

FinPro Member Update – Edition 1, 2022

President's Message

Welcome to 2022!

I hope you have been able to have some time away from the computer to spend the festive season catching up with family and friends. I enjoyed getting away from my home over Christmas and popped down to the beach at Mornington, so caught up and had tea with Gab and her family – it was a great opportunity to have a bit of normality.

It has certainly turned out to be a painful start to 2022 and it is certainly not what we wanted. I'm sure I wasn't the only one thinking and hoping that 2022 would be a lot more normal. It is becoming clear though that the numbers of COVID infections will certainly continue in the short term and it's becoming almost a not if, but when situation for when we will catch COVID. Please make sure you look after yourself, your family, friends and neighbours.

Unfortunately, with the increasing numbers, restrictions being reintroduced and for the general health and safety of everyone, we have decided to postpone our Conference that we planned for February – but in good news we have already locked in a new date – Wednesday 26 to Friday 28 October 2022. It will remain at RACV Cape Schanck.

We are in the process of notifying our speakers and Corporate Partners and Gab will contact those who have already booked to attend and arrange for a refund of the registration fees or cancellation of outstanding invoices.

At FinPro we want to continue to look for ways to make your lives that little bit easier. We will move to a number of online webinars in the first couple of months of 2022, moving some of the speakers who were scheduled for the conference to speak via a webinar, and others will be postponed to October. If you have a great speaker you want to hear from or a topic you would like us to cover please email @Gabrielle Gordon or @Belinda Johnson

I'm sure that although 2022 will have a few bumps in the road we will have many positives to look forward to. Later this year we will see both a Federal and State election. With those we can look forward to hearing about several funding and policy announcements – we will keep our eyes out for impacts to the sector.



Enjoy your weekend and stay safe,
Cheers, Bradley

Bradley Thomas
President – FinPro and CEO, Hepburn Shire

Membership

Welcome to new FinPro Member **James Bentley**, Director of Corporate & Community Services at West Wimmera SC.

Welcome to new FinPro Member **Carlo Manitta**, Financial Business Partner at Hepburn SC.

We pass on our congratulations to **Callista Clarke** who has moved to Whitehorse City Council as Manager Finance and Corporate Performance. Callista was previously at Boroondara for nearly 10 years where she was most recently Acting CFO.

FinPro Conference News

As detailed in the President's message, our 2022 Conference has been postponed to 26 – 28 October 2022 at RACV Cape Schanck. Please put this new date in your calendar 😊

An updated program will be provided over the coming months. For those who have already registered, Gab will be in contact to arrange the cancellation of your booking.

FinPro Professional Development – CPD Points for 2021

Updating your CPD points for 2021? Here is a list of the offerings FinPro have made over the past 12 months:

26.2.21	Half Day Webinar (Economic Outlook, LG Act Implementation)	2 ½ hrs
4.3.21	FCVic Councils Rates Hardship Forum - online	1 ¾ hrs
5.3.21	Model Accounts and Model Budget Webinar	1 ½ hrs
10.3.21	Budget Preparation Progress Webinar	1 hr
12.3.21	Financial Plan Webinar	1 ½ hrs
18.3.21	Fraud Awareness Webinar	1 hr
19.3.21	Revenue and Rating Plan Webinar	1 hr
30.4.21	Financial Plan Support Webinar	1 hr
12.4.21	GST and Cyber Vulnerability Webinar	1hr
18.6.21	FinPro Update webinar	2 ¼ hrs
11.8.21	Let's talk all things deliberative engagement – online webinar	1 hr
14.10.21	Practical tools to help your wellbeing – Clare Desira	1 hr
21.10.21	Debt – Another Resource for Councils to Consider (VLGA Connect)	1 ½ hrs
14-17.11.21	Leadership Program Workshop – CountryPlace Kalorama	21 hrs
3.12.21	FinPro AGM and End of year Update – Leonda by the Yarra	2 hrs

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. Copies of relevant information is available on the [LGV website](#)

Important Dates in relation to the LG Act:

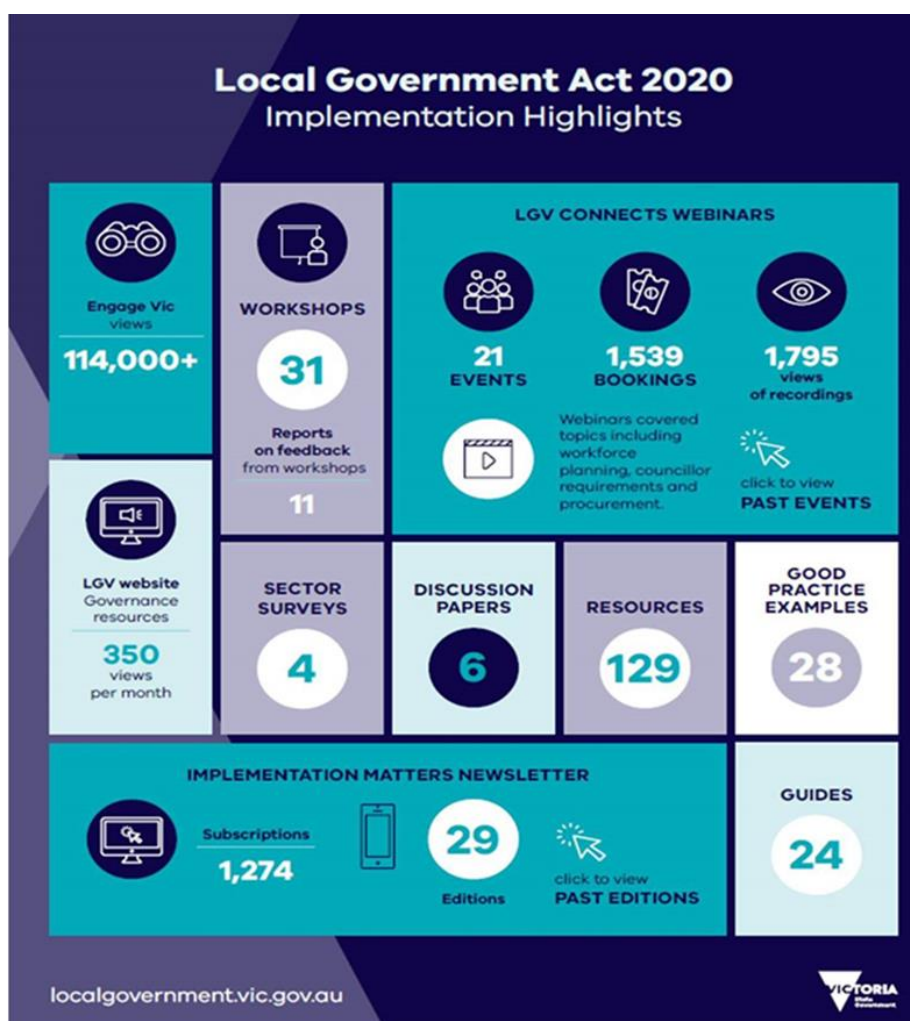
Asset Plan – 30 June 2022

Update from LGV – Implementation Matters

The following information was issued by Local Government Victoria on 22 December 2021 and is included here for member information.

Edition 30

Local Government Victoria thanks Councils, representatives from MAV, LGPro, FinPro, VLGA, Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia, Australian Services Union, and Rural Councils Victoria, and the Project Control Board for their contributions to the consultation and co-design initiatives related to the implementation of the Local Government Act 2020.



[Link to LGV Local Government Act 2020 Website](#)

The requirements under the *Local Government Act 2020* have mostly been implemented, with some remarkable outcomes and gains for the sector.

These accomplishments are a testimony to the resilience and dedication of council staff and elected officials to build an accountable local government sector that is focused on delivering for communities.

2021 has been another difficult year for Councils, facing the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, natural disasters, and other factors.

What's next?

On 31 December 2021, all Councils should have finalised the following documents:

- CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy
- Workforce Plan
- Recruitment Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy
- Procurement Policy

For more information and resources, please visit [EngageVic](#) and the [LGV website](#).

Recruitment Policy Guide

The *Recruitment Policy Guide for Local Government*, which has been drafted in collaboration with human resources professionals from across local government and the Australian Services Union, has been uploaded on [EngageVic](#) and the [LGV website](#). The Guide contains core principles of recruitment such as transparency, merit and equal opportunity which will assist Councils in developing their recruitment policies.

Asset Plan

The Asset Plan guidance material, *Making the Big Picture Simple – Asset Plans and the Local Government Act* will be released in January 2022 and made available on the [EngageVic](#) and the [LGV website](#). Note that Councils are expected to complete their Asset Plans by 30 June 2022 and that deliberative engagement is not required for the first iteration of the Asset Plan.

For queries and more information, please contact LGAct@ecodev.vic.gov.au.

Local Government Culture Project

The following information was recently sent to councils and is shared for member information:

Local Government Victoria (LGV) has engaged PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PwC) to undertake the Local Government Culture Project. The project aims to better understand the factors influencing culture and conduct within local government, and to work towards creating a safer, more diverse and representative local government sector.

