



NSW LOCAL GOVERNMENT WORKFORCE STRATEGY 2016-2020

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND LGNSW

IN COLLABORATION WITH INDUSTRY PARTNERS



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INTRODUCTION

The NSW Local Government Workforce Strategy 2016-2020 sets the direction for a range of initiatives and projects to address the workforce challenges facing local government in NSW over the next four years. The NSW Strategy adopts the eight strategic themes of the *National Workforce Strategy 2013-2020* and identifies a series of actions to be undertaken by peak bodies and government and industry partners in response to the key workforce development issues affecting councils in NSW.

These actions build upon the considerable resources (tools, professional development, research, specialist networks etc) currently available to the sector through local government industry associations, government agencies, universities, training providers and other commercial sources¹. The actions listed in the strategy have been developed in response to perceived gaps in existing resources, lack of awareness or understanding of the application of these resources and the identification of opportunities to develop new resources or initiatives to support workforce development in the sector.

The NSW Local Government Workforce Strategy integrates the elements of workforce planning, human resource management and workforce capability development to provide a framework for building a workforce that meets current and future service demands.

Acknowledgements

Local Government NSW and its industry partners would like to thank the many human resource professionals, corporate planners and general managers of councils who contributed to the development of this strategy. Their considered advice, guidance and insight has shaped the actions identified for the sector over the next four years.

The sector also acknowledges the contribution of the NSW Public Sector Industry Training Advisory Body (ITAB) which ceased operation on 30 June 2016 after many years of providing advice on vocational education and training needs and skills development opportunities.

¹A list of known resources developed specifically to support local government is available at www.lgnsw.org.au/key-initiatives/workforce-development-strategy

THE STRATEGY IN CONTEXT

Two key drivers underpin the development and framework of the NSW Local Government Workforce Strategy:

1. The development of a national workforce strategy, Future-Proofing Local Government: National Workforce Strategy 2013-2020².
2. Recommendations emerging from the local government reform process, particularly actions from Destination 2036³ and recommendations of the Independent Local Government Review Panel and the NSW Government.

Future-Proofing Local Government: National Workforce Strategy 2013-2020

The National Local Government Workforce Strategy 2013-2020 was released in 2013 following extensive consultation with local government organisations, federal, state and territory agencies and other key sector stakeholders. The Strategy was designed to provide a consistent national approach to local government workforce development, whilst recognising the need for jurisdictions to tailor strategies and actions to differing local circumstances and needs. These intentions are articulated in the National Strategy's four guiding principles.

The NSW Workforce Strategy adopts the same broad vision of the National Strategy, namely to ensure local government has:

- The workforce capability it requires for a productive, sustainable and inclusive future
- The capacity to develop and use the skills of its workforce to meet the needs and aspirations of its communities

The National Strategy includes eight strategic themes, all of which are relevant to the NSW context and are adopted in the NSW Workforce Strategy. These are:

1. Improving workforce planning and development
2. Promoting local government as a place-based employer
3. Retaining and attracting a diverse workforce
4. Creating a contemporary workplace
5. Investing in skills
6. Improving productivity and leveraging technology
7. Maximising management and leadership
8. Implementation and collaboration

²Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government (ACELG) and Local Government Managers Australia (LGMA), (2013) Future-Proofing Local Government: National Workforce Strategy 2013-2020

³Destination 2036, Action Plan, June 2012

NSW Local Government Reform

The need for a NSW Local Government Workforce Strategy has been identified at several stages in the steps towards the reform of local government in NSW. Attraction, retention and development of staff emerged as issues to be addressed by the sector at the Destination 2036 workshop in 2011. The Destination 2036 Action Plan⁴ then proposed a number of workforce-related actions to “establish local government as an employer of choice” and to “encourage and facilitate innovation”.

The NSW Independent Local Government Review Panel⁵ also acknowledged the importance of attraction, retention and talent management of staff and the need for the sector to have quality leadership and management programs. The Panel recommended that a NSW Local Government Workforce Strategy be developed “to apply the principles and ideas set out in the national strategy together with those that emerge from the Destination 2036 actions” (ILGRP, 2013:58).

