

FinPro Member Update July 2020 (Edition 3)

President's Message

Hi everyone,

Another week done and dusted, and don't they just fly by at the moment. A friend this week told me there are only 22 Mondays left till Christmas --- arrrgggghhhh!

We are pleased to be able to launch today the first of our monthly (at least) **Lunch and Learn** sessions. Thanks to everyone's feedback to the survey about the type of PD you would like to see over the coming months. We will be holding a monthly webinar, covering a number of topics (both technical and professional development) that we hope you will enjoy and find beneficial. A lot of comments were made about missing the human connection and that viewing via a screen isn't the same. We agree and as soon as it is safe and responsible to hold a 'live' event we will look at how we get together in person.

We have had a few questions about the release of any findings associated with the State Governments Rating Review. The report was submitted to the Minister Local Government prior to 31 March 2020. They will now consider but early indication was we could expect to have any outcomes in late 2020, this of course was before COVID and a change in the LG Minister. We would therefore not expect to hear until early 2021.

Finally, I'll take this opportunity to be a bit sneaky: I'm currently advertising for a Manager Financial Services.... Hepburn Shire is a beautiful place, why not consider it?? Check out our job information on page 6 of this Update.

Enjoy your weekend!

Have a great weekend,



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

Membership News

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

LAUNCH OF OUR LUNCH AND LEARN SERIES

- **Session 1: Setting a new work mindset**
- **Friday 31 July 2020, 1.00pm – 2.30pm**
- **FREE for all FinPro Members**
- **Watch out for the email with your invite!**

The following four speakers will present and then a live Q&A, facilitated by FinPro President Bradley Thomas, will allow an opportunity for you to ask questions of the panelists.

Richard Dore – Creating a positive workplace culture
CO-CEO Proteus Management

Creating a positive workplace culture is critical to managing right now – and everyone has a part to play in this. Richard will discuss how to lead and be led in a robust, resilient, no-whinge, solution focused workplace (whether it be at the office or in the virtual world we are now living in).

John Henderson – The practicalities of working from home
Assistant Director Solution Engagement, DHHS

John has had extensive experience, especially over the past 5 months, working through both the technological issues related to the way we now work, and also around the functionality of working from home. He will share his experiences and give some guidance on how to manage successfully.

Mary-Jane Moala – The reality of working from home – one practitioners' story
Co-Ordinator Finance Operations, Wyndham City Council

Mary-Jane will provide a personal perspective on managing work, family & other pressures over recent times; managing critical projects, managing team and team performance, home schooling, other care responsibilities – and making sure there is enough toilet paper in the house!

Belinda Johnson – The reality of working from home
Manager Finance, South Grampians Shire and Executive Member, FinPro

Hear from our own Executive Team member Belinda as she shares her insights into working in the current environment.

FinPro Technical Committee News / Updates

General Information

The LGV website provides a host of information: [LGV - COVID19 Information](#)

The FinPro Website provides a host of information: [FinPro Resource Library](#)

Information available here includes:

- Previous copies of the FinPro Member Updates
- Implementation of the Local Government Act
- Accounting Standards Guidance (Updated 17 July 2020)
- Model Budget 2020/2021 and Model Financial Statements 2019/20
- Samples of council policies

Implementation of Local Government Act 2020 – Update

Earlier this week we shared information about the co-design of the new Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework. We (FinPro) might be a bit biased, but this is a really critical part of the development as it will work on how the follow key elements can all be linked together:

- Community Vision,
- Council Plan
- Four-year budget
- Financial Plan
- Revenue and Rating Plan
- Asset Management Plan,
- Workforce Plan, and
- Annual Report

Members are strongly encouraged to consider nominating to be part of a small working group to work on this. LGV are very keen to have many participants, with varying experience and across the sector. Participating in this stage of the Act Implementation allows you to have input early and set some of the direction to participate.

For further information on this please refer to the email sent to you on Tuesday 21 July with the header: [FinPro – Implementation of the Local Government Action 2020 – Update](#). Alternatively, please contact gab if you would like this information resent to you.

Please ensure you provide your nominations at LGAct@delwp.vic.gov.au including the following information: Name, Position, Years of experience and Email by COB this Friday 24th July.

There are likely to be future working groups that get into the detail of what exactly makes up a budget, or asset management plan and FinPro will call for members of those working groups in the coming weeks. However, to be part of the co-design and thinking about the new Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework please get your nominations in.

FinPro Executive meeting with VAGO

Bradley Thomas and Tony Rocca (VP FinPro and Chair Technical Committee) met with VAGO's Sanchu Chummar earlier this week to discuss a number of items, including:

- Year-end process
- COVID-19 disclosure for asset valuations
- Revaluation processes

It was an insightful discussion and led to how challenging the virtual/remote auditing has been - potentially adding 1-3 days to an audit.

In relation to the Disclosure in the Financial Statements, VAGO is working with LGV as to what this disclosure will look like, especially if Councils have undertaken a revaluation many months before COVID-19 hit us all.

