

## FinPro Member Update – Edition 15, 2021

Hi Members,

Well, it feels like winter has well and truly started 😞

Federal Budget week – lots of big figures there!!! Hopefully we see some flow on benefits for funding of projects and services through to Local Government.

Early next week we expect the release of the Victorian Ombudsman's Investigation into how local councils respond to ratepayers in financial hardship. We look forward to reviewing any recommendation and making comment to the report.

Today (Friday) our FinPro Executive is catching up in person as a group, planning the remainder of 2021. We look forward to making announcements about our next PD Day, Leadership Program and conference over the coming weeks.

Cheers, *Bradley*

**Bradley Thomas**  
**President FinPro**  
**(CEO Hepburn Shire)**

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## Dates for your calendar

- **20 May 2021 – FinPro Technical Q & A (online) - Year end accounts / LG Act 2020 and VAGO Update**  
[REGISTER HERE](#)
- **5 – 8 September 2021 – Leadership Program at Country Place Kalorama**
- **20 – 22 October 2021 – FinPro Annual Conference at RACV Cape Schanck**

Recordings of previous PD sessions available on our [WEBSITE NOW](#).

## Membership News

Welcome to our new members:

- **John Wacheke** who has joined the team at Campaspe Shire Council as Asset Accountant.

Congratulations to the following members who have moved to new positions within the sector:

- **Bradley Thomas** who has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer at Hepburn Shire Council. Bradley previously held the role of Director Corporate and Community.
- **Jacinta Tori** has been appointed as Co-ordinator Financial Accounting at the City of Ballarat, commencing next Monday 17 April 2021. Jacinta was at Melton City Council.

We welcome back **Sulan Zhao** to Whitehorse Council as well.

### Thank-you to our 2021 Corporate Partners

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



We welcome aboard Peter Smith from New Era Management as our new Corporate Partner. Peter has been involved as a member of FinPro for many years and has furthered his involvement by becoming a partner.

## Technical Update

### 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](#)

### Update from LGV

The following information was distributed by LGV last Friday 6 May and is included here for your information:

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#### **BULLETIN: 20/2021**

#### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (LAND INFORMATION) REGULATIONS 2021**

*From 1 July 2021, the Local Government Act 2020 (the new Act) will legislate the requirement for purchasers to provide information to councils about the acquisition of land (notices of acquisition, NOA) and for councils to provide a land information certificate (LIC) to a person on request.*

*As part of the Victorian Government's extensive reform of the local government framework, the new Act has been introduced to improve local government democracy, accountability and service delivery for all Victorians.*

*The new Act is mainly replacing the Local Government Act 1989 (the current Act). While many elements of the old legislation are changing, the requirements relating to NOA and LICs will not materially change from the current Act to the new Act.*

*The Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR) is introducing New Local Government (Land Information) Regulations 2021 (proposed Regulations) to support the administration of the new Act. These will replace, with limited changes, elements of the current Local Government (General) Regulations 2015 relating to NOA and LICs that are being repealed.*

*The proposed regulations are outlined in the document below and on the [Engage Vic](#) website. Your feedback on these draft regulations will help Local Government Victoria, DJPR refine the final regulations to ensure that*

they reflect the views of Victorians. The objectives of the proposed regulations are to prescribe for the purposes of the new Act:

- information specified to be included in a land information certificate; and
- the fee for the issue of a land information certificate; and
- the form of and particulars required in an acquisition notice; and
- the period of time for giving an acquisition notice to the Chief Executive Officer of the Council.

**Subordinate Legislation Act 1994**

PROPOSED LOCAL GOVERNMENT (LAND INFORMATION) REGULATIONS 2021

Notice of Preparation

In accordance with section 11 of the **Subordinate Legislation Act 1994**, notice is given that the proposed Local Government (Land Information) Regulations 2021 (proposed regulations) have been prepared.

The proposed regulations will be made under the **Local Government Act 2020** (2020 Act). The proposed regulations will replace regulations 13, 14 and 15 of the Local Government (General) Regulations 2015, which were made under the **Local Government Act 1989** (1989 Act).

The objectives of the proposed regulations are to prescribe for the purposes of the Act:

- (a) information specified to be included in a land information certificate; and
- (b) the fee for the issue of a land information certificate; and
- (c) the form of and particulars required in an acquisition notice; and
- (d) the period of time for giving an acquisition notice to the Chief Executive Officer of the Council.

The Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) examines the impact of the proposed Regulations, including costs, benefits and possible alternatives and concludes that the proposed Regulations are the most efficient method of achieving the identified objectives.

Public comment is now sought on the proposed regulations and an accompanying RIS, which concludes the proposed regulations:

- will impose an estimated economic burden in excess of \$2 million per year to persons within the community seeking a land information certificate from their local council; and
- will impose a burden on a person who acquires land to provide prescribed information in a notice of acquisition within one month of acquiring land.

For copies of the proposed regulations and RIS visit [Engage Vic](#) or contact Tracy Helman at Local Government Victoria by phone on (03) 9651 9999 or email at: [lqv@ecodev.vic.gov.au](mailto:lqv@ecodev.vic.gov.au)

Submissions may be submitted through the Engage Victoria website or posted to Local Government Victoria, Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions, GPO Box 4509, Melbourne, Victoria 3001, or emailed to [lqv@ecodev.vic.gov.au](mailto:lqv@ecodev.vic.gov.au). **Submissions are open for 28 days and close on 3 June 2021 at 5 pm.**

All submissions will be treated as public documents.

Local Government Victoria is available to provide advice to councils on 0418 287 976 or email [LGV.Emergencies@ecodev.vic.gov.au](mailto:LGV.Emergencies@ecodev.vic.gov.au)

## Victorian Local Government Grants Commission – 2019-20

The following information was sent to all councils earlier this week and is included here for your information:

The Victorian Local Government Grants Commission - 2019-20 questionnaire data is [now available](#) under heading Raw Data collected from Councils, with the date from previous questionnaires.

The VLGGC pages contain information relating to the work undertaken by the Victorian Local Government Grants Commission in its allocation of the Commonwealth Financial Assistance Grants program.

Thank you to all councils, the Commission appreciates Council's support and co-operation every year in completing the Questionnaire.

If you have any queries, please contact Colin Morrison or myself.

Nada Bagaric

Support to the Victorian Local Government Grants Commission  
Local Government Victoria

## Update from the MAV

The following information was sent to Mayors, Councillors and MAV Reps yesterday and is shared here as information for members.

Dear Colleagues,

The Federal Budget announced this week included significant additional funding for a range of programs delivered by councils.

Commonwealth Financial Assistance Grants for FY2021-22 will be a total of \$2.65 billion nationally, with \$1.3 billion being brought forward to be paid in 2020-21. Victorian councils are budgeted to receive \$636.3m million (\$471.3m general purpose assistance, \$165.0m for roads), a 2.28% increase on the previous year. The level of these grants is estimated to be 0.6% of Commonwealth taxation revenue, which is in keeping with levels in recent years.

This budget is a spending budget, including substantial additional funding to the states and territories through the GST payments. We will be advocating to the Victorian Government to partner with councils in the delivery of initiatives and services to communities that it delivers with this additional funding – councils know their local communities best, and we make sure services get delivered where they are most needed.

The most significant announcement for the sector was the additional \$1 billion extension of the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program until 2022-23.

Other highlights of interest to councils include:

- Further \$250 million for the Building Better Regions Fund
- Additional funding for disaster mitigation, including \$212.2 million for drought planning, \$1.2 billion for improving preparedness and \$275.9 million response to natural disasters, and disaster recovery arrangements
- Further \$2.7 billion for the Commonwealth's apprenticeship wage subsidy scheme
- \$998.1 million to reduce and support victims of domestic violence
- \$1.2 billion over six years for improved digital connectivity

- \$67 million to reduce the amount of food waste going to landfill, and \$5.9 million for a further grant round of the National Product Stewardship Investment Fund

The President of the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA), Cr Linda Scott has [welcomed](#) the additional funding which will be provided to councils for a number of programs, including roads and community infrastructure.

ALGA's [summary](#) provides a list of initiatives of interest to councils.

### Aged Care

There is significant new funding for Aged Care which respond to recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aged care Quality and Safety. 80,000 additional home care packages will be available over the next two years. On a disappointing note, the vast majority of the budget announcement relates to residential care, rather than transformation reform and investment into home care. The number of additional home care packages does not cover the number required for the current waiting list. Victorians eligible for packages may still be waiting for extended periods of time to access the care they require.