Further support to the Panel’s recommendations was provided by the NSW Government⁶, who in response to the Panel’s report, stated:

“Addressing skills shortages, such as financial management in rural communities and engineers to deliver critical infrastructure, is essential to the future success of local communities. So too is attracting and retaining high quality council staff. The Government strongly encourages the local government sector, led by the representative bodies, to prepare a NSW Local Government Workforce Strategy and more importantly to turn this plan into action to tackle these challenges” (NSW OLG, 2014:9)

⁴ www.olg.nsw.gov.au/strengthening-local-government/local-government-reform/destination-2036

⁵ NSW Independent Local Government Review Panel (2013) Revitalising Local Government, Final Report of the NSW Independent Local Government Review Panel, October.

⁶ NSW Office of Local Government (2014), Fit for the Future, NSW Government Response, Independent Local Government Review Panel recommendations and Local Government Acts Taskforce recommendations, September.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE STRATEGY

The NSW Local Government Workforce Strategy 2016-2020 has been prepared by Local Government NSW in collaboration with the NSW Office of Local Government, Local Government Professionals Australia, NSW, Institute of Public Works Engineering (IPWEA) (NSW Division), the NSW Public Sector Industry Training Advisory Body (ITAB) and the Institute for Public Policy and Governance, University of Technology Sydney (formerly a partner in the Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government, ACELG). Funding was provided by the NSW Office of Local Government and Local Government NSW to prepare the Strategy and a Committee of representatives from the above organisations was formed to guide its development.

Survey on Workforce Challenges

To ensure the strategic themes of the National Workforce Strategy were still relevant to the current environment of NSW local government, Local Government NSW conducted an online survey in November 2015 to capture the challenges facing councils in NSW in workforce development. Targeted to human resource professionals, the survey received 93 responses from staff in metropolitan, regional and rural councils. The findings were used to validate the currency of the eight national strategies and to shape the drafting of proposed actions for each of the strategies.

Consultations on Proposed Actions in the NSW Strategy

A briefing document was prepared for the purposes of raising council awareness of the NSW Workforce Strategy and generating feedback about the draft actions proposed for each of the strategies. The document was emailed to Executive Officers of Regions of Councils (ROCs) and Joint Organisations (JOs) and to human resource professionals in all NSW councils, with invitations to attend focus group discussions or to provide written comment on the Consultation Document.

Between March and June 2016, feedback was gathered from 130 council employees who participated in focus group discussions (14) and telephone interviews (2) or provided written comments (2). They represented 71 (55%) of the 129 councils in metropolitan, regional and rural areas, as of June 2016. Most of the staff contributing to consultations were Human Resource Managers, Workforce Planners, Learning & Development Officers, and a small number of internal IP&R consultants and General Managers.

Discussions were also held with the NSW Local Government, Clerical, Administrative, Energy, Airlines & Utilities Union (USU), the Development and Environmental Professionals' Association (depa) and Professionals Australia regarding the Strategy and its actions.

The unions expressed several concerns. Since 1992 the parties to the series of Local Government State Awards have, in clause 2 Statement of Intent, committed themselves to build a workforce which provides skill-related career paths, no impediments to multi-skilling, broadening the range of tasks a worker may be required to perform, achieve greater flexibility and workplace practices and eliminate discrimination. The unions were firmly of the view that the Workplace Strategy was doing no more than catching up with the parties' commitment and there was wide variation in the extent to which award provisions have been taken up at the council level.

The unions also raised a number of other issues that they believed were critical to the attraction, development and retention of key professional employees, including ensuring that pay and other employment benefits, such as training and development, are sufficiently attractive.

The unions have historically implemented changes in the workplace and will continue to introduce changes cooperatively with the Strategy partners to ensure they deliver on long-term commitments.