Implementing the changes to the Accounting Standards

Recent survey results (from the FinPro survey on Professional development) showed that 62% of respondents were concerned about implementing all the changes required for the new accounting standards.

Taking this onboard, we have developed some guidance to assist members. This information is provided following consultation with both LGV and VAGO and is included on our [website](#).

2020/21 Council Budget Parameters and Budget Adoption Timelines

A reminder that FinPro are providing an up-to-date picture across the state of the progress of adoption of Council Budgets for 2020/21, along with measures taken within the budget to assist communities to cope with the affects of COVID-19. As Council's adopt their budgets, please provide the updated information to [gab](#) so that she can update the survey accordingly.

[SURVEY RESULTS](#)

Departmental Changes for Local Government Victoria

You may have noticed that Local Government Victoria's (LGV) branding has changed over the last few weeks.

Premier Daniel Andrews approved administrative arrangements for Local Government Victoria (LGV) to transfer to the Department of Jobs Precincts and Regions (DJPR) from 1 July 2020, following the appointment of Hon Shaun Leane MP as the Minister for Local Government, Suburban Development and Veterans.

This change enables alignment and greater collaboration with the Minister's Suburban Development portfolio.

Local Government Performance Reporting – Target Setting Trial

Members please note that LGV is inviting councils to review the proposed target setting methodology and test the tools before their formal introduction to the sector. This update is about making members aware that this pilot is occurring, partly in case details haven't come through yet to your finance teams.

This is focused on a few measures this year – being the following ones:

Service measures:

G2 – Community satisfaction with community consultation and engagement

R2 – Sealed local roads maintained to condition standards

SP2 – Planning applications decided within required timeframes

WC5 – Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill

Financial measures:

E2 – Expenses per property assessment

S2 – Rates compared to property values

L1 – Current assets as a percentage of current liabilities

O5 – Asset renewal and upgrade as a percentage of depreciation

LGV have sent a separate workbook (Excel) to Council's to enter target information for the forward years.

For the financial ones above, these are all ones which are already part of “forecasts” in the LGPRF year-end workbooks. These forecasts (from SRPs) will be a part of the audited performance statements for the current financial year. The methodology in the target's workbook is more like “setting a target” for 2020/2021, then adjusting it by a percentage – which is a bit different to the forecasts.

If anyone has delved even further into this, and would like to contribute to further updates for members, feel free to email [Nathan Morsillo](mailto:Nathan.Morsillo) or post on the FinPro Yammer Forum.

The follow is an excerpt from LGV, and includes a link to a survey to provide feedback about target setting.

In moving to the next phase of the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF), Local Government Victoria (LGV) is planning the staged introduction of the setting and reporting of targets against selected indicators in the Framework. This process, due to run over the next three years, will see Councils develop publicly reported targets and report performance against these targets as a method of promoting council transparency.

In developing the model, LGV is inviting all councils to review the proposed target setting methodology and test the tools before their formal introduction to the sector. LGV acknowledges that many councils are already setting targets. For those councils, LGV is

interested in how the LGPRF Target Setting process could be aligned with your target setting processes, rather than replacing your existing practices. For councils not currently using targets, this is an opportunity to try the tools and see if they would help in the development of your processes. We also encourage you to think about how targets will help communicate the success of your council to residents and ratepayers.

The following link will introduce you to the broad topic of target setting and how it might work in the LGPRF environment. It will then seek your feedback on various aspects of target setting, and on the proposed model.

Click [here](#) for to view and provide input on target setting.

Local Government Performance Reporting Framework

A couple of Councils have started their annual audit process and are referring to an older version of the LGPRF Template, please make sure you refer to the latest version of the template and guidelines, and review guidance issued in response to COVID. <https://knowyourcouncil.vic.gov.au/publications>

Job Vacancies

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

The following position is currently being advertised:

- Manager Financial Services**
 Hepburn Shire Council
 Applications close 3 August 2020
 For a confidential discussion call Bradley Thomas, Director Community and Corporate Services on (03) 5321 6450.
<https://www.hepburn.vic.gov.au/manager-financial-services/>

Helpful webinars, articles, videos or podcasts

This week we quizzed our Executive about what they were watching / listening to or reading that had a positive influence on them right now – here are a few suggestions:

Mark Montague has shared the link to [Beyond Blue](#) – some great tips on looking after your mental health whilst working from home.

John Brockway has shared his link to a ted talk that is one of his favourite – [How to make stress your friend.](#)

Nathan Morsillo shared a helpful podcast on [leading](#) – and also some blogs on the topic of [delegation.](#), and

Belinda Johnson really enjoys the [good news stories](#) shared through the ABC – no doom and gloom here – full of good stuff and local too!

FinPro Executive Members

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) – also leads the FinPro Leadership Program

Thank-you to our 2019 Conference sponsors

We look forward to seeing you back at our next annual conference from 20 – 22 October 2021 at RACV Cape Schanck

To Contact FinPro:
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