This project will enable the sector to understand the factors influencing conduct and culture and identify initiatives and actions that will improve workplace culture and relationships in local government. These improvements will support better governance outcomes for all Victorians.

PwC and their academic partners have developed a Discussion Paper to identify and consider the factors influencing culture and conduct within local government. Drawing on recent integrity reports, targeted stakeholder consultation, and academic expertise, the Discussion Paper will guide a discussion about practical things that can be done to improve council culture. PwC has been supported by Professor Graham Sansom, Adjunct Professor at University of Technology Sydney (UTS), Professor Anona Armstrong AM, Emeritus Professor at the Victoria University College of Law and Justice and Dr Yongqiang Li, Senior Lecturer in Law at Victoria University and Australian Principal Lawyer.

The Discussion Paper poses 12 'lines of inquiry' for public feedback, based on the three emerging themes identified by PwC.

1. **Leadership experience and capability:** Although the roles and responsibilities of Councillors, Mayors and CEOs are clear in legislation, a lack of leadership experience and capability may be preventing some Councils from effectively working together as a diverse board of the community to achieve community-based objectives.
2. **Councillor journey:** Councillors need to be supported throughout their journey (e.g., from candidacy to appointment) to ensure they understand and can execute their role, particularly in the social media age.
3. **Early intervention and effective dispute resolution:** Early intervention and effective dispute resolution mechanisms are critical to resolving conflict and preventing the escalation of poor behaviour and its impacts.

The Discussion Paper and its summary 'Snapshot' document are now available on the Local Government Victoria website. Those wanting to read the Discussion Paper and make a submission can visit the [Local Government Victoria website](#)

*Submissions will be open until **5pm Monday 28 February 2022**.*

Key themes and advice will then be provided to the Minister for Local Government for consideration in 2022.

Victorian Council Rate Cap Announcement

The following information was released by the Victorian State Government on 29 December 2021 and is included here for member information:

VICTORIAN COUNCIL RATE CAP SET FOR NEXT FINANCIAL YEAR

A new rate cap of 1.75 per cent has been set for all Victorian councils for the 2022/23 financial year, to help ease cost of living pressures for Victorians.

Minister for Local Government Shaun Leane announced the cap today, under the Andrews Labor Government's Fair Go Rates system.

The Fair Go Rates system began in 2016 to limit uncontrolled rate hikes and to provide councils with a clear framework to guide their budgeting while ensuring essential services continue to be delivered.

The cap is set each year by the Minister for Local Government with advice from the Essential Services Commission, guided by the Consumer Price Index.

Before the Fair Go Rates system was introduced residents faced an average rate increase of 6 per cent every year. The current rate cap of 1.5 per cent is the lowest since the system was first introduced.

Councils collect rates from residents annually to fund and deliver essential community infrastructure and services such as local parks, libraries, community centres, roads, kindergartens, waste collection and sports grounds.

Councils individually set rates for their municipalities every year through their budget process and must consult with their communities on decisions relating to budgets, rates, and other charges.

To find out more about how rates are set visit localgovernment.vic.gov.au

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

Manager Corporate Services

- Alpine Shire Council
- Applications close 6 February 2022
- Details available [here](#)

Director Corporate Services

- Macedon Ranges Shire
- Applications close 7 January 2021
- Details available [here](#)

FinPro Executive Team 2022

President	Bradley Thomas (Hepburn SC)
Vice-President – Chair Professional Development	Belinda Johnson (Southern Grampians SC)
PD Committee Members	Alan Wilson (Melbourne CC) Charles Nganga (Casey CC) Melissa Baker (South Gippsland SC) Aaron Gerrard (Whittlesea CC)
Vice-President – Chair Technical	Tony Rocca (Maroondah CC)
Technical Committee Members	Danny Wain (Monash CC) Fiona Rae (Golden Plains SC) Nathan Morsillo (Greater Bendigo CC) Simone Wickes (Frankston CC) Wei Chen (Yarra CC)
Chair Advocacy and Vision	Binda Gokhale (Wyndham CC)
Secretary / Treasurer	Gabrielle Gordon

Thank-you to our 2022 Corporate Partners

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| * APV Valuers and Asset Management | * LG Solutions |
| * Commonwealth Bank | * Maia Financial |
| * CT Management | * New Era Management |
| * .id informed decisions | * VOTAR Partners |
| * Ibis Information Systems | * Vision Super |
| * MAGIQ Software | * Westpac |

FinPro Contact Details

FinPro (Local Government Finance Professionals Inc.)

Executive Officer – Gabrielle Gordon

Email: gabrielle@finpro.org.au

Mobile: 0400 114 015 Web: www.finpro.org.au