

FinPro Member Update – Edition 3, 2022

President's Message

How can it be February already? On the one hand it is terrible because the year is flying, and we have budgets to sort out, but on the other, it means we are closer to returning to normality.

I know many of our members are well into budget preparations, already been speaking with Councils and that there are a few of us that are a bit behind in their budget schedule. Wherever, you are in the cycle, good luck with the process and remember there will often be pressure from Councillors and/or the community to fit more and more into the budget. Our role as finance professionals is to give full and frank advice on the financial decisions councils make.

Thank you to the 100+ members who attended the TCV focused webinar yesterday. We hope it was insightful, providing you with further information and will help with your financial planning. We have lots of PD planned for the next few months (online) so please stay up to date and book in. I am super excited to announce that we have booked Australian of the Year, Dylan Alcott AO, as our Keynote Speaker for our end of year Update, AGM and Lunch. Put 2 December 2022 in your diaries now!

The working groups that have been busy preparing the Model Budget and Model Accounts are close to finalising these. We expect they will both be launched at our webinar on 24 February. Thanks to those that have put considerable effort into the working groups; our membership base really appreciates it.

Enjoy your weekend, I hope you get some downtime – for me, I am off to a wedding, so certainly plan on relaxing!



Cheers, Bradley

Bradley Thomas
President – FinPro and CEO, Hepburn Shire

Membership

Welcome to new member, **Katrina Wilson** who has joined the team at Stonnington City Council as Finance Manager.

We also congratulate **Anu** Ubeysekara who has joined the team at Moonee Valley CC as Senior Project Accountant. Anu previously worked at Glen Eira City Council as their Asset Accountant.

We also farewell **Paul Roche** who will be retiring from Local Government Victoria on 11 February. Paul has held a number of roles over the years at LGV, most recently as Senior Manager Sector Analysis and Development at LGV. He has always been a wonderful support to the sector in general and to FinPro and our members. We wish him well in his retirement and hope to see him at one of our upcoming events to say 'hello'

Recent Professional Development

FinPro - TCV Loans Framework Webinar - Thursday 3 February 2022

In late 2021 the Victorian Government approved the Treasury Corporation of Victoria (TCV) to become a direct lender to councils. All Victorian councils are eligible to be considered for loans under the framework. Local Government Victoria (LGV) is administering the framework in collaboration with the Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF).

So- what does this mean for councils in reality?

FinPro ran a 1 hr webinar on Thursday 3 February 2022 from 11am – 12 noon to discuss the realities of this new framework.

Our presenters for this session were Justin Lofting, General Manager, Treasury, TCV and Tania Ventura, Senior Manager, TCV.

Following their presentation a panel discussion, facilitated by Binda Gokhale – FinPro Executive member and CFO, Wyndham City Council shared individual council experiences as well as answered questions from the audience.

Other panelists were Chen Wei – FinPro Executive member and CFO, Yarra City Council, and Nathan Morsillo – FinPro Executive member and Manager Financial Strategy, City of Greater Bendigo.

Watch the recording now: [TCV Loan Framework Webinar- FinPro 3/2/22 - YouTube](#)

Upcoming Professional Development

Thursday 24 February from 10am – 12.30pm (online) - FinPro Webinar – session to include an Economic Outlook Update presented by Keenan Jackson from .id (informed decisions), launch of the Model Financial Statements and Model Budget, and a short intro to the newly appointed Sector Director, Financial Audit at VAGO, Travis Derricott.

Thursday 10 March 2022 (online) - FinPro Webinar Reimagining Engagement – details TBA

Friday 3 June 2022 from 9.30am – 3.00pm - FinPro Seminar –at Melbourne Entertainment & Convention Centre

Wednesday 26 – Friday 28 October 2022 - FinPro Conference –at RACV Cape Schanck

FinPro AGM – Friday 2 December at Leonda by the Yarra. **Key Note Speaker – Dylan Alcott AO**

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.

[Link to LGV Local Government Act 2020 Website](#)

Recruitment Policy Guide

The *Recruitment Policy Guide for Local Government*, which has been drafted in collaboration with human resources professionals from across local government and the Australian Services Union, has been uploaded on [EngageVic](#) and the [LGV website](#). The Guide contains core principles of recruitment such as transparency, merit and equal opportunity which will assist Councils in developing their recruitment policies.

Asset Plan

The Asset Plan guidance material, *Making the Big Picture Simple – Asset Plans and the Local Government Act* will be released in January 2022 and made available on the [EngageVic](#) and the [LGV website](#). Note that Councils are expected to complete their Asset Plans by 30 June 2022 and that deliberative engagement is not required for the first iteration of the Asset Plan.

For queries and more information, please contact LGAct@ecodev.vic.gov.au

Model Budget and Model Financial Statements Update

The working groups have met a number of times over the past month to draft up the draft the Model Budget 2022/23 and Model Financials 2021/22.

Of the course of the coming weeks, the documents will be finalised, and this will be communicated. However, it is notable to say that the documents will not be changing significantly from prior period.

