

FinPro Member Update December 2020 (Year End Edition)

President's Message

Good afternoon,

In years to come, when someone says to you “oh what a year it’s been,” you will need only to remind them of 2020!!! Words can’t do justice to describe what a year this has been, but together, we have made it through the year and everyone should be incredibly proud of themselves.

Local Government is a tough sector to work in; I think as tough as any, with the complexity of services we deliver, increasing community aspirations and desires and a decreasing revenue base, but I would also argue that it is as rewarding a sector as any. To know that the work we are doing has a direct impact of the daily lives of those in our communities encourages us to continue to put in 110%.

Even without the COVID Pandemic 2020 would have been busy for LG – Council elections and the subsequent induction process PLUS the biggest change in our legislation in over 30 years with a new Local Government Act and the significant implementation associated with that Act.

Some of the FinPro activities for 2020 have included:

- Welcoming a number of new members to the FinPro Executive – thank you for your contribution.
- Becoming a member of the Local Government Act Project Control Board – we are thrilled to have joined LGV and peak bodies, being at the table discussing the LG Act implementation.
- Having over 270 delegates attended our February PD Day (doesn’t that seem so long ago....)
- Assisting in the preparation and launch of the Model Budget and Model Financial Statements at the start of the year.
- Coordinating a number of Regional Finance Group networking opportunities.
- Running FinPro Executive meetings via ZOOM.
- Providing 40+ member updates – we have tried to keep members updated with key information throughout the year.
- Conducting surveys of Councils key information and utilising this data for advocacy to State Government.
- Regular contact with LGV and VAGO.
- Looking after yourself webinar series – four webinars from Wayne Schwass.
- Running our May PD Day was run completely virtually focusing on the LG Act implementation and year-end processes.
- Sadly, having to cancel our 2020 Conference and Leadership Programs 😞 but they will be back bigger and better in 2021 (fingers crossed).
- Providing regular webinars on a broad range of topics including technical, strategic and professional development.

- Providing an online mini-2020 conference hearing from sponsors on their LTFP offerings; hearing from speakers on thoughts for our future, and from CEOs on the challenges to face Council in 2020 and beyond.
- Establishing a FinPro Working group of 18 members who continue to play an important role in assisting the sector to be prepared for the implementation of the new Act, and
- Production of the 2020 FinPro art gallery plus a few laughs along the way so as to not always take things so seriously.

When I started as FinPro President my mantra was to make life easier for our members. I hope that the activities undertaken by FinPro may have done that for you all.

Thank you to our sponsors and partners for 2020. Your support is greatly appreciated, and we look forward to our 2021 conference where we can meet back in person to catch up with you all.

Can I please take this opportunity to thank the Executive for 2020 - Binda Gokhale, Kim Jaensch, Liz Rowland, Nathan Morsillo, Mark Montague, Danny Wain, Kristy Stephens, Charles Nganga, John Brockway, Belinda Johnson, Vishantri Perera and Tony Roca. Not only have you dealt with your own individual impacts of COVID and increased workloads at your Councils but you have also worked together extremely well for the benefit of our FinPro members and our sector. A massive thanks from me!

Gab, well each year you continue to go from strength to strength in your commitment to and passion for FinPro, and this year has been no different. You threw the rulebook out the window of how FinPro operates and have created regular members updates and moved our entire Professional Development program online. And to think that only a few short months ago we have never even heard of ZOOM. Thank you for all you do for us.

I hope you are all able to take some time off over Xmas/NY for yourselves, to reflect on the challenges of the year and also the opportunities you face in the future. I hope too that you recharge your batteries and catch up with the most important things in life (your health, family and friends).

Merry Christmas and see you (in person) in 2021!

Cheers, Bradley



Bradley Thomas - FinPro President
Director Community and Corporate Services – Hepburn Shire

**MERRY
 CHRISTMAS**

Membership News

With Council's updating and renewing their membership for the coming year, we are very pleased and appreciative of the 73 Councils and 3 libraries that have renewed their membership for 2020/21.

