



Tasmanian
Government

2018-19 BUDGET SPEECH

***‘Delivering on our Plan
Building Your Future’***

BY

THE TREASURER

HON PETER GUTWEIN MP

Delivered in the House of Assembly on 14 June 2018 on the
Second Reading of the Consolidated Fund Appropriation Bill
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Presented to both Houses of Parliament by the Governor's Command

Madam Speaker,

It is my privilege today, to deliver the Hodgman Majority Liberal Government's fifth Budget and the first Budget of our second term in Government.

Tasmania is a very different place today than it was five years ago. Today, Tasmanians are the most confident people in the nation.

Our economy is now one of the fastest growing in the country and the conversations we now have are about what the opportunities are, rather than the lack of them.

For only the second time in our history, the election returned a Liberal Government with more than 50 per cent of the primary vote.

It was a resounding endorsement of our long-term plan and the results we have delivered and it provides the Hodgman Liberal Government with a clear mandate to keep implementing this plan for the next four years.

It is a plan for a strong economy, to help businesses grow and to create even more jobs for Tasmanians.

To take action on the cost of living and invest in our schools, to lift education standards and to give our kids every opportunity to be the best they can be.

It is a plan to build a better health system and to keep Tasmanians safe, with more police on the street to tackle crime.

It protects our way of life by keeping living costs affordable and ensuring that we are able to enjoy the outdoors and other recreational pursuits that are part of what makes our State great.

And Madam Speaker,

It is a plan to deliver the infrastructure of the 21st century, massively increasing our investment into roads, hospitals, affordable housing, dams, bridges and schools.

It is also a plan Madam Speaker, that will see this Government deliver all of our election commitments, in full and on time.

Our Government is committed to take Tasmania to the next level, grasp our opportunities and deliver enduring growth and prosperity.

Four years ago, I delivered the first Liberal Budget in 16 years. We delivered our promises, in full and on time, and began the task of fixing the financial mess we inherited.

That first Budget laid the foundations for a brighter future for Tasmanians.

Tasmanians have clearly recognised the benefits that a stable majority Liberal Government has delivered. They have put their trust in us again, and we will not let them down.

In the current economic boom that Tasmania is experiencing, it is easy to forget that we have come a long way in just four short years.

When I delivered our first Budget, Tasmania was in a very different place.

The Budget was in the red, our finances were unsustainable and confidence was at rock bottom.

Our economy had been in recession, 10 000 jobs had been lost, and the unemployment rate had reached over 8 per cent.

Madam Speaker,

We had a job to do so we rolled up our sleeves and got on with it.

Over the last term 11 100 more people were employed and our unemployment rate is now lower than Queensland and Western Australia.

Compared to where we were in 2014, today Tasmania is almost unrecognisable. There is a buzz in the air, the confidence is contagious, and people are excited about what the future will bring.

It was unthinkable then, that we would now be able to set the responsible and achievable goal to have the lowest unemployment rate in the country by 2022.

Over the last term, we responsibly pursued our long-term plan. The Government's top priority then - as it remains now - was to maintain confidence through responsible, strong financial management.

Over the course of our first two Budgets, we brought spending under control without causing economic contraction. It was important that we continued to fund appropriately essential public services whilst increasing investment in job creating infrastructure.

As a result, we delivered a Budget surplus four years earlier than forecast, the first surplus in seven years and the best outcome in a decade. This has been followed by a strong surplus last year and the expectation of an increased surplus for this current financial year.

Madam Speaker,

We have delivered on our commitment to fix the Budget, and restore confidence and as a result, Tasmania can now keep moving forward into an even brighter and more confident future.

Our economy is growing strongly - last week's National Accounts data reported that State Final Demand in the March 2018 quarter was 4 per cent higher than the year before and we now have the second strongest growing economy in the nation.

Importantly, this result has largely been driven by increased household consumption and private investment.