THE NSW LOCAL GOVERNMENT WORKFORCE

Approximately 45,000 FTE (full time equivalent) staff work in local government in NSW. NSW councils are diverse in geographical size, population and cultural mix, rates of growth and functions performed. Many are significant local employers, offering jobs in a wide range of occupations. Yet most councils face similar workforce challenges as they compete for labour drawn from within and outside their local areas.

In research undertaken with NSW councils in November 2015, the greatest challenges facing councils in developing their workforce for the future were (in descending order):

1. Ageing workforce
2. Uncertainty due to possible future local government reforms
3. Skills shortages in professional areas
4. Limitations in leadership capability
5. Gender imbalance in senior roles
6. Lack of skills and experience in workforce planning
7. Lack of workforce trend data
8. Difficulty in recruiting staff
9. Resistance to more flexible work practices
10. Lack of cultural diversity

Comments and responses to each of the above challenges are provided in the strategic themes that follow.

WORKFORCE STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

Strategy 1: Improving workforce planning and development

In 2009 the NSW Government introduced the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework, comprising a suite of integrated processes and documents to streamline local government planning and reporting. Each council is required to prepare a Workforce Management Plan as part of its Resourcing Strategy, to address the workforce requirements emerging from the council's four year delivery program.

While all councils in NSW have now had some experience in preparing a Workforce Management Plan, a number of challenges remain⁷:

- Integrating the Workforce Management Plan with other elements of the IP&R process such as the Operational Plan, Financial Plan and Asset Management Plan. Councils seek greater guidance on the process (timing, consultation mechanisms) and content of the Workforce Plan to ensure it accurately reflects the workforce needs to meet organisational commitments
- Gaining high level and cross-management understanding, involvement and commitment to workforce planning, as a strategic and operational tool for the organisation
- Gaining a consistent, cross-sector understanding of the level of detail and depth of analysis required for a workforce plan
- Strengthening councils' ability to identify, collect, analyse and interpret appropriate data about their own workforce, their local and regional community and the external labour market from which new staff are drawn

Objectives of Strategy 1

1. To strengthen the workforce planning capabilities of all managers, including the strategic planning capabilities of human resource professionals, in local government
2. To develop a consistent approach to workforce planning across councils to facilitate organisational and regional planning
3. To improve council access to and use of data for workforce planning purposes

The unions have historically implemented changes in the workplace and will continue to introduce changes cooperatively with the Strategy partners to ensure they deliver on long-term commitments.

Actions for Strategy 1

| | ACTION |
|------------|---|
| 1.1 | Collaboratively collect comprehensive data on NSW local government skills shortages, skills gaps, emerging skills and workforce challenges to inform education and training policies, programs and workforce strategies |
| 1.2 | Develop and promote guidelines, tools and professional development programs to support the development of workforce planning capabilities of human resource professionals and senior managers, and to help councils prepare workforce plans that are integrated with other elements of the IP&R process |
| 1.3 | Communicate the business benefits of undertaking workforce planning to leaders and managers through a range of approaches including case studies and peer exchange opportunities |

⁷Identified in LGNSW consultations with councils in 2016, and in ACELG and UTS:CLG (2012) Workforce Planning and Development, Capacity Building Opportunities, Learning in Local Government, Issues Paper 4.

Strategy 2: Promoting Local Government as a Place-Based Employer of Choice

With workforce participation projected to fall in NSW as the population ages, local government will need to do more to position itself as an attractive career option for prospective and existing employees. Effective employer branding (often communicated as “Employee Value Proposition”) can be used to demonstrate the unique attributes of an organisation and the benefits an employee can expect from working for that organisation.

Recent reforms to local government in NSW have affected the profile of the sector in the media and the broader community. Local government can take advantage of its heightened profile by promoting its role, functions and career diversity to the community, including prospective employees and careers advisors, who along with parents, have a significant influence on initial career choices of young people.

Councils also perform a broader role in their communities beyond providing employment to their own workforce. They are important catalysts in attracting and developing new business to and within their communities and working collaboratively with existing local businesses to innovate and grow.