### Early Childhood Education and Care

There are positive aspects to the Early Childhood Education and Care announcements to provide a stronger foundation for the future system. The previously announced additional \$1.7 billion for ECEC in Commonwealth funded services is included - from 11 July 2022, families with 2 or more children below the age of 5 in childcare will be able to claim Child Care Subsidy up to 95% for the second and subsequent children. The current Child Care Subsidy cap of \$10,560 will also be removed from 1 July 2022. It would appear that there is likely to be an increased administrative complexity to a system that is already stretched. It would have been positive to see some targeted strategies to boost the supply of the early childhood workforce to meet the increased demand for ECEC places as women's workforce participation increases.

The extension of the National Partnership on Universal Access to Education and Care is also a positive step. MAV has consistently advocated for sustainable and enduring funding for this National Partnership. From 2022–2025 a new 4-year funding agreement with the States and Territories to 'Guarantee Universal Access to Preschool' will be put in place. Funding of \$1.6 billion will be made available but is conditional on the state and territories agreement to a "robust reform timeline" to increase participation and school readiness. In 2024 this funding will be tied to attendance targets. It will be important to work closely with the Victorian Government about the details of the reform timeline and the attendance targets, given these will have implications for council-provided services.

### Leadership Forum on the Gender Equality Act (2020)

The MAV will host an online Leadership Forum focusing on Councils' implementation of the Gender Equality Act (2020) on Friday 11 June between 10am – 11:30am.

Commissioner Dr Niki Vincent, who is leading the [Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector](#), will deliver a key note presentation and take questions / answers from attendees.

There will also be a panel discussion of local government representatives reflecting on the implementation of the Gender Equality Act – both the opportunity and possible apprehension.

Your Council colleagues who will participate on the panel are:

- Mayor, Cr Jennifer Anderson, Macedon Ranges Shire Council
- Mayor, Cr Libby Stapleton, Surf Coast Shire Council
- CEO, Ali Wastie, Bass Coast Shire Council
- CEO, Andrew Day, Manningham City Council
- CEO, Jessie Holmes, Yarriambiack Shire Council

All Mayors, MAV representatives and CEOs are invited to attend the forum. You can register [via this link](#). If you would like further information, please contact MAV Policy Adviser, Kellie Nagle, via [knagle@mav.asn.au](mailto:knagle@mav.asn.au) or 0407 730 573.

Cr David Clark | MAV President

## FinPro Professional Development

### FinPro Q & A – Interactive ZOOM session - “Year End, the LGAct 2020, VAGO Update and more”

Thursday 20 May 2021 from 11am – 12 noon

#### REGISTER NOW FOR THIS EVENT

As Councils are thick into budgets, implementing the changes required as a result of the new LGA, as well as thinking about preparing year end accounts and being audited, there are always a lot of questions. To assist, FinPro will be running an online, interactive Question and Answer session. This is your opportunity to ask the questions you may have around any of these topics, or raise questions around anything else that you think our panel might be able to assist with.

During the session Sanchu Chummar (VAGO) will also provide an update from his office:

- How to access 79 Councils data for benchmarking purposes? Demonstrate VAGO data dashboard and 2020 LG Report.
- Key messages for 2021 audit cycle. Revenue accounting/ Contract renewal and lease accounting/ COVID disclosures.
- Administrative matters and general updates.

#### Our Panelists will be:

- **Sanchu Chummar**, Acting Sector Director, Local Government, VAGO
- **Daniel O’Shea**, Program Manager Finance and Reporting, LGV
- **Martin Thompson**, Partner – Audit, Crowe
- **Tony Rocca** – Vice-President FinPro (Technical Committee) and Manager Finance and Governance, Maroondah City Council
- **Fiona Rae** – Manager Finance, Golden Plains Shire and FinPro Executive member

#### Our Facilitator will be:

- **Danny Wain** – Executive Member FinPro (Technical Committee) and CFO, Monash City Council

In order to get the most out of this session, if you are able to send through in advance any questions you have – this will ensure that the Panel are able to answer them on the day.

Email the questions when registering, or separately prior to the session to [gab](mailto:gab).

