

Welcome to the March Edition of the FinPro News

Presidents Message

Hi Everyone,

Interesting times right now.

I know many of you will be knee deep in budget development and presentations to Councillors – we hope that it is going relatively smoothly. Both the Model Budget 2020/21 and the Model Financial Reports 2019/20 were launched at the FinPro Seminar on Friday 21 February 2020 and are [available online](#). Thank you to LGV, Martin Thompson from Crowe and the working groups on all the work that has been undertaken to develop these important and very useful documents.

We at FinPro take all developments concerning the coronavirus (COVID-19) very seriously and continue to closely monitor the situation. The virus has and will continue to impact on the sector. Of greatest importance is looking after the health of yourself, colleagues and your families. Please make sure you stay up to date with the various health announcements.

We understand that many Councils are putting into place working groups to consider their response both internally to staff and also to the community. We have already been alerted to possible valuation impacts for some councils, the cost of sick leave and resourcing on councils as well as broader, longer term impacts on tourism, and business support that will be required. This is a new space for FinPro and we welcome any feedback from our members on how you believe we can provide assistance to you and to the sector.

Thank you for the 270+ that attended our PD Day in late February. We received very positive feedback from the day and there has been many downloads of the presentation from our website. It was particularly pleasing to hear from Graeme Emonson (LGV) on the implementation of the new Local Government Act. We certainly will have plenty of work ahead of us over the coming months and FinPro is excited about the changes that can be implemented. The Bill passed Legislative Council on Thursday 5th March; it now goes back to the Lower House on 17 March where we expect to have new Act.

Take care,

Cheers, Bradley



Bradley Thomas - FinPro President

Director Community and Corporate Services – Hepburn Shire

Membership News

We welcome the following new member this month to FinPro:

- Tracy Brennan, Accountant, Gannawarra Shire Council

We also welcome back the following member this month:

- Lynne Stevenson, Contractor and currently working at Central Goldfields Shire

We farewell:

- Nick Bell, City of Greater Bendigo how has moved to take up a new position within RSD Audit in Bendigo.

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

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 (Moreland City Council)
- 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

Upcoming FinPro Events - Dates for your diary

FinPro Seminar - Friday 29 May 2020

Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre

FinPro Conference - Wednesday 21 – Friday 23 October 2020
RACV Cape Schanck

FinPro Technical Committee News / Updates

Proposed Local Government Act 2020 – Update and survey request

The Local Government Bill was debated in the Legislative Council on 20th February.

The Bill passed Legislative Council on Thursday 5th March and all of the government's amendments were accepted. It now goes back to the Lower House on 17 March (a formality as there were some minor changes) then Royal Assent scheduled for 23 March. When assent is given then the Bill becomes an Act.

Once the Bill has received Royal Assent, information will be available at www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au. This website will become the centralised point of information. The website will have links to:

- Important dates;
- Guidance material; and
- Engagement opportunities.

FinPro is thrilled to be part of the Project Control Board and assisting with the implementation of the Act. We will be in ongoing contact with our members throughout the implementation process and will provide plenty of opportunities for you to be part of the journey. This will be particularly important in the co-design sections of the implementation where the sector will work very closely on the development of guidelines (including Community Engagement, Financial Plan, Procurement, Asset Plan and Revenue/Rating).

As a first step could you **please complete this very short, 3 question survey**. This survey will assist us in gaining an understanding of your readiness and also assist us to gauge how we may be able to assist our member.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=yBkQNssw80esZ1cMsx0-kfKqJVGYRstCltCVnStnfqtUMktBRIBHMDczSDJIRVE4M09URVMwNjISRC4u>

Completion of this survey by **COB Tuesday 17th March 2020** would be greatly appreciated. Multiple submissions per Council are OK. If you have already completed this survey – thank-you. We will share the results with our members once we have analysed them.

Rating Review Update

The Local Government Rating System Review Panel is in the final stages of development of their report with the report due to be submitted to Minister for Local Government by 31 March 2020. FinPro will work with our members to respond to any recommendations made in the final report.

Volunteer Request – Speaker for SA Conference.

We have been contacted by the SA Local Government Financial Management Group (a group similar to FinPro but SA based) inviting a representative from the FinPro Membership to provide a presentation at their conference being held on 15 May at the Adelaide Convention Centre. Presentations typically go for 40 minutes including questions.