Councils in NSW report that more can be done to unify the sector without reducing the capacity of individual councils to present their own Employee Value Proposition as they compete with private and public sector employers (including other councils) for staff. In developing core messages, taglines or promotional materials, it is important to explore the successes and failures of similar initiatives in other industries and jurisdictions and to commence with an informed understanding of current perceptions of, and values and benefits associated with, working in local government.

Local government offers a very diverse range of careers both within and across councils and these opportunities need to be better understood to attract and retain employees.

Objectives of Strategy 2

1. To increase community awareness of the diversity of functions and jobs within local government
2. To attract and retain high quality employees in local government

Actions for Strategy 2

| | ACTION |
|------------|---|
| 2.1 | Undertake research on the perceptions of local government as a place to work to inform the sector’s promotional and branding strategies |
| 2.2 | Investigate the successes of marketing campaigns in other industries and jurisdictions to identify cost-effective actions that could be taken in NSW to promote local government as an employer of choice |
| 2.3 | Develop an Employee Value Proposition for the sector that can be integrated with the promotional activities of individual councils |
| 2.4 | Utilise digital media to profile and promote jobs and careers in local government |

Strategy 3: Retaining and Attracting a Diverse Workforce

Workplace diversity and inclusion refers to the diverse skill and perspectives that people may bring to the workplace because of their gender, age, language, ethnicity, cultural background, disability, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, working style, education, personality, socio-economic background, job function, marital status and family responsibilities etc. Workplace diversity is about removing barriers to ensure all employees can perform to their highest ability. It also involves recognising the value of individual differences and managing them in the workplace.

Councils in NSW vary in the extent to which they have recognised and managed issues of workforce diversity. They also represent diverse communities where issues of inclusion can be quite different from one local government area to another. Consequently, councils' priorities and initiatives in relation to diversity need to be tailored to their unique circumstances and be sustainable in order to make a real impact on their workforce, and potentially on the community they represent.

Most councils acknowledge challenges associated with:

- Retaining mature talent – faced with an ageing workforce, councils are concerned about:
 - transitioning older workers into meaningful jobs that are appropriate for their health and wellbeing
 - finding or creating sufficient numbers of jobs within council into which older workers can transition
 - changing attitudes of older workers towards embracing new roles

The ageing workforce is a challenge not limited to local government. In NSW the median age of the population rose from 29 in 1976 to 37 in 2015 and is expected to climb to 41 by 2056⁸. As the population ages, workforce participation declines, and demand for services and infrastructure changes in response to the needs of older Australians. For councils where the workforce is “older compared with other government and industry sectors”⁹, there are implications for succession planning, knowledge management and health and safety of employees.

- Lack of women in leadership roles – to illustrate, only 13% of general managers of NSW councils are female¹⁰ compared with 29.3% of senior leaders in single-site organisations and 17.9% in multi-site organisations¹¹
- Insufficient understanding amongst leaders and managers of the benefits of a diverse workforce, with ramifications evident in recruitment decisions that can perpetuate existing workforce profiles

⁸NSW Government (2016) Future State NSW 2056, NSW Intergenerational Report 2016, p5.

⁹Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government (ACELG). 2014. Profile of the Local Government Workforce. 2014 Report

¹⁰ Based on profile of NSW General Managers as of 30 June 2016

¹¹ Gahan, P., Adamovic, M., Bevitt, A., Harley, B., Healy, J., Olsen, J.E., Theilacker, M. 2016. Leadership at Work: Do Australian leaders have what it takes? Melbourne: Centre for Workplace Leadership, University of Melbourne.p 42.

