

FinPro Member Update September 2020

President's Message

Good afternoon all,

Thank-you for being part of the FinPro community over part or all of the past 12 months. We are so proud of all our members and the incredible work everyone has done to meet each and every challenge that has been thrown their way (and there have certainly been a lot!)

As we near the end of the FinPro financial year (30 September 2020) we take the time to reflect on what we have been able to achieve for our members.

In the first 5 months (Oct '19 – Feb '20) we were able to deliver:

- Our Annual Conference in October 2019 at RACV Cape Schanck with over 20 speakers, over 20 business sponsors and partners and over 240 attendees.
- An engaging and enjoyable AGM at Leonda by the Yarra with guest speaker, Susan Alberti AC
- The February PD Seminar at the Melbourne Convention & Entertainment Centre – attended by over 260 members
- Member updates and advocacy on behalf of our Members.

Unfortunately, our delivery of face to face PD and networking came to an abrupt end, but in the ensuing 7 months we were able to adapt to the on-line environment and deliver a different style of support to our members, immediately starting out with a series on mental health to help get through those extremely anxious first weeks:

- Free online Professional Development for all members, including a 4-part mental health series with Wayne Schwass,
- Technical Updates from VAGO and LGV
- Special Interest topics through our Lunch and Learn series and
- Facilitation of Regional Group Meetings throughout the state to ensure we stay connected and common issues can be raised and addressed.

We've also been able to continue to provide leadership and support through

- Advocacy on behalf of members to VAGO, the Victorian Ombudsman and Local Government Victoria. This has been critical over the course of this year as we addressed the health & economic impacts felt by our communities as well as implementation of changes to the Local Government Act.
- Facilitation of member discussions through the FinPro Yammer Forum
- Online Job Directory for finance related jobs from all our members councils

A record 28 Member Updates have been sent to every member. This started monthly and then moved to weekly from the end of March 2020, recognising the need for greater information and sector support in managing the COVID-19 pandemic.

Your feedback has been extremely positive and we really hope that what we have been able to provide over the past year has assisted you to do the best job you can.

Membership renewals for our new financial year (commencing 1 October 2020) are now due. The details our membership renewals are included in this Update and will also be emailed to all members.

We do hope that you continue to value the work we do and are able to continue to support us through your ongoing membership.

Have an enjoyable weekend,

Bradley



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

Membership News

We welcome **Heather Boyd**, Manager Finance & Customer Services at Hindmarsh Shire as a new member. Heather replaces Janelle Reichelt who has left Hindmarsh to concentrate on other things.

We welcome **Kara Green**, Capital Works Management Coordinator at Yarra Ranges Shire as a new member.

We farewell **Karen Milner** who has left Mildura Rural City Council to join Lower Murray Water. Thank-you for being an active member of FinPro over many years Karen.

We congratulate **Hannah White** as she joins the team at Hepburn Shire as Manager Financial Services this week.

If you have any news to share with the FinPro membership please forward this to **Gab**.

To Contact FinPro:

Gabrielle Gordon – Executive Officer

M: 0400 114 015

E: gabrielle@finpro.org.au

W: www.finpro.org.au

FinPro Membership Renewals – due 1 October 2020

As we move towards our next financial year, we ask you to renew your FinPro Membership.

Membership rates have been kept at 2019/20 levels:

- Individual Membership - \$150 [Individual Membership Form](#)
- Council Membership - \$740 (unlimited members from within the council included) [Council Membership Form](#)

Based on queries we have had from a number of external organisations, we will also be introducing a Corporate Partnership opportunity for 2020/21. This enables us to acknowledge the important role many other organisations play in partnering and supporting Local Government Sector: [Corporate Partnership Form](#)

- Corporate Membership – small business - \$400
- Corporate Membership – Large Business - \$900

All membership renewals are due by 1 October 2020 and can be paid by either credit card or EFT.

