

# Weekly

Issue 48, 8 December 2017

## **Message from LGNSW**

Weekly update on local government issues.

## **Community Votes 'Yes' for Local Government**

The numbers are in and the community has voiced its resounding endorsement of local government.

## **Get Ready for a New Look Weekly**

We're planning to launch a new look Weekly from next week introducing a more modern, online newsletter with content that is easier to navigate, read and share.

## **2018 Ministers' Awards for Women in Local Government**

The NSW Office of Local Government is calling for nominations for the 2018 Ministers' Awards for Women in Local Government.

## **2018 LGNSW Learning Solutions Courses in Regional NSW**

LGNSW's 2018 Training Calendar for January – June 2018 includes a range of short courses for council employees and elected members in regional NSW.

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## Message from LGNSW

Friday 8 December 2017

**Annual Conference and New Board** – Thanks to everyone for making our annual conference in Sydney this week such a success. Members voted for a new board and the AEC has declared all bar the director results. Cr Linda Scott is our new President, Cr Marjorie Spooner O'Neill is Treasurer, Cr Angelo Tsirekas is Vice President (Metro/Urban), and Cr Lindsay Brown is Vice President (Rural/Regional). The full results will be communicated to all members by email as soon as they are official.

Delegates engaged in lively debate of conference motions and enjoyed informative presentations and insightful keynote addresses. The record of decisions on conference motions is available on the [LGNSW website](#). Next year's conference will be in Albury (21 - 23 October) – make a diary note.

**Community perceptions of local government** – Recent LGNSW research into community attitudes towards local government shows there's a lot of support out there our sector. The results, presented at conference, indicate that people consider councils to be trustworthy and they really value the importance of local decisions being made locally. [Read more](#).

**Draft code of meeting practice** – Mandatory webcasting of ordinary meetings by all councils in NSW is being proposed under a new draft model code of meeting practice announced on Tuesday by Local Government Minister Gabrielle Upton, during her address to conference. Councils will also be required to deliver induction training within six months of an election and ongoing professional development for councillors. As you know, LGNSW is ahead of the game here, with the capability framework and "Professional Development (PD) in a Box" designed to meet PD obligations - and go well beyond! [Read more about the Minister's announcement](#).

**New Weekly** – From next week you'll receive a new-look Weekly newsletter. It has been a long time in the making. We've surveyed subscribers and we're acting on the feedback. You've told us you value the content but that it's time for a proper e-newsletter, with more concise stories, more direct links to information on our website, and a structure that's easy to scan and navigate. We couldn't agree more. [Read more](#) about what to expect.

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The NSW Office of Local Government is calling for nominations for the 2018 Ministers' Awards for Women in Local Government.

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There's still time to complete LGNSW's annual remuneration survey (closing Wednesday 20 December).

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Councils are invited to comment on Part 4 of the *Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2013*, which has been released for consultation by Cemeteries and Crematoria NSW.

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From 1 January 2018, occupiers of premises with water-cooling systems must comply with new legionella control maintenance requirements.

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LGNSW is offering two courses in partnership with the Australian Institute of Company Directors specifically designed for elected members and senior executives of LGNSW member organisations.

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LGNSW coordinates a range of programs to build the skills and capabilities elected members.

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LGNSW's 2018 Training Calendar for January – June 2018 includes a range of short courses for council employees and elected members in regional NSW.

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## Awards

### Item 1: Award Opportunities

View the latest award opportunities for local government.

#### **2018 Ministers' Awards for Women in Local Government**

The NSW Office of Local Government is calling for nominations for the 2018 Ministers' Awards for Women in Local Government.

## Conferences and Events

### Item 2: Upcoming Conferences and Events

View upcoming conference and events relevant to local government.

#### **Australian Institute of Company Directors Courses for Councils**

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#### **Programs for Elected Members**

LGNSW coordinates a range of programs to build the skills and capabilities elected members.

#### **2018 LGNSW Learning Solutions Courses in Regional NSW**

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## General Interest

### Item 3: Get Ready for a New Look Weekly

**We're planning to launch a new look Weekly from next week introducing a more modern, online newsletter with content that is easier to navigate, read and share.**

LGNSW conducted a survey earlier this year which found that 74% of subscribers read the Weekly every week and that 85% do so on a computer or laptop. Of those 5% who print it, most do so because it's easier to read that way. (The current format was originally designed for print.)

Most people prefer to scan the Weekly for articles of interest and the most sought-after information is about government policy or events.

Subscribers said they were generally happy with the Weekly's content and number of articles (although just over a quarter said there were too many). Ease of navigation scored six out of 10, indicating room for improvement.