Objectives of Strategy 3

1. To increase understanding amongst councillors, managers and staff, of the community and business benefits of a diverse workforce
2. To support councils in attracting and retaining a diverse workforce

Actions for Strategy 3

| | ACTION |
|------------|---|
| 3.1 | Build the business case and promote the benefits of a diverse workforce |
| 3.2 | Provide professional development to councillors and senior managers to encourage inclusive recruitment practices |
| 3.3 | Develop case studies, guidelines and professional development for managers and leaders, to support councils in managing their ageing workforce |
| 3.4 | Provide sector-wide networking events to encourage peer learning about initiatives, practices and policies to attract and retain a diverse workforce |
| 3.5 | Develop a campaign to increase the diversity of candidates standing for local government |
| 3.6 | Investigate and reduce procedural barriers to recruiting people from diverse backgrounds, without compromising any existing qualification, professional registration or Australian Standards requirements |

Strategy 4: Creating a Contemporary Workplace

The essence of a contemporary workplace, as outlined in the National Workforce Strategy, is one that is responsive to individual employee and organisational needs, delivering flexibilities that attract and retain a workforce with the skills and knowledge required by the business.

“Each local government will need to be highly responsive to the needs and desires of its current and potential workforce if it wishes to compete with other sectors for skilled and qualified employees”(ACELG: 2013; 58)

To create a contemporary workplace, councils need to give consideration to the work arrangements sought by different segments of their workforce, to accommodate work/life balance requirements of employees, maximise staff engagement, address workplace stress and inappropriate behaviours, review and respond to changes in demand for skills and job roles, and retain critical knowledge within the organisation.

Councils in NSW report their greatest challenges in implementing the above practices are:

- Lack of support from managers and leaders who may not support, or understand, the scope of flexibilities that can be adopted, nor the range of benefits to the organisation and individual
- Lack of knowledge of how the industrial Award can be best utilised to achieve the workplace flexibilities required
- Lack of awareness of models or examples of innovative practice that could be adopted by councils more widely

Creating local government as a contemporary workplace is essential if the sector is to attract and retain the next generation of leaders. With an ageing population, councils in NSW are competing with private and public sector employers, locally and internationally.

Objectives of Strategy 4

1. To increase councils' capacity to provide workplace flexibility that meets organisational and employee needs
2. To assist councils to identify, gain and retain the skills and knowledge required for a sustainable workforce
3. To facilitate new ways of working in local government

Actions for Strategy 4

| | ACTION |
|-----|---|
| 4.1 | Provide professional development to managers, supported by guidelines and case studies, to increase their understanding of the benefits of workforce flexibility and the options available within the Award |
| 4.2 | Provide professional development to managers on how to review and redesign job roles to meet the needs of a more contemporary workplace while maintaining existing qualification or professional registration requirements and Australian Standards where relevant. |
| 4.3 | Research and promote case studies on innovative solutions to addressing skills shortages and utilising specialist skills in demand |
| 4.4 | Provide guidance to councils on how to identify, gain and retain critical skills in demand through mechanisms such as skills audits, knowledge management and succession planning |
| 4.5 | Ensure the new Award maximises opportunities for workplace flexibility and contemporary HR practices |

Strategy 5: Investing in Skills

Education and training improve the employment prospects of individuals, the productivity of workplaces and the capacity of people and organisations to adapt to changes in demand for products and services. Investment in technical and 'soft' skills development occurs in a number of forms: organisational and individual investment in tertiary education, vocational education and training (VET) or other forms of structured courses and programs, learning and development through others from coaching, mentoring or networking and most commonly, through on-the-job informal learning.

Much of the debate about investment in skills is focused on the acquisition of qualifications because this is readily measured, costed and compared across industries and countries. Full and part qualifications in the VET system are also the focus of most Commonwealth and State Government policies linked to education and training funding, because they are a measure of the achievement of competency. However, workplace-based application and development of knowledge and skills remains a critical part of an organisation's (largely unmeasured) investment in skills and, as such, is acknowledged and encouraged in this Strategy.

Local government in NSW has been a longstanding supporter of entry level training programs such as apprenticeships, traineeships and cadetships. Despite a decline in participation in recent years, councils are looking to increase opportunities to attract new and younger employees to address issues related to succession, age imbalance and corporate social responsibility. Some will need to address barriers related to management reluctance, inadequate organisational support structures and poor candidate quality, before participation in such programs can increase.