Introduction of a Professional Development Levy

For the past 7 months, FinPro has absorbed all the costs associated with the provision of services utilizing retained surplus' from prior years, however we recognise that as it remains uncertain as to when we will be able to provide any form of 'live' professional development for the foreseeable future, the Executive have however been actively engaged in looking at enhancing our online PD offerings for the next 12 months (up to 30 September 2021). Online offerings do come at a cost to FinPro and therefore an upfront Professional Development 'Levy' is being introduced for the coming financial year;

- Individual Professional Development Levy - \$100
- Council Professional Development Levy - \$500

Members take out their Professional Development Levy when completing their membership renewal.

This Levy will enable members to take part in all online programs offered by FinPro until 30 September 2021 and represents extremely good value.

For the remaining 3 months of 2020 these will include:

- 1 October 2020 – Councillor Onboarding Seminar
- 22 October 2020 – LTFP Software Offerings Update

- 23 October 2020 – Virtual mini-conference
- 27 November 2020 – FinPro AGM and special guest speakers
- 10 December 2020 – Regional Group Catch-ups

Obviously, we hope there will be much more to offer in 2021 as things unfold in the sector, including

- Continuation of the additional member updates
- More on-line sessions
- Advocacy as and when required
- Use of polls and data collection (such as the budget survey this year) to provide support to our advocacy work
- Facilitation of the regional sessions and (hopefully)
- Re-launch/re-new of our online chat forum – Currently Yammer.

Membership and Partnership forms are available here and also on our website. Directions for completion and payment are on the forms. The Professional Development Levy is also included on the Membership form.

Thank-you for your continued support of FinPro.

FinPro Technical Committee News / Updates

Local Government Act 2020 – Draft Regulations – FinPro Submission

The newly formed FinPro Working Group have met over the past 2 weeks and worked through the proposed regulations, as issued by LGV (details below). They have now finalised the submission on behalf of FinPro and this has been forwarded to LGV today. A copy of the submission is available on the [FinPro Website](#).

Thank-you to Tony Rocca who Chairs the Working Party, and to all who were involved.

For those who missed the details of the regulations, earlier this month LGV issued Bulletin 59/2020 – Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020.

As part of the new framework relating to council's strategic plans under the Local Government Act 2020 (LGA 2020), it is proposed that new Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020 (Regulations 2020) be made to come into operation on 24 October 2020, and apply from the financial year commencing 1 July 2021.

The proposed Regulations 2020 will replace and substantially replicate the current Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014, by prescribing the information to be included in councils' Council Plan, budget, and annual report, as well as continuing to provide a mandatory system of performance reporting for all councils.

The only variations proposed by the Regulations 2020 will be to reflect the new strategic plans being introduced by the LGA 2020, specifically the four-year budget, and the 10-year Financial Plan.

The LGA 2020 is a principles-based legislation, and focusses on enabling councils to implement the requirements in manner that gives life to the principles and reflects their communities. On this basis, regulations are only being utilised where they are deemed essential. Work is currently occurring with the sector on the development of the Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework and if further regulatory requirements for planning and reporting are identified through this co-design work they would be progressed in the second half of 2021.

Please refer to the **Attachment** for further details on the proposed Regulations 2020.

If you have any questions or feedback on the proposed Regulations 2020, please let Michael Concas, Senior Manager, Local Government Victoria know at local.government@delwp.vic.gov.au by no later than 5pm Friday, 25 September.

FBT: Cars garaged at employees' homes during the pandemic

The following is taken from the [HLB Mann Judd Tax Alert, September 2020](#)

The ATO has published a fact sheet to assist employers in determining if they have an FBT liability where cars are garaged at employees' homes because of COVID-19.

The fact sheet states that the ATO will accept that an employer isn't holding a car for the purposes of providing fringe benefits where the car isn't being driven at all, or is only being driven for maintenance purposes. Provided that the employer elects to use the operating cost method and maintains odometer records, the employer will not have an FBT liability for a car. Without electing to use the operating cost method or not having odometer records, the statutory formula method applies and an FBT liability will arise as the car garaged at the employee's home is taken to be available for private use.