We also welcome the following new members to FinPro:

- **Cassie-Anne Norris**, DC / Assets Accountant at Melton City Council
- **Kyle D'Souza** – welcome back as Coordinator Management Accountant at Darebin City Council
- **Philippa Spurling** – Finance Manager at Central Goldfields Shire Council

We congratulate the following members on their new roles:

- Natalie Martin who will be moving from Northern Grampians Shire to Southern Grampians Shire to take up the role as Revenue Coordinator.
- Belinda Johnson who will be moving into the role of Director Infrastructure at Southern Grampians for a period of 3 months. Belinda is currently the Manager Finance at Southern Grampians and a FinPro Executive Member.

If you have any news to share with the FinPro membership please forward this to [Gab](#).

Membership Renewal information [available here](#) Corporate Partnership information [available here](#)

FinPro Technical Committee News / Updates

Local Government Act Implementation

The FinPro Local Government Act 2020 Working Group is meeting for the third time today.

A reminder to go to <https://engage.vic.gov.au/local-government-act-2020> for all LG Act information.

Working Group Update

The Local Government Act 2020 Working Group and Subgroups have continued to meet to assist the sector in developing minimum requirements templates as well as better practice guidance material. The groups have been so generous with their time out of their already busy schedules.

The three subgroup updates are as follows:

Long Term Financial Plan Subgroup:

Financial Plan Template that will act as a baseline report in order to comply with the LG Act 2020 and LG (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020.

Model LTFP Template

Financial Plan Better Practice Guide

Model Budget Subgroup:

The usual annual documentation will be provided. Early noted changes at this stage are:

- Statement of Human Resources

- Revised tables in line with regulations to include gender (male / female / self-described)
- Additional tables (FTE and \$'s) for Y2-Y4, also including gender split and forecast
- Statement of Capital Works
- Additional tables (summary by asset class) for Y2-Y4
- Update of Better Practise Guide in line with Local Government Act 2020 changes

Revenue and Rating Strategy Subgroup:

A template as well as a Better Practice Guide is being drafted. If Rating Review outcomes suggest further changes, these will be undertaken accordingly.

An initial draft of these documents is scheduled for release by the end of January 2021 for sector consideration on the Engage Vic site.

FinPro Professional Development

CPD Points for 2020

At the end of year, we know that many of our members like to update their Professional CPD Reporting, so the following is hopefully of assistance.

Throughout 2020 FinPro has continued to provide Professional Development Opportunities for our members. The following is a listing of what we have provided during the year.

| Event | CPD Hrs |
|---|---------|
| Seminar – 29 February 2020 at the Melbourne Convention Centre | 5.0 hrs |
| Online Mental Health Session with Wayne Schwass - 1 April 2020 | 0.5 hrs |
| Online Mental Health Session with Wayne Schwass – 8 April 2020 | 0.5 hrs |
| Online Mental Health Session with Wayne Schwass – 15 April 2020 | 0.5 hrs |
| Online Mental Health Session with Wayne Schwass – 22 April 2020 | 0.5 hrs |
| Online LGV Update – 27 May 2020 | 0.5 hrs |
| Online VAGO Update – 27 May 2020 | 0.5 hrs |
| Online FinPro Q&A Session – 29 May 2020 | 1.0 hr. |
| Online Session – Setting a new work mindset – 31 July 2020 | 1.5 hrs |
| Online FinPro Q&A Session – 6 August 2020 | 1.0 hr. |
| Online Webinar – Councillor Onboarding – 1 October 2020 | 1.0 hr. |
| Online Webinar – LTFP Session 1 – 22 October 2020 | 1.0 hr. |
| Online Webinar – LTFP Session 2 – 22 October 2020 | 1.0 hr. |
| Online Mini-Conference – 23 October 2020 | 3.0 hrs |
| Online Webinar – Budget Preparation – 10 December 2020 | 1.0 hr. |

Upcoming Events

FinPro Professional Development Day – 26 February 2021 (incorporating the FinPro AGM) – This event is planned as a hybrid event, run in regions throughout Victoria.