This session is free for all FinPro Members and will be recorded and shared with our membership on Friday 21 May 2021.

## RECENT EVENTS:

### GST Update – Wednesday 12 May 2021

Recording to be available on our website shortly [at this link](#).

## Financial Plan Support Webinar



FinPro offered a Financial Plan support webinar to help members complete the Financial Plan, now a mandatory reporting requirement under the new LG Act 2021.

[Watch the recording now](#)

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

- **EOI Independent Audit and Risk Committee**
- Alpine Shire Council
- [Link to council website](#)
- For further enquiries please contact Ruth Kneebone, Director Commercial on 0402 104 188
- EOI's close Friday 21 May 2021.
  
- **Fixed Asset Accountant**
- Whitehorse City Council
- [Link to council website](#)
- For further details please contact Julia Cushing at Whitehorse City Council on 9262 6302
- Applications close 16 May 2021
  
- **Corporate Performance Officer**
- Whitehorse City Council
- [Link to council website](#)
- For further details please contact Julia Cushing at Whitehorse City Council on 9262 6302
- Applications close 16 May 2021
  
- **Coordinator Revenue and Rates**
- Whitehorse City Council
- [Link to council website](#)
- For further details please contact Julia Cushing at Whitehorse City Council on 9262 6302
- Applications close 16 May 2021
  
- **Independent Audit and Risk Committee Members**
- Hepburn Shire Council
- [Link to website for further details](#)
- If you have any further questions, please contact the Governance and Risk team on 03 5348 2306
- Applications close at 5pm on Wednesday 26 May 2021



## News from our Corporate Partners



### ***New Era Management Need assistance in putting together the 10-year financial plan?***

As a long-time supporter of FinPro and a new corporate partner, I am keen to help members save time and make this first attempt in putting together the 10-year financial plan a rewarding one for you.

And for any council that books my services before June 30, 2021 I am offering a 10% discount.

Feel free to contact me on 0427 841 096 or [peter@neweramangement.com.au](mailto:peter@neweramangement.com.au) A list of referees can be made available too.

Or for more information visit [www.neweramangement.com.au/lq-webinar/](http://www.neweramangement.com.au/lq-webinar/)

Yours in LG Finance  
Peter Smith, The Financial Strategist

### ***APV upcoming event***

A number of the leading experts in Local Government are putting on a free one-day webinar on Tue 25 May starting at 9:00am. The content is strongly focused on technical content with sessions set up with comfort breaks between sessions to allow you to escape the screen, have a coffee, etc.

Based on the recent VAGO report, all sessions are relevant and cover -

- Asset Management
- Financial Statement preparation
- Asset Valuation and Depreciation
- Audit and accounting update
- Tax update
- Workplace culture

Sessions and presenters include -

- Jackie Frost (Moreton Bay Regional Council) - Training councilors in asset management
- Pat McCarthy (Genesis Accounting) - FBT, GST and other local government tax issues
- David Edgerton (APV valuers and Asset Management / Asset Valuer Pro)
  - o Getting depreciation right
  - o Sneak peek at version 3 of Asset Valuer Pro (Asset Valuer Pro has recently been used by Geelong to do their own valuations)
- Adam Bradfield (TNR Accountants, Auditors and Business Advisors) - general update
- Jill Brazil (Jill Brazil Consulting) - Workplace diversity and inclusion
- Augustin Stojic and Tony Pizzuto (LG Solutions) - year end cloud update and new functionality

To find out more visit <https://www.assetvaluer.net/events>



## FinPro Executive Team 2021

**President**

Bradley Thomas (Hepburn SC)

**Vice-President – Chair Professional Development**

Binda Gokhale (Wyndham CC)

**PD Committee Members**

Alan Wilson (Melbourne CC)

Belinda Johnson (Southern Grampians SC)

Charles Nganga (Casey CC)

Melissa Baker (South Gippsland SC)

**Vice-President – Chair Technical**

Tony Rocca (Maroondah CC)

**Technical Committee Members**

Danny Wain (Monash CC)

Fiona Rae (Golden Plains SC)

Mark Montague (Whittlesea CC)

Nathan Morsillo (Greater Bendigo CC)

Simone Wickes (Frankston CC)

Wei Chen (Yarra CC)

**Secretary / Treasurer**

Gabrielle Gordon

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