Madam Speaker,

People will move to where the jobs are and it is no surprise that our population is growing again, with the strongest growth rate in over seven years, and the highest rate of Net Interstate Migration in eight years.

With a State that now has opportunity in abundance, it is no wonder that people are voting with their feet.

Our export sector is booming, and on the latest data has increased by nearly 35 per cent, the strongest growth in the nation and well ahead of the national average of 10 per cent.

Our tourism sector is the envy of the country - and this is underpinning significant growth in accommodation, restaurants, cafes and other services and importantly across our broader economy.

The message is now out there, we are open for business and our door is open wide and the world is now walking through it.

Tasmania is now a must see, exciting destination to visit, and the statistics tell the story.

In the last year, visitor spending increased by 8 per cent to a record \$2.33 billion, we have experienced tourism growth in every region and now lead the nation in international visitor growth at 18 per cent.

Madam Speaker,

Tasmania is now in great shape, but the Hodgman Liberal Government believes that there is more that we can achieve.

Central to our plan is strong financial management.

We have delivered that and strong financial management will continue to be at the core of our decision making for the next four years.

Madam Speaker,

The 2018-19 Budget is the foundation of that commitment.

The Budget I am handing down today forecasts a surplus of \$161.9 million in 2018-19, and demonstrates that - true to our commitment during the election campaign - there will be surpluses in each and every year over the Forward Estimates.

This Budget forecasts revenue growth of 2.1 per cent from the 2017-18 Estimated Outcome over the Budget and Forward Estimates period, whilst expenditure growth is forecast to be 1.6 per cent. We will continue to live within our means.

And Madam Speaker,

We will remain net debt free whilst putting our strong balance sheet to work, to deliver our plan of record levels of investment into the job-creating infrastructure this State needs to future proof itself.

Madam Speaker,

A balanced Budget delivering surpluses that provide an appropriate buffer is critical to ensuring we can deal with any unexpected events. Whilst Tasmania is in a very strong position, it would be reckless to do what others call for and spend every dollar that is earned.

During the last term we dealt with a prolonged Basslink outage, wildfires, the worst floods in 100 years and a GST downgrade that wiped \$500 million from our forecast revenues.

While we have made it clear that we will fight tooth and nail to protect our revenue base, we must be prepared for unexpected events, like natural disasters, as lightning does, and can, strike twice, which is why this Budget sensibly forecasts surpluses over the Forward Estimates.

In recent weeks, those opposite have raised risks associated with the GST, whilst at the same time calling for public sector pay rises that run ahead of inflation.

Madam Speaker,

You cannot have it both ways.

There is always a risk that future revenues may not turn out to be as high as expected.

That is why we will not spend the surpluses forecast before we have received them - they are the Tasmanian people's insurance policy against adversity.

This is also why we have a firm but fair 2 per cent wages policy.

The surpluses forecast in this Budget, are modest in the context of total revenue, and they will stand us in good stead should we need to face unforeseen events.

They also underpin the delivery of record levels of job creating infrastructure which will strengthen and sustain our economy into the future.

Madam Speaker,

The centrepiece of this Budget is the record spend of \$2.6 billion that we are investing into job creating infrastructure.

This record investment will deliver on our commitments to build Tasmania's infrastructure for the 21st century and lays the solid foundation we will use to take Tasmania to the next level.

This pipeline of investment is significant, and will form the backbone of Tasmania's economic future.

Central to our infrastructure program is the investment of \$1.1 billion into roads and bridges right around Tasmania.

In an export-focused economy, we are heavily reliant on the efficient transport of freight, and the safe movement of people. We will invest in our cities to deal with congestion whilst building the strategic freight links we need for the future.

Madam Speaker

The health of Tasmanians is a top priority of the Hodgman Liberal Government, and this Budget delivers over \$475 million into hospitals and other health infrastructure.

This includes the commencement of more than \$87 million in capital upgrades at the Launceston General Hospital, the roll out of the \$35 million in upgrades to the Mersey Community Hospital, and the completion of the redevelopment of the Royal Hobart Hospital, together with the commencement of \$28 million in new capital commitments for ward upgrades.

