Terry Mills  
Leader of the Opposition

New Local Government policy  
18 February 2004

Local Government will be recognised and funded as a legitimate third tier of Government under a Terry Mills lead CLP Government.

Announcing another major policy initiative today CLP Leader Terry Mills said the time has come after almost 26 years of self government, to fully recognise the third tier of government – the councils whether they be city, town or community councils.

“A CLP Government will enter negotiations with councils and LGANT that will lead to them being far more independent and no longer subject to direction from the Territory Government or the department,” Mr Mills said.

“We will give greater autonomy to local councils. They will be given the financial support to be as independent as practicable.

“My commitment to councils is that no longer will they have to go cap in hand with a beggars bowl for their funding.

“The CLP will recognise that local councils are mature enough and capable enough to handle their affairs. Part of this would be to seek an immediate amendment to the Self-Government Act – the virtual constitution of the Territory – that constitutionally recognises the role of local government.

“There is no need to wait until we get Statehood and our own constitution. We should recognise councils now via the Self-Government Act. A CLP Government will ask the Federal Government to amend the Act accordingly.”

Mr Mills said a CLP Government will move those local government functions now under the control of the Local Government Division of the Department of Community Development, Sport and Cultural Affairs and place them under the control of the councils.

“We would ensure as part of the arrangement that no public servants would lose their jobs, rights or entitlements,” Mr Mills said. “They would be involved in the consultations and in drafting the transitional arrangements and final situation.

“The budget for this division within the present super department will be transferred at the same time from the control of the Minister to control of councils.”

Ends.