Most comments related to navigation (unsurprisingly). Other suggestions also related to structure. They included 'shareable content', 'easier to read on a mobile device', 'easier to navigate', 'more concise items with links to relevant information on the web', and 'a more engaging format'.

There were some content suggestions which we are looking at implementing down the track, including requests for advice-style articles and good practice case studies. Some requests, such as those for a magazine style format, are more difficult to implement (much as we'd like to) within current parameters.

It was also clear that some readers like the Weekly just the way it is, some even asking us not to change anything, but we do recognise, and most readers agree, that it's time for a change.

We are fixing the format first. We've built a new microsite to host the content and developed a new user-friendly design while maintaining elements of the newsletter that people said they liked (such as content categories). We've also gone to great lengths to ensure the new Weekly will work on a variety of mobile devices while still being printable.

Keep an eye on your inbox (and if you don't see your copy check your spam folder).

#### Contacts

Susan Napier  
Communication Manager,  
LGNSW

Susie Summers  
Senior Communication Officer,  
LGNSW

**Ref:** R17/0006

## General Interest

### Item 4: 2018 Ministers' Awards for Women in Local Government

**The NSW Office of Local Government is calling for nominations for the 2018 Ministers' Awards for Women in Local Government.**

Please consider nominating the talented, inspirational women you know before the closing date (5pm, Thursday 21 December).

The awards celebrate the contribution of women to local government in NSW.

In 2018, there are five categories: elected representative, GM/senior staff member, non-senior staff member, women in non-traditional roles and women in traineeships and apprenticeships.

Awards will be made to a metropolitan council and a rural/regional council for each category, and will be presented by the Minister for Local Government and the Minister for Women at a function to celebrate International Women's Day on Wednesday 7 March at Parliament House, Sydney.

Visit the [Office of Local Government website](#) for more information.

#### **Dates**

Nominations close 5pm,  
Thursday 21 December

#### **Online information**

[OLG Website](#)

**Ref:** R98/0087

## General Interest

### Item 5: Community Votes 'Yes' for Local Government

**The numbers are in and the community has voiced its resounding endorsement of local government.**

Recently released LGNSW research into community attitudes towards the sector shows that people consider councils to be trustworthy and they really value the importance of local decisions being made locally.

The results of the research were presented at this year's annual conference by Stu Reeve, Managing Director of Micromex Research and Consulting, which conducted the research on behalf of LGNSW.

The research comprised both desk and quantitative survey research. The latter was conducted with a representative sample of more than 1000 NSW residents by telephone over a three-week period. The research was compared with similar research undertaken in 2012.

Previous research has already shown (repeatedly) that overall community trust in local councils is higher than in state or federal governments.

#### Key Findings

The survey research found that the vast majority (75%) of NSW residents believe local government is the best sphere of government to make decisions about their local areas (compared with 27% (state) and 5% (federal)). This is consistent across all councils and demographic types.

Most (82%) people were at least somewhat satisfied with their local council versus only 6% who said they were not at all satisfied. Satisfaction has increased by 10% since 2012.

When asked what benefits local government provided the most common answer (unprompted) was 'knowledge/understanding of the local community'.

Nearly three quarters (73%) of people surveyed said they were at least somewhat supportive of paying more to receive better quality local services, facilities and infrastructure.

Most (61%) rated their council's image as good to excellent versus only 16% saying poor or below. Overall, image was rated more highly now than it was five years ago.

The overall image of councils is influenced by people's perception of councils' competency, trust, acting in the best interest of local communities, financial management and value for money

Nine per cent of respondents said they had considered or were likely to consider running for council. Interest was much higher in small council areas (26%).

When asked whether they were currently involved in council decision making, 12% of people said yes, 14% said they'd like to be, 30% said they'd like to have a say. A significant proportion (44%) said they were not interested in personal involvement in decision making in their local area as long as the council does a good job.

Just over half (52%) of people said they were satisfied with information they received but 46% said they wanted more.

For those who said they had seen or heard anything about local council initiatives or activities over the past six months (64%), print channels dominated. Newspapers topped the list (72%) by far, followed by letterbox drop (64%), council rates letters (58%), then council websites and social media (41% each), public noticeboards (36%), radio (29%), council email (24%) and other (21% ...primarily word of mouth).

When asked what they believed would be the key issues facing their local areas over the next 10 years (unprompted) roads topped the list overall. It also was the top issue for large councils, closely followed by the effects of perceived overdevelopment and ensuring that infrastructure growth matched population increase. For residents of small and medium council areas, the most important issue was local economies and support for business and employment (followed closely by roads).

The research will be used to inform LGNSW's communication, advocacy and services on behalf of members.