The presentation has been requested specifically on “Pitfalls Debtors and Creditors” relative to: lessons learnt / benchmarking learnings - does it drive your performance and add value.

If you are interested in volunteering your expertise and knowledge to do this please contact [Gab](#) or [Bradley](#). In advance – thank-you.

FinPro Professional Development Committee News / Update

Seminar – Friday 21 February 2020

Over 270 delegates attended our first Professional Development day for the year, representing 70 Victorian Councils and a number of regional library corporations.

It was an information filled day as delegates heard from 13 speakers over the course of the day, covering a range of topics of interest to local government finance professionals. Some of the topics were specific and technical, some innovative and all relevant.

Presentations were:

- Update from the ESC – [Angelina Garces](#), Senior Regulatory Manager, Local Government at the ESC
 - Update from VAGO – [Sanchu Chummar](#), Acting Sector Director, Local Government at VAGO
 - Current LG Issues – [John Brockway and Danny Wain](#), FinPro Executive Members
 - Climate Risk through a finance & Liability Lens – [Charlotte Turner](#), MinterEllison and [David Meiklejohn](#), NAGA
 - The Economy and YieldHub, [Andrew Murray and Jason Marsham](#), Curve Securities
 - Using data to read the wellbeing of our municipality – Jessica Christiansen-Franks (no presentation available)
 - Citizenship and what it means for LG today – Justin Hanney, CEO Melbourne City Council (no presentation available)
 - Launch of the Model Budget 2020/21 and the Model Financial Statements 2019/20 – [Daniel O'Shea, LGV and Martin Thompson, Crowe](#)
 - Proposed Local Government Act 2020 and beyond, [Graeme Emonson](#), LGV
- Special thanks to [Curve Securities](#) for sponsoring this event.

Model Budget and Model Financial Statements Webinar

As a follow up to the launch of the Model Budget 2020/21 and the Model Financial Statements 2019/20, a webinar was presented by Martin Thompson (Crowe) and Daniel O'Shea (LGV) on Monday 2 March 2020.

The recording of this webinar can be accessed through the following link – [Webinar recording 2.3.20](#)

Thank-you to Martin and Daniel for providing this webinar for our members.

Also of note, the [Model Accounts and the Model Budget](#) are now live on the LGV website:

<https://www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au/strengthening-councils/sector-guidance-planning-and-reporting>

Attendance at FinPro events

Recently we conducted a review of the break-up of attendees at our events. It was interesting to see the change in attendees over the years:

- 2008 seminar attendance: 34% females, 66% males
- 2020 seminar attendance: 50.7% females, 49.3% males
- 2010 conference attendance: 142 delegates – 33.1% females, 66.9% males
- 2019 conference attendance: 214 delegates – 53.7% females, 46.3% males

Over the years there has certainly been growth in the number of attendees at FinPro events, and a definite push to even numbers of females and males at our events. It would be interesting to look at the statistics in the finance departments of the LG sector too!

Australian Women's Leadership Symposia

Women will come together to learn, share and be inspired at the [Australian Women's Leadership Symposia](#), set to take place in every state and territory capital throughout 2020. Attendees will hear from an exceptional line up of inspirational guest speakers and collaborate on the issues of gender equality, leadership, career advancement and life fulfilment.

Keynote speakers include Nova Peris, Ita Buttrose, Libby Trickett, Ann Sherry, Catherine Fox, Tammie Matson, Sallyanne Atkinson and many, many more.

In 2019 FinPro offered 3 members the opportunity to attend the Melbourne Symposium. The 3 members were drawn from a list of names of FinPro members who expressed a desire to attend and they found the experience exceptional.

FinPro will again be offering members the opportunity to attend the 2020 Melbourne event. Details of how to enter to be in the running to attend will be circulated in May of this year.

Women & Leadership Australia (who run the event) are offering an attendance discount of 25% to our members – this is currently available by entering code ANSY20 at the time of booking (available until each symposium sells out). For more information and to book: www.wla.edu.au/symposium

ESC Update

The Essential Services Commission distributed their 'Essential News' Newsletter at the end of February – details [here](#).