Madam Speaker

It is well understood that the future workforce of Tasmania depends on having world-class education outcomes.

Our Government understands this, and that is why we will increase our investment into schools to a record of nearly \$200 million. We will begin construction of two new schools and significantly upgrade others, we will further invest in extending all our high schools to Year 12, invest in six more new early learning hubs, and create centres of excellence for trade training.

Madam Speaker

Importantly, we are investing around \$200 million over four years to support housing and human services.

This includes the largest ever investment into Affordable Housing. This Budget delivers the first \$100 million of our new \$125 million Stage 2 Affordable Housing strategy to support Tasmanians who need a roof over their head which will underpin the delivery of 1 500 affordable homes assisting around 2 000 families in need.

We are also investing over \$169 million into infrastructure to keep Tasmanians safe, including \$70 million for a new Southern remand centre, the first stage of the new \$270 million Northern prison and \$7.3 million to redevelop the Ashley Youth detention centre.

We will invest \$70 million into the new Tranche 3 irrigation program to build more dams to support our plan to double the value of agriculture to \$10 billion. Tasmanian Irrigation has been a clear success story to date - the partnership between the State and Federal Governments, together with irrigators, has delivered nation leading results and will continue to do so.

Madam Speaker,

This Budget invests \$2.6 billion, the single largest General Government infrastructure program in the State's history.

When combined with the significant investment occurring in local government and the private sector along with our government businesses we have a pipeline of investment that will deliver economic growth and underpin our economic prosperity for decades to come.

Over and above this record investment, there are also projects of nationwide significance being progressed by the State's electricity businesses, which feasibility studies outline could lead to effectively doubling our capacity to generate electricity for the National Electricity Market.

As these projects progress, billions of dollars in new infrastructure investment in Tasmania will occur over the next decade.

In order to manage this unprecedented opportunity along with our record levels of current infrastructure investment, the Government will this year:

- deliver a 10-year Infrastructure Pipeline detailing the major Government infrastructure projects and spending proposed across inner budget agencies and Government Businesses; and
- a 30-year Infrastructure Strategy to assist with long-term planning so that the next generation of Tasmanians can understand and importantly grasp the opportunities of the future.

We will initiate a construction sector round table led by the Deputy Premier and Minister for Infrastructure Jeremy Rockliff, which will be convened during July to ensure the commercial sector, and all levels of government collaborate to maximise this once in a generation opportunity.

This process will deliver a whole of sector plan of the short, medium and longer-term objectives that need to be achieved to ensure that the sector is able to deliver the record infrastructure task in front of us.

The program of works will create thousands of jobs that will make Tasmania a magnet for construction and engineering professionals who are attracted to the opportunity that Tasmania now offers.

We are entering a golden age of investment in this State and the Government will ensure that we firmly grasp and deliver on the opportunity, for our future generations.

Madam Speaker,

To ensure we continue to build the work force for the future, this Budget delivers investment into trade training centres of excellence as well as a suite of tax incentives to support jobs and to make businesses more competitive.

We are extending the successful payroll tax rebate scheme for apprentices and trainees in areas with skill shortages, to encourage employers to make that crucial down payment on skills and training.

If our businesses are more competitive, they will be able to create more jobs and that is why we are also cutting payroll tax. By reducing the rate of payroll tax on payrolls up to \$2 million by 35 per cent, from 6.1 per cent to 4 per cent, we will provide a tax saving of up to \$15 750 for all businesses that pay this tax. Our payroll tax will be the most competitive of any state for businesses with payrolls up to \$4 million.

This will be of particular assistance to small and medium-sized businesses enabling them to continue growing and employing more people.

Small businesses that do not pay payroll tax will also benefit from \$7.5 million in targeted small business grants over the next three years, to support the employment of more trainees and apprentices in areas of high skills demand.

