunity. This project was delivered in-house by the Executive Officer. An application has been submitted for a Julia Farr Disability Inclusion Grant of $20k to fund a Universal Design Capacity Building program. This proposal has been modelled on a successful 2021 program, and subject to grant funding, would be delivered to councils in 2027 via two in-person sessions hosted by Victor Harbor and Mount Barker. The funding would be used to engage specialist delivery partners – URPS and Wax Designs. An audit and update of the 2022 Community Wellbeing Indicators adopted by SHLGA is being progressed as part of the 'State of the Region' insights report.
D2	Monitor and review the Regional Transport Plan 2030.	Ongoing	The Roads Working Group met in October 2026 to discuss priorities under the Plan, including the South Coast Freight Corridor (SCFC) and Commonwealth funding opportunities.

D3	Coordinate regional prioritisation of Special Local Roads Program funding.	Ongoing	Preparations for the 2027 Special Local Roads Program (SLRP) funding have commenced. Councils have been asked to identify potential projects by early next year to enable out of session board consideration of the region's priorities prior to the submission of SLRP applications. The Executive Officer engaged with LGTAP to seek feedback following an unsuccessful application to the 2026 round. Feedback has been provided to the Roads Working Party regarding the expected level of detail to be included in SLRP applications.
D4	Scope and deliver projects responding to shared regional challenges and objectives.	Ongoing	Current regional projects are summarised within this report.
D5	Provide practical support and assistance to councils to progress joint projects.	Ongoing	The Executive Officer is working with RDA AHFKI on next steps to progress a Victor Harbor – Goolwa Bypass as a key stage of the SCFC. A high-level project plan has been prepared for discussion with relevant councils and stakeholders.
D6	Investigate and prioritise shared service opportunities.	Commenced	A $25k grant from the LGRDS Regional Capacity Building program has been secured to progress this work. A draft project brief has been prepared and will be finalised with CEO input before going to market to engage a consultant to lead this investigation with the Executive Officer.
D7	Prepare a new Regional Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.	Commenced	The 'State of the Region' Insights Report project has commenced, with a $15k grant secured through the LGRDS Regional Capacity Building program. This project, scheduled for completion in Feb 2027, will build the evidence base for the new Regional Public Health Plan. The project timeline has been adjusted based on the new council caretaker period, with engagement and endorsement to be undertaken in the next council term.

D8	Undertake a minor review of the Regional Transport Plan.	Commenced	HDS Australia has been engaged to undertake a minor review of the roads action plan and database. This work establishes a pipeline of prioritised regional road projects for state and commonwealth funding opportunities. A Roads Working Group meeting was convened in October to initiate the review and council officers have been asked to provide information to HDS by the end of the year.
D9	Progress the ARC Linkages Research Project - Modern Construction Methods.	Not commenced	SHLGA has agreed to be a partner in this national research project, with a $5k contribution. This project remains subject to a successful funding application submitted by the Adelaide University. The outcome of the grant should be known in December 2026.

4. CORPORATE – Achieve best practice in governance and public administration

Ref.	Activity / commitment	Status	Progress Report
C1	Comply with the SHLGA Charter and Local Government Act 1999.	Ongoing	No compliance issues have been identified.
C2	Maintain contemporary corporate policies.	Ongoing	A new Risk Management Policy and Framework were adopted by the Board in August 2026. There are no outstanding policy reviews.
C3	Provide transparent reporting to the Board and constituent councils.	Ongoing	Regular updates have been provided to the Board on SHLGA activities and all required reporting under the Charter, including the 2025/26 Annual Report, has been undertaken.
C4	Ensure sound management of SHLGA finances.	Ongoing	The 2025/26 external audit demonstrated sound financial management and appropriate internal controls.

C5	Develop a new Board member induction process.	Commenced	An induction process and resources have been developed and are included on the Agenda for the November 2026 SHLGA Board Meeting. Implementation will commence in April following the elections.
C6	Appoint SHLGA office bearers.	Not commenced	In accordance with the Charter, the appointment of a President and Deputy President is deferred until after the periodic council elections being held in April 2027.