Regional Finance Groups

Whilst FinPro offers training and networking opportunities for all finance professionals working in the Victorian Local Government sector, our regional groups also provide additional opportunities for training and networking. These are more informal sessions which really benefit from input and support from the Council's in each area. Please get in touch if you think there are issues or opportunities which can be brought up at these groups.

There are 6 regional groups in Victoria, which together, cover all of the state. They are:

- Central Victoria – Contact: [Nathan Morsillo](#), Greater Bendigo City Council
- South West Victoria – Contacts: [John Brockway](#) (Surf Coast Shire) and [Belinda Johnson](#) (Southern Grampians Shire)
- South East Victoria – Contact: [Kim Jaensch](#), Frankston City Council
- Metropolitan – Contact: [Tony Rocca](#), Maroondah City Council
- Western Metropolitan – Contact: [Wei Chen](#), Wyndham City Council
- Northern Metropolitan – Contact: [Tania O'Reilly](#), Banyule City Council

Each of these groups meets at least once per year as well as at the commencement of the FinPro Annual Conference, which this year, will be held at RACV Cape Schanck on Wednesday 21 October 2020.

The next meetings for the above groups are:

- Central Victoria – 27 March, hosted by Greater Bendigo City Council
- South West Victoria – meeting held on 2 March 2020
- South East Victoria – 19 March, hosted by Mornington Peninsula Shire
- Metropolitan – TBC
- Western Metropolitan – TBC
- Northern Metropolitan – Friday 20 March 2020, hosted by Banyule City Council

Job Vacancies

FinPro is happy to place advertisements on our website for any finance related positions our members councils are advertising. To place details of any jobs on our website, please send the following details through to our Executive Officer, Gabrielle Gordon at gabrielle@finpro.org.au

- Job Title
- Website link
- Dot points giving main details of the position eg. salary or band and main details
- Contact person for any questions
- Closing Date

Currently we have the following positions advertised on our website www.finpro.org.au/jobs

- [Accountant](#) – Moyne Shire Council – position closes 23.3.20
- [Coordinator Financial Services](#) – Moorabool Shire Council – position closes 27.3.20
- [Capital Systems Lead](#) – City of Greater Bendigo – position closes 16.3.20
- [Finance Manager](#) – Central Goldfields Shire – position closes 23.3.20

PD Hours

Wanting to update your CPD Hours Register for CPA Australia or AANZCA? For a list of all the professional development events held by FinPro since 2015 please refer to our [website](#).

FinPro Yammer Forum

Many FinPro members are part of the FinPro Yammer Forum. This online discussion platform gives an opportunity for members to raise topics for discussion, ask questions, seek out policies and also find out what is going on in the sector.

If you are not already a member of the forum, please contact FinPro and we can join you up – email gab at gabrielle@finpro.org.au

If you are a member, we encourage you to get online and seek the assistance of your fellow LG Finance Peers.

LinkedIn

Make sure you sign up to FinPro - Victorian Local Government Finance Professionals, on LinkedIn to stay in contact with current past members of FinPro.

Thank-you to our 2019 Conference sponsors:

Platinum Sponsors -	Commonwealth Bank
Gold Sponsors -	LG Solutions EFTSure
Silver Sponsors -	BankWest CT Management Curve Securities Genesis Accounting Inlogik Pty Ltd IT Vision Laminar Capital MAGIQ Software Midstate CreditCollect National Australia Bank Recoveries & Reconstruction TechnologyOne Nelnet International Westpac
Sector Partners:	VAGO LGV
Program Partner:	Vision Super
Conference App Sponsor:	Imperium Markets

Some of our wonderful sponsors have put together a [case study](#) showcasing what services or products they offer – to view these case studies just click on the sponsor as listed above!

FinPro / VAMA History

FinPro (formerly VAMA) has a long history of providing technical updates and networking opportunities for finance professionals working within the sector. Established over 30 years ago, the organisation has grown from a couple of finance managers sitting around a table sharing stories and information, to an organisation with over 550 members from all councils in Victoria.

Our plan over the next 12 months is to put together a history of our organisation. We are keen for any of our members who have any photos, stories or information they feel would be of value to share. If you have anything at all please contact Gab and let her know – gabrielle@finpro.org.au or 0400 114 015

To Contact FinPro:

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