In addition, they will benefit from other measures including packages to assist the agriculture, seafood, information technology, and hospitality and tourism sectors.

Madam speaker,

We also want the benefits of a very strong jobs market to extend fully to all regions of the State.

We know that the eyes of the world are on us at the moment and we want to assist those business from interstate that want to share in and contribute to our successes.

They will invest capital and bring skills whilst growing our population and we will provide a payroll tax concession for up to three years for interstate businesses that relocate and employ in regional Tasmania.

In addition, the Coordinator-General will work with regional councils to help them to develop regional investment attraction packages.

By continuing to grow our economy we will build the future for all Tasmanians and ensure the continued and ongoing record investment into health, education, infrastructure and supporting our disadvantaged that Tasmanians expect and deserve.

Madam Speaker,

It is because our economy is now running on all cylinders, that today I can announce record spending into health, education, public safety and to support vulnerable Tasmanians.

This Budget builds on our record levels of investment into our hospitals and health system. That has allowed us to employ over 300 more nurses, doctors and allied health professionals in the public health system than when we came to government four years ago.

Today recurrent annual spending in health is \$341 million per annum higher than what it was when we came to Government, and over the Budget and Forward Estimates, the Government will invest a record \$7.6 billion into health.

This Budget builds on our achievements and charts a course over six years to employ more than 1 300 hospital and health staff, and open up another 298 hospital beds.

This Budget delivers the first stage of our commitments and over the next four years it includes nearly \$250 million in additional recurrent funding as well as more than \$120 million in new capital investment into our hospitals and health facilities.

We will recruit an additional 478 hospital staff, including nurses, doctors and allied health professionals and, importantly, we will progressively open 76 more hospital beds.

The focus of this investment is increasing capacity on the frontline, with more beds, more doctors, nurses and paramedics, new out-of-hospital services, new community mental health beds and support, alcohol and drug rehabilitation beds and better management of chronic disease.

In addition to our election commitments, we are investing a further \$20 million boost for elective surgery in 2018-19, to continue improvements made over the past four years in ensuring even more patients are seen within the clinically recommended time.

There is \$2.1 million to build a new antenatal clinic at the North West Regional Hospital, together with \$17.6 million to fund eight new acute medical beds, including four emergency department stay beds and four surgical beds for elective surgery patients who need to stay overnight.

Mental health is a key element of the Government's plan - we are investing additional funding to support 25 new mental health beds in the South, including \$11.8 million for infrastructure, and almost \$16.5 million over four years for the opening of new beds.

In addition, the Government is providing \$6 million over three years to fund more drug and alcohol rehabilitation beds across the State, and more than \$1.8 million in funding for the Rural Alive and Well program.

In Hobart, we have a private hospital co-located with the Royal Hobart Hospital which improves health outcomes for Tasmanians by enabling a seamless integration of services between the public and private health sectors.

This sensible co-location option is not yet available in other parts of the State.

Last year an unsolicited bid proposal was received from Calvary Health Care to develop a new private hospital, co-located adjacent to the Launceston General Hospital. The proposed new hospital would constitute an investment by Calvary of well over \$100 million.

Calvary has served the Launceston community well, however their current operations are dislocated from the public health precinct and are dispersed across two campuses. Calvary believe synergies would emerge from a co-location that significantly improve facilities and the sustainability of services offered, and would better serve the people of Launceston regardless of whether they are public or private patients.

The Government is of this view as well, and we have formally notified Calvary that we will progress their proposal to the second phase of the process which will be conducted over the next nine months.

That process will involve the Assessment Panel and Calvary working together to finalise the appropriate location within the health precinct that meets both parties' needs and future plans, and ensuring that the co-location improves the services and health outcomes for both public and private patients.

Madam Speaker,

Education is the key to unlocking Tasmania's true potential.

As announced during the election campaign, the Government will invest a record \$324 million over six years into education.

Over the course of the Budget and Forward Estimates, we will invest \$69.4 million to recruit an extra 277 teachers and support staff.