The planned venues at this stage are:

- North Central Victoria – Bendigo
- South West Victoria – Warrnambool
- Eastern Victoria – Traralgon or Morwell
- Metro – Melbourne

The option will also be available to live-stream all morning sessions.

Morning sessions will be the same for all attendees and will be live-streamed to all venues. Planned topics for the morning will be:

- The Victoria Economy, recovery and funding opportunities for LG
- Local Government Act Implementation
- Launch of the Model Budget and Model Financial Statements
- Looking after the most vulnerable in our communities – Victorian Ombudsman and the ESC
- AGM

Following a lunch break, the afternoon sessions will be run separately for each region, with topics to be discussed including:

- Budget Preparation updates
- Community Consultation case studies, and
- How organisations are managing the move back to work / working from home arrangements.

If you have any ideas of speakers, or would be willing to lead any of the above discussions for your region please contact [Gab](#).

Further information about this event will be distributed towards the end of January 2021.

FinPro Leadership Program 2021 – Our next Leadership Program will be held from **16 – 19 May 2021**. Proudly supported by Vision Super, this program will offer the opportunity for up to 12 Emerging Leaders from within the FinPro Membership to take part in a 3-day residential program, onsite at Country Place Kalorama. We encourage all our members to consider applying for this program, or encouraging someone within their Council who they believe would be suitable to apply. Applications will open in February 2021.

FinPro Conference 2021 – This event is booked in at RACV Cape Schanck for **Wednesday 20 – Friday 22 October 2021**.

Previous events

Budget Preparation for 2021/22 – On 10 December 2020 we ran a really informative session on preparing for the 2021/22 Budget Cycle. Thanks to our presenters who are all members of FinPro – Allan Williams, South Gippsland, Narelle Klein, Wodonga, Dennis O’Keeffe, Port Phillip and Charles Nganga, and to our facilitator, Danny Wain, Monash.

Further details of the session are available [here](#).

[Watch now](#). (you may need to go back to the start of the recording – for some reason it wants to start half way through!)

Job Vacancies

FinPro is happy to place advertisements on our website for any finance related positions our members councils are advertising. Please send the details through to [Gab](#)

Current positions

- **Coordinator Financial Sustainability**
- Northern Grampians Shire Council
- <http://applynow.net.au/jobs/MOR50-financial-accountant>
- For further information about the role please contact Stephanie Burns, People and Culture Officer at stephanie.burns@ngshire.vic.gov.au or call 03 5358 8700
- Closing Date – 12.00pm, Monday 21 December 2020.

- **Accounting Officer (Part Time Permanent – 0.8 FTE)**
- City of Greater Geelong
- <https://www.geelongaustralia.com.au/employment/default.aspx>
- If you would like to know more contact Kathy Fulton, Financial Reporting Co-ordinator at kfulton@geelongcity.vic.gov.au or call (03) 5272 4613
- Applications close 5.00pm Wednesday 6 January 2021.

- **Asset Management Accounting Officer**
- City of Greater Geelong
- <https://www.geelongaustralia.com.au/employment/default.aspx>
- If you would like to know more contact Kathy Fulton, Financial Reporting Co-ordinator at kfulton@geelongcity.vic.gov.au or call (03) 5272 4613
- Applications close 5.00pm Wednesday 6 January 2021.

- **Coordinator Finance (Full time contract 12 months)**
- Bass Coast Shire Council
- <https://www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/about-council/jobs/current-vacancies/coordinator-finance>
- If you are interested in the opportunity to lead an innovative finance team to deliver exceptional business partnering support and the provision of end-to-end financial management and compliance please get in touch with Tess Dowthwaite, Manager Financial Services on 03 5671 2732. Secondments are welcomed.
- Applications close Sunday 3 January 2021

- **Finance Business Partner (Full time contract 12 months)**
- Bass Coast Shire Council
- <https://www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/about-council/jobs/current-vacancies/finance-business-partner>
- If you are interested in the opportunity to be a part of a developed finance business partnering culture, and to deliver financial plans and compliance utilising leading edge Technology One products please get in touch with Tess Dowthwaite, Manager Financial Services on 03 5671 2732. Secondments are welcomed.
- Applications close Sunday 3 January 2021

Messages from our Corporate Partners

LG Solutions: LG Solutions **Cloud YE** - worth the wait

Hi Victorian Year Enders!

