



1919.

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 PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.
 

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## PUBLIC ACCOUNTS:

### REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE.

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Brought up by Mr. Treasurer, December 4, 1919, and ordered by the House of Assembly to be printed.

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## REPORT.

The Standing Committee on Public Accounts has the honour to present the following report:—

1. Your Committee has again to call the attention of your Honourable House to the late date at which the Local Bodies have sent in their applications for loans. The requirement that all such applications shall be lodged with the Treasurer not later than the 30th June has been ignored in all cases this year. This practice was instituted in order that ample time should be given for the full investigation of the proposed work by the Departmental Officers of the State, for the proper consideration of the financial position of the local body, for perusal of the draft bill by the Parliamentary Draftsman, for due enquiry by the Public Accounts Committee, and for ample notice to the rate-payers who will have to shoulder the responsibility. It is hoped that in the future strict compliance with the prescribed requirements will be observed by Local Bodies who may desire to approach Parliament with applications for loans.

2. Your Committee in accordance with the Resolution of your Honourable House (*Vide* Votes No. 31, Entry 20) took into consideration the three applications referred to it, and reports the results of its investigations as follows:—

- (a) Application from the St. Leonards Municipality for a loan £100 to enable the said Council to contribute such sum to the Corporation of the City of Launceston towards the cost of the sewers, where such sewers are used to receive sewerage from the area described in Section Three of "The St. Leonards Municipality (Newstead) Loan Act, 1911." (see Bill No. 59).

In this case no application had been received from the St. Leonards Municipal Council. Mr. R. J. Sadler, M.H.A., who had introduced the bill, explained the objects sought to be attained. The Committee resolved to recommend the bill to the favourable consideration of the House, provided that as the loan is a small one, and should be liquidated at an early date, a sinking fund of £3 per centum per annum be prescribed.

- (b) Application from the Burnie and Table Cape Marine Board for a further loan of £20,000 (additional to the sum of £210,000 already advanced) for the purpose of extending the harbour accommodation of the port of Burnie by the continuation, extension, erection, and equipment of breakwaters and wharves, and for the purpose of defraying the expenses thereof, and of acquiring the necessary land in connection therewith (see Bill No. 69).

In this case it was made apparent to the Committee that the additional amount required was due to the increase in the cost of labour and materials and to the higher rate of interest payable since the original estimates of the construction costs were made. The financial position of the Board is sound and there should be no difficulty experienced by the Board in meeting the interest upon the increased loan as soon as trade becomes normal.

The Committee resolved to recommend this application to the favourable consideration of the House.

- (c) Application from the Municipal Council of Table Cape for a further loan of £2000 (additional to the sum of £6000 already advanced) for the purpose of providing for expenditure made and to be made for the alteration, increase, addition, and extension of the Wynyard lighting scheme generally (see Bill No. 67).

This proposal seems to be a sound one, and the additional amount asked for is required for extensions and additions to the service which is rapidly extending.

The Committee resolved to recommend the application to the favourable consideration of the House with a sinking fund of £2 per cent. per annum upon the fresh advance to meet the depreciating nature of the plant upon which the advance will be expended.

In each of the foregoing cases the recommendations of the Committee are subject to a report being received from the Parliamentary Draftsman that the bills as introduced are in order.

N. E. LEWIS, Chairman.

No. 1 Committee Room,  
House of Assembly,  
4th December, 1919.