We will also invest more than \$192 million in education infrastructure, to deliver the educational outcomes of the future.

This investment will support the construction of two new schools in the growth areas of Legana and Brighton, the rebuild of existing schools such as Sorell School, Cosgrove High and Devonport High School, as well as our commitment to extend all schools to Year 12.

We will invest more than \$31 million to provide free pre-school to disadvantaged and vulnerable three year olds from 2020, and \$15 million to revitalise our kindergartens.

In addition to the \$12 million we have already committed, we will invest an additional \$3.25 million into providing support for students with disabilities, develop six new learning hubs and invest in and redevelop our school farms.

Madam Speaker,

Our police force protect us, keep us safe and help ensure that Tasmania remains the best place to live and raise a family.

We have a plan to make Tasmania the safest State in the nation, and have set a target to have the lowest serious crime rate.

To achieve this we will support and invest in our first class police service.

In our last term, we invested and rebuilt our police service and employed 113 more officers after the previous Government sacked more than 100. The contrast could not be starker.

During this term we will build an even better police service to keep Tasmanians safer. We will recruit a further 125 new front line police officers over the next four years, and we will support them by implementing a range of new initiatives and investing in key infrastructure.

We will provide \$240 000 to further support a full-time special operations group, and because we understand the difficult job they do we will ensure that police officers injured in the line of duty will continue to receive 100 per cent of their pay while they are on workers' compensation.

We have allocated \$5 million for a new police station at Longford, \$5 million for a new police station at New Norfolk and \$12 million to build a new Emergency Services Hub at Sorell.

In addition, we have initiatives to further address crime by cracking down on shoplifting, by providing small business with a \$2 million no-interest loan program to install CCTV cameras in-store, and will provide \$400 000 to help deal with anti-social driving.

Madam Speaker,

Tasmania has become the place to be - and people from interstate and overseas are keen to make our State their new home.

However, in an expanding economy there will always be growing pains, challenges that need to be addressed and in our case strong population and employment growth has led to a more competitive market for housing.

While house prices are now rising right around the State, Hobart in particular has seen much stronger price growth, and this has flowed through to its rental market, with rental vacancy rates at historically low levels.

The market is responding to the increased demand, and the average monthly number of dwelling approvals is 28 per cent higher than a year earlier and residential building work done is up by over 18 per cent - but there is more that we can and must do.

Central to our response is Stage 2 of the Affordable Housing Strategy, which will result in \$125 million being invested, the Government's largest ever investment into affordable housing. This investment will mean that over the eight years to 2023 we will have invested more than \$200 million into improving stock levels and access to affordable housing.

This significant commitment will result in an additional 1 500 new affordable homes being built, that will provide assistance for around 2 000 households. This will take the total number of new affordable homes to 2 400.

We have also recently launched the Private Rental Incentives pilot scheme to encourage residential property owners to make their affordable rental homes available for low income earners.

In addition to this, we have announced a range of new tax measures to support housing.

A three year land tax exemption is now available for newly constructed homes rented on a long-term basis, and we are offering a one year land tax exemption for owners of short-stay accommodation that opt to rent their property out on a long-term basis within the Greater Hobart area.

Further, we are introducing a Foreign Investor Duty Surcharge on the acquisition of residential property by foreign purchasers to help level the playing field.

Looking after the most vulnerable in our society is a key responsibility of Government and we must take steps to assist those affected by child sexual abuse. That is why this Budget contains the first tranche of our \$70 million Redress commitment to assist survivors of these abhorrent acts.

We are also investing record amounts in this Budget to assist children who do not have the stability we take for granted; the Budget includes additional funding of \$24 million to assist those in Out of Home Care.

Furthermore, this Budget commits an additional \$18 million to continue the nation leading Safe Homes, Safe Families initiative.

This Government is determined to deliver for all Tasmanians, which is why we have established the new agency, Communities Tasmania to provide an even greater focus on supporting and strengthening our communities.