[See our website](#) for more information and to download a summary.

#### Online information

[LGNSW Community Research](#)

#### Contact

[communications@lgnsw.org.au](mailto:communications@lgnsw.org.au)

Ref: R16/0024



## General Interest

### Item 6: LGNSW's 2017 Remuneration Survey

#### **There's still time to complete LGNSW's annual remuneration survey (closing Wednesday 20 December).**

The remuneration survey collects data on total remuneration packages (TRPs) for general managers, directors, managers and supervisors/ specialists in councils across NSW.

All councils are encouraged to complete the survey which currently enjoys the highest participation of any comparative survey in NSW. The data provides valuable comparative information for budget preparation, remuneration reviews and HR matters.

Survey participants will receive a complimentary summary of median TRP for positions surveyed. Councils that have completed the survey for the past two years will receive a discount when ordering remuneration reports.

Contact [Debra Law](#) to order your 2017-18 survey pack, or to request an extension for submitting survey responses.

**Date**

Surveys submitted by  
Wednesday 20 December 2017

**Online information**

[LGNSW Remuneration Survey  
and Reports](#)

**LGNSW Contact**

Debra Law  
Divisional Coordinator  
02 9242 4142  
[debra.law@lgnsw.org.au](mailto:debra.law@lgnsw.org.au)

**Ref:** I09/0016 MA

## Community

### Item 7: Cemeteries Regulation Consultation

**Councils are invited to comment on Part 4 of the *Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2013*, which has been released for consultation by Cemeteries and Crematoria NSW.**

Part 4 of the act will establish a simplified, consolidated and consistent regime of interment rights.

The changes provide strong consumer safeguards for interment right holders and mandated requirements to improve accountability of cemetery operators, and increase certainty for the consumer.

A new, voluntary option of a 25-year renewable interment right is included, which can be renewed up to a total of 99 years, enabling a lower cost structure to be offered by cemetery operators.

The new interment rights system under the *Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2013* is expected to commence in early 2018.

The closing date for submissions is 22 December. To find out more and provide feedback, visit the [Cemeteries and Crematoria NSW website](#).

To contribute to LGNSW's submission, please email comments to [Margaret Kay](#), Strategy Manager LGNSW, by 15 December.

#### **Dates and location**

Submissions close 22 December

Input to LGNSW Submission by 15 December

#### **Online information**

#### **Contact**

[ccnsw.info@cemeteries.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ccnsw.info@cemeteries.nsw.gov.au)

9741 4864

**Ref:** R96/0085 MK

## Community

### Item 8: New Legionella Control Requirements for Building Occupiers

**From 1 January 2018, occupiers of premises with water-cooling systems must comply with new legionella control maintenance requirements.**

The changes, being introduced under the Public Health Regulation 2012, ensure that:

- There is monthly sampling of water from the system, and testing of the samples for Legionella and heterotrophic colony count
- Any test results showing high counts are provided to the local government authority within 24 hours.

These are the first in a suite of legionella control reform measures the NSW Government intends to introduce.

Further reform measures (expected in early 2018) will require councils to:

- Issue occupiers in their local government area with a unique identification number for each cooling tower
- Receive certificates of legionella risk assessment completion and certificates of audit completion from occupiers.

A 10 November 2017 NSW Health presentation on the changes is [available on the NSW Health website](#).

On 7 December 2017 NSW Health wrote to all councils outlining these changes, and is also now preparing a frequently asked questions document to help councils implement the coming requirements.

**Date**

Regulation commences 1 January 2018

**Online information**

[NSW Health Legionella control](#)

[Amendment to Regulation](#)

**Contact**

Dr Adi Vyas, NSW Health  
02 9461 7568

[aditya.vyas@moh.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:aditya.vyas@moh.health.nsw.gov.au)

**Ref:** R90/0110-02 DT

## Learning

### Item 9: Australian Institute of Company Directors Courses for Councils

LGNSW is offering two courses in partnership with the Australian Institute of Company Directors specifically designed for elected members and senior executives of LGNSW member organisations.

#### Foundations of Directorship Program

Sydney – Monday 26 to Wednesday 28 February 2018

This course provides a comprehensive overview of directorship including:

- Governance for directors
- Finance for directors
- Strategy and risk for directors.

The course includes an option to complete an online examination within 12 months. [More information.](#)

#### Governance Essentials for Local Government

Sydney – Tuesday 20 March and Wednesday 21 March 2018

The course is suitable for councillors, mayors and council executives wanting to learn more about the duties and responsibilities of boards and directors, and governance responsibilities.