Councils must continue to invest in entry level tertiary and vocational programs to ameliorate skills shortages in the future. Strategies to attract apprentices, trainees, tertiary students and university graduates need to be developed with a sound understanding of future skills requirements and in collaboration with education and training providers.

The sector will also need to focus on investing in skills for mature workers who will remain in employment for longer but will have to adapt to the changing skills requirements of new, existing and revised job roles.

With the closure of the NSW Public Sector ITAB on 30 June 2016, future vocational education and training (VET) advisory arrangements for local government in NSW are unknown. In the absence of an ITAB representing the sector, its peak bodies will need to ensure that the VET skills needs of local government are regularly monitored and communicated to national advisory bodies responsible for training package development and addressed at a state level with funding of appropriate qualifications and vocational pathways.

Over the next four years many councils in NSW will undergo significant structural change. This presents opportunities for the sector to define the capabilities required to work in local government, creating consistent benchmarks for recruitment, performance management and development, and facilitating the transfer of skills across and between councils. Local government reform also provides opportunities for the sector to review its skills requirements more strategically and seek efficiencies in the way education and training opportunities are co-ordinated and funded across regions. This also applies to the professional development of councillors, before and after council elections.

Objectives of Strategy 5

1. To encourage councils to invest in entry level skills development programs to build its workforce for the future
2. To increase councils' awareness and access to funding to support workforce skills development
3. To provide councils with information and access to a range of skills development opportunities for councillors, managers and staff at all levels
4. To develop core capabilities of councillors and employees in local government

Actions for Strategy 5

| | ACTION |
|------------|--|
| 5.1 | Identify the long-term trends in demand for professional and critical roles in local government and develop strategies to address potential skills shortages |
| 5.2 | Develop a state-wide strategy to increase the employment of apprentices and trainees in local government, including partnership models with other sectors of government and private industry |
| 5.3 | Develop a state-wide proposal for vocational education and training (VET) funding to address common skills gaps of employees, particularly those transitioning to new or altered roles |
| 5.4 | Work with universities to explore ways to increase the number of tertiary students and graduates working in councils, including the feasibility of establishing a local government graduate program |
| 5.5 | Develop and implement a capability framework that describes the capabilities required by councillors and employees of local government |
| 5.6 | Increase councils' investment in skills and capability development through a range of informal learning opportunities |
| 5.7 | Build the capacity of elected members by providing a comprehensive range of pre-election to post-election professional development opportunities |
| 5.8 | Establish a secondment program for local government to provide professional development opportunities for those seeking to gain experience working in higher level or new roles, and to address skills gaps and skills shortages in councils |

Strategy 6: Improving Productivity and Leveraging Technology

According to the NSW Intergenerational Report 2016¹², the three drivers of growth in the NSW economy over the next 40 years will be population, participation and productivity, with productivity described as “economic output per hour worked”. (NSW Government, 2016:6). While skills development is a major contributor to innovation and productivity, the utilisation of technology has, and will continue to, become increasingly important in improving efficiency of service and infrastructure delivery. Technology and data will also be big factors in local government delivering more effective, customer-centric services and facilitating more flexible work practices.

One of the issues facing all employers, not only local government, is the fast pace at which technology changes. Awareness of the latest capabilities and applications of technology is an ongoing challenge for councils who seek greater opportunities to share information or collaborate in decision-making. The Productivity Commission also recently noted that “Better coordination between national, state and territory and local governments is also necessary to realise the benefits from technology-abled information sharing” (Productivity Commission, 2016:133). Councils also see opportunities to reduce individual and collective costs by increasing the sector’s joint procurement of technologies that are commonly required.

The impact of technology on workforce skills requirements is also considerable, with most employees’ roles now requiring some interface with technologies. Councils are also requiring more staff with higher level skills and qualifications in specialist IT areas.

