

FinPro Member Update January 2021 (Edition 6, 2021)

Welcome,

What a great day. Thanks to everyone who participated in our online seminar today. Record numbers (again)!

A special welcome onboard and congratulations to our new Executive Team for 2021. The group were duly declared as elected during the AGM and comprise the following FinPro Members:

1. Alan Wilson, Melbourne City Council
2. Belinda Johnson, Southern Grampians Shire
3. Binda Gokhale, Wyndham City Council
4. Bradley Thomas, Hepburn Shire
5. Charles Nganga, Casey City Council
6. Danny Wain, Monash City Council
7. Fiona Rae, Golden Plains Shire, and
8. Gabrielle Gordon, FinPro
9. John Brockway, Surf Coast Shire
10. Mark Montague, Whittlesea City Council
11. Melissa Baker, South Gippsland Shire
12. Nathan Morsillo, City of Greater Bendigo
13. Simone Wickes, Frankston City Council
14. Tony Rocca, Maroondah City Council
15. Wei Chen, Yarra City Council

We look forward to getting this group together quickly to elect a President and 2 Vice-Presidents.

We also thank sincerely those members of the current Executive who have taken this opportunity to leave the group: Kim Jaensch, Liz Rowland and Kristy Stephens. Thank-you for all the work you have each done to contribute your skills and knowledge for the betterment of the sector. In particular, thank-you to Kim Jaensch who has served on the Executive since 2016 and has taken a leading role in recent years in the FinPro Leadership Program. Your work is really appreciated.

Gab Gordon
Executive Officer, FinPro

Membership News

All councils have now renewed their FinPro Membership. Thank-you for your support.

We welcome the following new members to FinPro:

Lee Watson has joined the team at Warrnambool City Council as Administration Officer – Financial Services.

Brooke Walsh has joined the team at Warrnambool City Council as an Accountant.

Sarah Bubb-Dempster has also joined the team at Warrnambool City Council as Team Leader.

Rosanna Vomberg has joined the team at Pyrenees Shire as Accountant and Finance Business Partner.

FinPro Online Professional Development

Seminar – 26 February 2021

Today we ran a very successful professional development session with nearly 300 members taking part.

The sessions covered the following topics:

The Economy – Presented by Keenan Jackson, Urban Economist & Economic Consultant @ .id

All councils will now be well engaged on operational planning and budgeting activities. The state of our economy, ongoing uncertainty regarding COVID-Normal and the health and wellbeing needs of our communities will be key factors of consideration. In this next presentation Keenan will provide an economic update and analysis of key indicators that are relevant to our sector. Keenan will also present on population data across our regions with insights on how municipalities have been impacted over the course of this last year and some early indicators on pathways towards recovery.

A recording of this session will be made available to all FinPro members on Monday 1 March 2021.



[Copy of Keenan's slides](#)

A big thank-you to Keenan and to .id for the presentation today.

Local Government Act Implementation Update

The new Local Government Act 2020 is the most ambitious reform to the local government sector in over 30 years. The Act will improve local government democracy, accountability and service delivery for all Victorians.

Since the Act was proclaimed on 6 April 2020 the LGV has been working with councils in a sector-led approach of co-design and consultation to develop products and materials that are customizable and scalable for individual councils.

Today, Tony Rocca, who has led the work from FinPro's perspective over the past 8 months, introduced the session, speaking about the various working groups who have been working on

various parts of the Act Implementation. He then introduced the Working Groups Leads who formally present key highlights in relation to the final documents relevant to their particular group.

- Malcolm Lewis – Long Term Financial Plan
- Hannah White – Model Budget
- John Brockway – Revenue and Rating Strategy

Sharon Redmond from Local Government Victoria then spoke about the Local Government Act Implementation generally and then followed this up with the launch the Model Accounts 2020/21.

A recording of this session will be made available to all FinPro members on Monday 1 March 2021.