Madam Speaker,

The Hodgman Liberal Government has made a strong commitment to take action on the cost of living.

Last year, we implemented legislation that allowed us to limit power price increases for households and small businesses to 2 per cent, at a time when other states were experiencing double digit price increases.

One of our key commitments is to provide Tasmanians with the lowest regulated power prices in the nation - as we progress removing the link between Tasmanian and Victorian power prices, we are already taking action on this issue by legislating to cap power price increases for the next three years to no more than the CPI.

We understand the cost of electricity is not just an issue for households and small businesses, it is also a challenge for larger businesses as well.

Accordingly, we have extended the wholesale electricity price rebate scheme for commercial and industrial customers, committing \$10 million to limit future price shocks as a result of factors occurring outside of the State's control.

We will also deliver on our plan to accelerate water and sewerage infrastructure upgrades, improve the environment and keep prices lower to benefit all Tasmanians.

Importantly for TasWater's customers, not only will our landmark agreement with local government and TasWater deliver an accelerated investment in water and sewerage infrastructure, it will freeze prices for regulated customers in 2019-20 and cap future price increases at no more than 3.5 per cent a year.

Madam Speaker,

The Hodgman Liberal Government knows that a strong agricultural sector delivers jobs and opportunities across every region.

This Budget begins the next stage of our program to support our ambitious Agri-Food Plan.

It will support our farmers on the land but also recognises the importance of strong farming families, support programs and investment into the future.

Key to our plan is a new \$70 million commitment towards the third tranche of irrigation schemes which will continue our successful partnership with the Australian Government and local farmers to deliver the water that farmers rely on to produce higher value food products.

Over the Budget and Forward Estimates period, we will invest around \$32 million into the agriculture sector across a range of initiatives and infrastructure. Our focus on Biosecurity is much enhanced with the establishment of the \$20 million Biosecurity Emergency Response and Research Fund in collaboration with the Australian Government. It will help meet the eradication costs of the recent fruit fly incursion and importantly boost our capacity to respond to future threats.

We will invest \$7 million in capital upgrades to modernise our research farms, \$5 million in building an Agricultural Centre of Excellence, \$3.7 million into the Weeds Action Fund and \$1.8 million in competitive grants funding for the Landcare Action Fund.

Madam Speaker,

One of our State's strengths is the aquaculture industry and we are unashamedly its strongest supporter.

This Budget invests more than \$13 million for the aquaculture industry, including \$5.1 million to support an industry-led abalone industry productivity improvement program and \$5 million to develop the Government's fisheries integrated licensing and management system.

Madam Speaker,

One of our major employers is the resources sector and our forestry and mineral exports are of significant importance to our economy. The Government has worked hard to get the forestry sector back on its feet and significant investments are occurring once again.

For the mining sector the identification of new ore deposits is central to its future sustainability and the jobs that it supports.

Exploration is key and given this, the Budget provides \$2 million for mining exploration grants that will support up to 20 drilling projects to identify new mineral resources that will open up opportunity and underpin the future of mining in Tasmania.

Madam Speaker,

We all know Tasmania's tourism sector is a runaway success.

Be it MONA, or the Great Eastern Drive, Cradle Mountain, the rugged beauty of the West Coast or the world-class vineyards of the North East, Tasmania now has the world beating a path to our door.

For a state that in the past has often been left off the map, we are now the destination that everyone wants to visit, and our accommodation sector is in overdrive to keep up with demand.

In recent years, the level of investment in visitor accommodation has been phenomenal, with new offerings around the state such as MACq 01, Ibis, Pumphouse Point and the recently completed Silos Hotel.

There are hotels in planning or under construction in Hobart, Launceston, Devonport, the Tasman Peninsula and the East Coast. It really is a very exciting time to be in the Tasmanian tourism industry.

This Budget contains \$72 million to fully develop the potential that exists at Cradle Mountain to create what we believe will be an experience in the North that will be as important as MONA is in the South.