Topics include:

- The role of the council and councillors
- Leadership: the councillor's role
- Risk: issues for councillors
- Introduction to financial information for councillors.

[More information.](#)

Contact [LGNSW Learning Solutions](#) or email [learning@lgnsw.org.au](mailto:learning@lgnsw.org.au) for a quote to have courses delivered locally for your organisation or in partnership with other organisations in your region.

#### Cost

Foundation of Directorship Program  
Members: \$3,118.50 incl. GST

Governance Essentials for Local Government

LGNSW Members: \$1,941.50 incl. GST

#### Contact

LGNSW Learning Solutions  
02 9242 4181  
[learning@lgnsw.org.au](mailto:learning@lgnsw.org.au)

Ref: I98/0012 SA

## Learning

### Item 10: Programs for Elected Members

**LGNSW coordinates a range of programs to build the skills and capabilities elected members.**

#### Media Skills

Sydney – Tuesday 13 February 2018

Apply practical techniques to enable you to be more comfortable, confident and effective in dealing with the media. [More information.](#)

#### Financial Issues in Local Government

Sydney – Friday 23 February 2018

Gain practical skills, knowledge and confidence performing the financial duties of an elected member. [More information.](#)

#### Mayors' Weekend

Sydney – 24 and 25 March 2018

This practical two-day seminar for mayors addresses the skills and knowledge mayors require to face current issues and challenges. [More information.](#)

#### Code of Conduct for Councillors

Sydney – Friday 27 April 2018

Understand the requirements, principles and processes of the Model Code of Conduct for councillors. [More information.](#)

#### Executive Certificate for Elected Members

Sydney – Block 1: Friday 4 to Sunday 6 May 2018; Block 2: Saturday 2 and Sunday 3 June 2018

This five-day program, delivered in partnership with the UTS Institute of Public Policy and Governance, will help elected members understand their legislative responsibilities and build their skills and capacity to have a positive and well-informed impact on council decision making.

On successful completion, participants will receive recognition against the national skills set for elected members and one subject of credit towards the UTS postgraduate qualifications in public policy and local government. [More information.](#)

#### Speed Reading

Sydney – Thursday 31 May 2018

Double your reading speed and improve your comprehension and memory. [More information.](#)

#### Chairing and Effective Meeting Procedures

Sydney – Thursday 14 June 2018

Become better equipped to deal with business at council meetings. [More information.](#)

Contact [LGNSW Learning Solutions](#) to discuss running these programs in-house or with other organisations in your area.

#### Further information [Mayors' Weekend](#)

[Executive Certificate for Elected Members](#)

**Registrations**  
[LGNSW Learning Solutions registrations](#)

**Contact**  
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02 9242 4181  
[learning@lgnsw.org.au](mailto:learning@lgnsw.org.au)

**Ref:** I98/0012 SA

## Learning

### Item 11: 2018 LGNSW Learning Solutions Courses in Regional NSW

LGNSW's 2018 Training Calendar for January – June 2018 includes a range of short courses for council employees and elected members in regional NSW.

Courses scheduled in non-metropolitan areas are:

#### **Drone Operations in Local Government**

Port Macquarie – Wednesday 7 March 2018

Shoalhaven – Wednesday 21 March 2018

Newcastle – Wednesday 9 May 2018

Albury – Thursday 7 June 2018

Orange – Thursday 14 June 2018

Learn about the applications and benefits of drone technology in local government, the current laws and risks associated with their use and pros and cons of purchasing and contracting. [More information.](#)

#### **Award History and Interpretation**

Newcastle – Thursday 22 March 2018

Wagga Wagga – Thursday 17 May 2018

Understand the application and interpretation of the Local Government (State) Award 2017 and the factors influencing the development of the series of State Awards. [More information.](#)

#### **Making Consultative Committees More Effective**

Yass – Monday 26 March 2018

Armidale – Monday 30 April 2018

Griffith – Thursday 7 June 2018

Gain an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of consultative committees in the local government context. This workshop is based on regulations required under the *Local Government Act*, the *Local Government (State) Award 2017* and internationally-accepted meeting procedures. [More information.](#)

Contact LGNSW [Learning Solutions](#) for a quote to have these or other workshops delivered locally for your organisation or in partnership with other organisations in your region.

View LGNSW's [Training Calendar online.](#)

#### **Online information**

[LGNSW Learning](#)

#### **Registrations**

[Register online](#)

#### **Contact**

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02 9242 4081

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Ref: I98/0012 SA

## **In the News**

### **Item 12: Local Government NSW Media**

**View the latest media releases distributed by LGNSW.**

### **Item 13: ALGA Newsletter**

**View the latest newsletter distributed by the Australia Local Government Association.**