Copies of each of the documents launched today are available now on the LGV website – at this link:

<https://www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au/strengthening-councils/sector-guidance-planning-and-reporting>

Follow-up Webinars

LGV, in conjunction with FinPro and Martin Thompson from Crowe Australasia will be running a set of follow-up technical webinars around each of the documents presented today. The schedule is as follows:

Friday 5 March 12.30-2pm – Model Accounts and Model Budget

Friday 12 March 12.30-2pm – Financial Plan

Friday 19 March 12.30-2pm – Revenue and Rating Plan

Further details of these webinars, and links to register, will be sent out to all FinPro members early next week.

Special thanks

Putting together the Model Accounts, Model Budget, Financial Plan and the Revenue and Rating Plan has taken a lot of work, this year more than ever, as council staff not only battle a heavy workload, but also deal with the day-to-day difficulties caused by COVID.

Our heartfelt thanks go out to our FinPro Working Groups who have dedicated a lot of time to assist the sector by putting together these documents.

In particular, we thank the following people:

Tony Rocca, Maroondah City Council and Vice-President FinPro (Tech Committee) – Tony took on the role of Chairperson of the Working Groups. This was an enormous role and we are forever indebted to you Tony for your contribution.

To our Individual Working Group Chairs:

- Hanna White, Mitchell Shire Council – Model Budget and Model Accounts
- Malcolm Lewis, Northern Grampians Shire Council – Financial Plan, and
- John Brockway, Surf Coast Shire Council – Revenue and Rating Strategy

Thank-you to the three of you for leading these groups through to finalisation of the associated documents. We really appreciate your leadership in these projects.

And finally, to our hard-working team members. Thank-you for your continued prioritisation in order that the timelines be met and the documents delivered to the sector. Amazing work.

- Luke Wheeler, Ballarat City Council (Model Budget)
- David Filmlalter, Bass Coast Shire Council (Financial Plan)
- Nathan Morsillo, Greater Bendigo City Council (Model Budget)
- Jason Clissold, Colac Otway Shire Council (Revenue and Rating Plan)
- Simone Wickes, Frankston City Council (Revenue and Rating Plan)
- Shana Johnny, Gannawarra Shire Council (Model Budget)
- Karen Oh, Glen Eira Shire Council (Financial Plan)
- Ange Marshall, Kingston City Council (Financial Plan)
- Paul Millar, Melbourne City Council (Model Budget)
- Megan Falla, Moonee Valley City Council (Financial Plan)
- Jemma Wightman, Moreland City Council (Revenue and Rating Plan)
- Stuart Smith, South Gippsland Shire Council (Financial Plan)
- Julia Blythe, Whitehorse City Council (Model Budget)
- Nicola Gleeson Coopes, Wodonga City Council (Revenue and Rating Plan)
- Mark Montague, Whittlesea City Council (Financial Plan), and
- Julia Kelley, Yarra Ranges Shire Council (Financial Plan)

And to Daniel O'Shea from LGV and Martin Thompson, Crowe Australasia for all the work you have done with these groups too.

Fantastic work everyone.

Follow-up Budget Preparation Webinar

Last December we ran a well-attended session on budget preparation. During the session 4 of our members gave a frank and open account of their approach to this year's budget preparation. Facilitated by Danny Wain, they shared a lot of information about how they were going.

At some stage between 10 and 17 March 2021 we will run a follow up discussion where Danny will once again discuss with a number of council representatives how their budgets are progressing, what challenges they face and what their timelines are.

This session will be run via zoom. Further information will be shared with members via email and also the Member Update as it is finalised.

Technical Update

The following information was distributed to council by VAGO today (26 February 2021) and is share now with member for your information.

VAGO performance audit and other integrity bodies – February 2021 update is [included via this link](#) for your reference.

LG 2019-20 VAGO Parliamentary Report:

- We are on track to table this report on 17 march 2021. Invitation to comment by Councils named in the report went out yesterday (email from Kevin to CEO with CFO/ Finance manager copied). Please provide your response by cob 3 March 2021. Any queries on this, please reach do out to me.