Where a home-garaged car is being driven by an employee for business purposes, the ATO says the employer may be able to reduce the taxable value of the car fringe benefit by taking into account the business use, provided the employer has logbook records and odometer records for the period in question. Logbook records will need to be for at least:

- 12 continuous weeks; or
- until the car stops being garaged at home, if this is less than 12 weeks.

The fact sheet also provides information on logbook requirements for car fringe benefits and options for employers to consider where COVID-19 has impacted driving patterns.



FinPro Professional Development

Upcoming PD: 9am – 10am, Thursday 1 October 2020

Councillor Onboarding (with a finance them)

Councillor elections only come around once every four years....and the induction of a new Council is vital in establishing the framework for their term as Councillors.

Join us for a webinar where we detail some key principles, tips and tricks that you might want to include in the Finance induction of our new, and returning Councillors.

Financial understanding will be even more important for Councillors than ever as the impacts of COVID throughout the community and the council organisation. It is imperative too that our councillors understand how the everyday finance operations of Councils link to the new integrated framework of the new LG Act.

Join Bradley Thomas, President FinPro as he welcomes Marc Giglio, Director Corporate Services at Banyule City Council who will lead us through this very important conversation.

The session will be recorded and shared for those who are unable to attend on the day.

[Register now](#)

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](#)

- **Manager Corporate**
- Alpine Shire Council
- www.alpineshire.vic.gov.au/employment
- For enquiries please contact Nathalie Cooke, Director Corporate on 0439 617 324
- Applications close Sunday 27 September 2020

- **Manager Finance**
- Central Goldfields Shire
- <https://www.davidsonexecutive.com.au/job/manager-finance-cgsc/>
- For further details please contact Seamus Scanlon on 0455 118 868 or Carla Bent on 0422 583 992
- Applications close Sunday 4 October 2020

- **General Manager Corporate Performance**
- Central Goldfields Shire
- <https://www.davidsonexecutive.com.au/job/manager-finance-cgsc/>
- For further details please contact Seamus Scanlon on 0455 118 868 or Carla Bent on 0422 583 992
- Applications close Sunday 4 October 2020

FinPro Members Virtual Art Gallery



**HAVE YOU BEEN CREATIVE DURING THE COVID-19 LOCKDOWN?
HAVE YOU ACHIEVED A GOAL, MASTERED A NEW SKILL, BUILT SOMETHING, MADE
SOMETHING, WRITTEN SOMETHING?**

We would like to celebrate and share your success with our FinPro family.

And so – we make an official call out to all our wonderful members to share your success, no matter how big or how small.

PAINTING, DRAWING, COLOURING PAGES, COLLAGES, DIGITAL ART,
KNITTING, CROCHET, TEXTILE ART, CRAFT, POTTERY, SCULPTURE,
WOODWORK, POETRY, WRITING, MACRAME, JEWELLERY, GARDENING,
LANDSCAPING, MASTERING A NEW SKILL, COOKING.... THE LIST IS
ENDLESS!

We would like to celebrate your success with you. If you are willing, please send through a photo and a short description of what you have achieved during these 'interesting' times of isolation.

All contributions will be collated and displayed in a 'FinPro Virtual Gallery' in late October. Please send a clear jpeg (portrait) photo or photos and description to [Gab](#) by Sunday **11 October 2020**.

We thank Monash City Council for sharing with us their Gallery – this provided the seed for the idea we now present to our members. 😊

Calling all volunteers – help us test a Yammer replacement

We know there is a demand amongst our members for a tool to enable collaboration, connection and discussion. Yammer fits this bill – but isn't by any means perfect.

We would like to trial a new tool. It is called SLACK and we are looking for some volunteers from our membership to assist us by trialling it as a possible replacement.

If you are willing to assist and keen to share ideas then please let gab know by emailing her ASAP.

Thank-you

Gab- gabrielle@finpro.org.au

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) – 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