While our door is now widely open we need to ensure we keep reminding the world just how good it is here and this Budget contains an additional \$16 million to ensure that every region shares in the billion dollar boom of Tasmania's visitor economy.

An additional \$12 million will be invested into marketing Tasmania as a premium destination and attracting higher yielding visitors and boosting flights into the State and \$4 million will underpin the attraction of more mass participation events.

This will ensure we can build an even better events calendar right across the State and right throughout the year to help support regional economies.

To support the growth occurring in our tourism and associated hospitality industries, we will invest \$3 million to develop our hospitality workforce along with the establishment of a dedicated unit within government, which will spearhead industry and government collaboration to ensure that the sector continues to grow and succeed.

To underpin the unique touring experience that Tasmania offers we will begin the rollout of our five year, \$72 million visitor economy roads package. This Budget contains almost \$58 million towards this plan to upgrade the roads that visitors use to reach the special and unique features of this State we are so proud of.

It goes without saying that one of our most important assets are our national Parks. They are also one of our most visited assets with demand increasing annually.

This Budget recognises the need to invest in these fantastic natural assets and delivers \$16 million to improve statewide infrastructure as well as an increase of \$8 million towards ongoing maintenance and \$6.6 million for more rangers and frontline staff.

A further \$20 million has also been committed towards the identification and development of our next iconic walk and this Budget delivers the first \$9 million to begin this exciting new development.

Madam Speaker,

We know that to stay in front of the curve we must continually be updating the product we offer. We have a unique blend of city and rural, wilderness and six star comfort, breathtaking natural assets as well as heritage listed properties that are the envy of the world.

One such heritage asset is the Treasury building complex in central Hobart.

In recent years there has been much public debate about the best use of this magnificent heritage listed asset.

It has served the Department of Treasury and Finance for many decades, however, the buildings are not well suited to modern office accommodation and we believe there are better options.

In another pair of hands these beautiful buildings will be able to be put to a better use, one that takes full advantage of its heritage character and location.

That may involve a conversion to visitor accommodation, or for a combination of uses.

Accordingly, the Government will begin work immediately and intends to seek proposals through an Expression of Interest process later this financial year for the divestment of the site.

Madam Speaker,

Tasmanians are some of the most community and sports oriented people in the country. We work together as volunteers for our communities both large and small, we embrace our junior sports, we celebrate our elite and we all benefit both socially and economically as a result.

To support and strengthen our communities this Budget contains \$11.6 million in Community and regional election commitments that range from a couple of thousand dollars for a local hall or sports club up to \$3 million dollars for a regional swimming pool.

We also recognise the need for investment into our larger community assets, and for mass participation sports like basketball, netball and tennis and this Budget provides \$10 million towards a new multi-sports facility in Glenorchy, \$2 million towards the \$4 million regional tennis centre in Launceston as well as \$3 million towards a hydro therapy pool here in Hobart.

Further, our Levelling the playing field policy provides a \$10 million investment to improve sporting facilities for girls and women across Tasmania with a priority on upgrading football and cricket facilities.

These commitments will support volunteers, increased participation, and our community well-being as a whole.

Madam Speaker,

The Budget I deliver today is framed not just for the next four years, it is framed to lay the foundations for our long-term future.

It charts the path that the Hodgman Liberal Government will take over our second term - to manage our finances responsibly, to grow our economy to create the revenues our growing state needs to invest in the essential services and public infrastructure, which Tasmanians expect and deserve.

I believe that Tasmania is on the cusp of a golden age.

We can now leverage the strong financial position that as a Government we have worked so hard to achieve, to build the infrastructure of the future, whilst providing first class education, health and job opportunities for all Tasmanians.

Madam Speaker,

We took a clear plan to the election - in delivering the 2018-19 Budget, this Government's commitment to the Tasmanian people is that we will deliver that plan, we will deliver our commitments, and we will make the most of the opportunity we now have to build Tasmania's future.

Madam Speaker,

I commend the Bill to the House.