Congratulations to everyone for getting through 2020. We hope you have a great Christmas and a Happier New Year.!

LG Solutions has been providing YE reporting templates to local governments across Australia for **15 years**.

We are acutely aware of the requirements & expected outcomes for YE reporting which is why the number of entities using the LGS YE templates is growing each year (> 200 across Oz for YE 19/20).

Already in the second year for **Cloud YE** in NSW...over 140 Councils (& associated entities) used our Cloud YE to complete their 2019/20 financials.

We are therefore very excited to announce that Cloud YE is now available for Victorian Councils!

Beyond our usual “sharp” look and feel plus all the existing features of our “tried & tested” Excel YE Templates (e.g., model Financial Report (LGMFR) updates, auto GL update, auto cash flow update and workings, full council customisation for lines and disclosures), **Cloud YE also provides a whole heap of new & additional benefits including:**

- **Multi-user access** (including Auditor view only access if you wish)
- **Individual real time formatting choices across every note**
- **On demand PDF reporting** meaning an immediate, complete set of Financial Statements 24/7/365
- **ASAP Rollover functionality** meaning Councils can choose to get a head start on preparing the next year’s Financials as soon as they finish this



**For further information
on Cloud YE (VIC)**

please call Tony on 0418 696 680 or
via email tony@lgsolutions.net.au

Message from Curve Securities

Season's Greetings from all at Curve Securities and YieldHub!

Curve Securities would like to wish all FinPro members the best as we move into the festive season and away from 2020!

As a Christmas gift we are launching our new tailorable, widget-based reporting in our YieldHub Portfolio Management cloud application. With features fast tracked to assist pandemic induced, work from home requirements, such as robust compliance, management oversight and electronic approvals we would love the opportunity to demo the completely rebuilt system to you in the New Year. We are making it free for all councils across Australia until January 2022 with no obligation to continue.

Message from CT Management

The Directors and Staff of CT Management Group have valued being part of FinPro activities during 2020 and look forward to working with FinPro, the Board and Gabrielle (Executive Officer) during 2021.

We extend to all FinPro Executive and members our best wishes for a safe and relaxing Christmas and New Year holiday period.

CT Management Managing Director, Michael Courtney has also written an [article recently on rate capping](#) which may be of interest to FinPro Members – [READ HERE FOR MORE.](#)

Message from Vision Super



We wish you a wonderful, joyous and safe holiday season.



FinPro Executive Team for 2020

President – Bradley Thomas (Hepburn Shire Council)

Executive Officer – Gab Gordon

Vice-President: Chair Technical Committee – Tony Rocca (Maroondah City Council)

Technical Committee members:

- Danny Wain (Monash City Council)
- Kristy Stephens (Bass Coast Shire)
- Liz Rowland (Western Water)
- Mark Montague (Yarra City Council)
- Nathan Morsillo (Greater Bendigo City Council)
- Vishantri Perera (Yarra Ranges Shire Council)

Vice-President: Chair Professional Development committee – Binda Gokhale (Wyndham CC)

Professional Development Committee members:

- Belinda Johnson (Southern Grampians Shire)
- Charles Nganga (Casey City Council)
- John Brockway (Surf Coast Shire) – also leads the FinPro Mentoring Program
- Kim Jaensch (Frankston City Council) – leads the FinPro Leadership Program

We thank our 2020 Corporate Partners

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

[Corporate Partnership](#) is available to all businesses and is an opportunity to support FinPro, our members and the sector as we journey through COVID and are unable to provide face-to-face Professional Development and live sponsorship opportunities.

For further information please contact Gabrielle Gordon on 0400 114 015 or at gabrielle@finpro.org.au