Hardship Working Group – Policy and Checklist

Over Christmas and New Year, the work on the document was put on hold however, the working group leads are coming together this week, to help refine the draft documents. Throughout the month of February, the documents will be finalised and FinPro and RMA reps will work with LGV to finalise the documents by end of February early March 2022. Finpro would like to thank all the Workgroup members, both FinPro and RMA members that assisted in getting the documents to a draft stage.

Update from LGV

The following Bulletin was issued by LGV on Friday 28 January and is included here for member information:

BULLETIN: 7/2022

RESULTS OF 2020-21 AUDITS: LOCAL GOVERNMENT VAGO AUDIT TABLED

On 2 December 2021 the Victorian Auditor-General tabled in Parliament an audit titled Results of 2020-21 Audits: Local Government which is relevant to the local government sector. The report is now available at www.audit.vic.gov.au.

The Results of 2020-21 Audits: Local Government report summarises the findings of the most recent round of local government financial audits. The Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) has reported that they provided clear audit opinions for the financial and performance reports of all 79 Victorian councils and that Parliament, and the community can use these reports with confidence.

The audit found that the sector has a low-risk financial profile and that in relation to council funding options collectively there are significant cash holdings, low debt levels and a strong capacity to repay financial obligations when they fall due. It also noted that the financial position of the local government sector remained resilient despite the uncertain environment caused by the pandemic.

The report includes two recommendations addressed to all Victorian councils. The first is to prioritise and expedite resolution of prior period internal control issues and reporting deficiencies. The second is to prioritise the resolution of IT control deficiencies that pose a risk to complete and accurate financial reporting, or the ability to achieve process objectives and comply with relevant legislation.

Local Government Victoria (LGV) will continue to work with the local government sector to address the Auditor-General's recommendations.

I encourage you, if you have not already, to review this audit report and distribute it to councillors, audit committee members and staff as appropriate. A timely response to any recommendations relevant to your council is also encouraged.

Regards,

Julie Reid
Executive Director
Local Government Victoria

VAGO Update – February 2022

This year we welcome a new Sector Director, Financial Audit to VAGO – Travis Derricott. Travis replaces Sanchu Chummar who has moved within VAGO to the Health Sector.

Travis has sent through his first Monthly Update for the year. This has been emailed to councils and a copy is included on our [website](#) for member information.

The status report has several sections:

- **VAGO news:** Senior management appointments and recent publications
- **VAGO annual plan:** Details regarding the 2021–22 annual plan
- **VAGO Financial Audit:** Matters related to the 2021–22 financial audit
- **VAGO Performance Audit – proposed audits:** A summary of proposed performance audits, proposed and those underway
- **VAGO Performance Audit – audits in progress:** An update on performance audits underway
- **VAGO recently tables Parliamentary report:** A summary of audit reports recently tabled in Parliament of potential interest and relevance
- **Other Victorian Integrity and Local Government related bodies:** Details of audits or investigations underway and recently published reports
- **Other Australian audit offices:** A summary of audits planned or details of recently tabled / published reports

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

Team Leader – Financial Accounting and Treasury

- Greater Bendigo City Council
- Applications close Tuesday 15 February 2022
- Details available [here](#)

Administration Officer - Rates

- Greater Bendigo City Council
- Applications close Tuesday 8 February 2022
- Details available [here](#)

Manager Corporate Services

- Alpine Shire Council
- Applications close Sunday 6 February 2022
- Details available [here](#)

Revenue Manager

- West Wimmera Shire Council
- Applications close Friday 11 February 2022
- Details available [here](#)

Asset Accountant

- Glen Eira City Council
- Applications close Sunday 13 February 2022
- Details available [here](#)

Property and Revenue Coordinator

- Rural City of Wangaratta
- Applications close Monday 7 February 2022
- Details available [here](#)

Cash Management & Banking Officer

- Manningham City Council
- Applications close Wednesday 9 February 2022
- Details available [here](#)

Thank-you to our 2022 Corporate Partners

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

Thank-you to our Sector Partner:

Vision Super

FinPro Executive Team 2022

President	Bradley Thomas (Hepburn SC)
Vice-President – Chair Professional Development PD Committee Members	Belinda Johnson (Southern Grampians SC) Alan Wilson (Melbourne CC) Charles Nganga (Casey CC) Melissa Baker (South Gippsland SC) Aaron Gerrard (Whittlesea CC)
Vice-President – Chair Technical Technical Committee Members	Tony Rocca (Maroondah CC) Danny Wain (Monash CC) Fiona Rae (Golden Plains SC) Nathan Morsillo (Greater Bendigo CC) Simone Wickes (Frankston CC) Wei Chen (Yarra CC)
Chair Advocacy and Vision	Binda Gokhale (Wyndham CC)
Secretary / Treasurer	Gabrielle Gordon

FinPro Contact Details

FinPro (Local Government Finance Professionals Inc.)
Executive Officer – Gabrielle Gordon
Email: gabrielle@finpro.org.au
Mobile: 0400 114 015 Web: www.finpro.org.au