VAGO PA report - Sexual harassment in local government:

- In December 2020 we tabled our report looking at sexual harassment in local government. In the audit and risk committees that I am attending this year, it is encouraging to see discussion on this very important issue/ report.
- Councils are acknowledging the longer lead time needed for cultural changes to take place in this area and are implementing recommendations with that longer term focus by updating relevant policies and procedures with VAGO recommendations. In the short term, councils are also incorporating themes from this report into their staff survey/ training programs and committing to actions to track progress.
- Refer attached February 2021 update for link to this report and data dashboard.

Other matters:

- VAGO is developing a catalogue of VAGO fact sheets, to raise awareness of our work. Two general fact sheets, are attached for reference.

Have a great weekend!

Kind regards, Sanchu

This email is sent to audit committee members, senior management in local government sector, LGV and FinPro This email with additional audit related matters will also be forwarded to our audit service providers (ASPs). Feel free to pass this information to anyone who will benefit from it.

Sanchu Chummar

Acting Sector Director, Local Government

Victorian Auditor-General's Office

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Current positions advertised on the [FinPro Website](#)

- **Coordinator Financial Accountant**
- Moonee Valley City Council
- <https://careers.pageuppeople.com/896/ci/en/job/494372/financial-accountant>
- For further information, please view the Position Description or contact Andrew Nicolaou, Coordinator Financial Accountant on (03) 9243 8740
- Closing Date – 11.45pm Sunday 28 February 2021

- **Coordinator Financial Services**
- Moorabool Shire Council
- <http://moorabool.recruitmenthub.com.au>
- For further information, contact Steve Ivelja, Chief Financial Officer on (03) 5366 7100.
- Closing date – 5.00pm Sunday 7 March 2021

- **Finance Business Partner**
- Bayside City Council
- <https://www.seek.com.au/job/51567129>
- For further information please contact Yamile Monsalve, Accounting Services Coordinator on (03) 9599 4765
- Applications close 11.59pm Sunday 7 March 2021

- **Team Leader Accounts Payable**
- Moonee Valley City Council
- <https://mooneevalley.mercury.com.au/ViewPosition.aspx?id=sScqf2mfDWg=&jbc=ere>
- For further information please contact Andrew Nicolaou on 03 9243 8740
- Applications close 11.45pm, Sunday 7 March 2021

- **EOI – Audit and Risk Committee Member**
- Alpine Shire Council
- <https://www.alpineshire.vic.gov.au/council/careers/current-vacancies/eoi-independent-audit-and-risk-committee-members>
- For further information please contact Nathalie Cooke, Director Corporate at Alpine Shire on 03 5755 0555
- EOI's close on 14 March 2021

- **Senior Rates Officer**
- City of Greater Bendigo
- <https://www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/About/Working-at-the-City-of-Greater-Bendigo/Current-vacancies>
- For further information please contact Ann-Marie Wangdi, Coordinator Rates and Revenue on 03 5434 6018
- Applications close 9 March 2021

- **Financial Accountant**
- Alpine Shire Council (Bright)
- <https://www.alpineshire.vic.gov.au/council/careers>
- For further information please contact Dena Vlekkert, Manager Corporate on 0429 065 192
- Applications close 14 March 2021

- **Payroll and Finance Officer**
- Hepburn Shire Council
- <https://www.hepburn.vic.gov.au/payroll-finance-officer/>
- If you have further questions please contact People and Culture on (03) 5348 2306 or at peopleandculture@hepburn.vic.gov.au
- Applications close Monday 8 March 2021.

We are also aware of a number of regional and rural councils who are seeking both short term and longer-term assistance. If you are looking for a sea / tree / or other change, please let us know and we can put you in touch with some councils looking for finance professionals.

Thank-you to our 2021 Corporate Partners

- Commonwealth Bank
- CT Management
- MAGIQ Software
- LG Solutions
- VOTAR Partners
- Vision Super

From your friendly FinPro Executive

Gabrielle Gordon

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