Objectives of Strategy 6

1. To increase council knowledge about innovative systems and technologies designed to improve productivity
2. To improve the effectiveness of the investment in technology by the sector

Actions for Strategy 6

| | ACTION |
|------------|--|
| 6.1 | Research and promote case studies of innovative technologies and shared services models that increase productivity |
| 6.2 | Facilitate opportunities for joint procurement of technologies to minimise costs for councils |
| 6.3 | Deliver the technical skills required by the workforce to adapt to new technologies in the workplace |
| 6.4 | Increase management and staff awareness of cyber security issues |

¹² NSW Government (2016) Future State NSW 2056, NSW Intergenerational Report 2016.

Strategy 7: Maximising Management and Leadership

Managers and leaders have a significant impact on individual and organisational performance. Leadership is found to have “both positive and negative consequences for team dynamics and outcomes, including communication, learning, effectiveness, conflict and conflict resolution, and support for team creativity and emergent leaders”.

At the organisation level, leadership is linked to “productivity, innovation, customer satisfaction, quality and financial performance” (Gehan et al. 2016: 15). Yet findings from the recent Study of Australian Leadership¹³ show significant gaps and weaknesses in Australia’s leadership and management. These relate to:

- Poor mastery of basic management fundamentals such as performance monitoring, target setting and appropriate use of incentives
- Inability to encourage and drive innovation
- Lack of formal training of leaders
- Under-investment in leadership training across organisations, especially at the frontline where improved performance can be achieved through better employee engagement and outcomes
- Lack of diversity amongst senior leadership which remains dominated by older men from English-speaking backgrounds
- Limited external sourcing of advice and information from associations, consultants, experts or other senior leaders in their industry or elsewhere.

These findings were generally reflected in consultations with councils who also sought greater guidance and consistency from the sector concerning the capabilities required of managers and leaders and appropriate professional development programs to attain those capabilities. A focus on building effective leadership teams (not only individuals) was also required, particularly given council amalgamations in NSW.

The link between leadership and good governance is also critical in NSW local government. Strong leadership and the modelling of acceptable behaviour foster and reinforce a culture of good governance. Current proposals to amend the *NSW Local Government Act 1993* include new guiding principles for local government (including risk management, continuous improvement and fair and ethical behaviour); re-defining the roles of mayors, councillors and general managers; requiring the governing body to ensure the council acts ‘honestly, efficiently and appropriately’; new provisions for professional development for elected members; better community engagement; expanded internal audit; a new code of meeting practice; and changes to the Code of Conduct.

¹³Gahan, P., Adamovic, M., Bevitt, A., Harley, B., Healy, J., Olsen, J.E., Theilacker, M. 2016. Leadership at Work: Do Australian leaders have what it takes? Melbourne: Centre for Workplace Leadership, University of Melbourne. Available at: www.workplaceleadership.com.au/sal

Objectives of Strategy 7

1. To enhance leadership and management capability within the sector
2. To provide a common framework for management and leadership recruitment and capability development across local government

Actions for Strategy 7

| | ACTION |
|------------|--|
| 7.1 | Develop and promote leadership and management programs that are aligned to the local government capability framework |
| 7.2 | Facilitate the involvement of local government senior managers and leaders in formal mentoring programs within and outside local government |
| 7.3 | Increase the sector's investment in 'soft' skills for managers to enable effective leadership and development of staff |
| 7.4 | Provide opportunities for the development of leadership teams |
| 7.5 | Implement expanded legislative provisions for induction and professional development for elected members to support and promote better governance and leadership |
| 7.5 | Develop a range of initiatives to support good governance in the sector, including risk management, continuous improvement and fair and ethical behaviour |

Strategy 8: Implementation and Collaboration

The implementation of the actions in this Strategy will not be possible without the collaboration of the peak industry bodies, relevant professional associations, unions, education and training providers, and most importantly, the councils for whom the Strategy is designed. To this end, the Strategy has included a series of actions to guide the project management, monitoring and evaluation, and communication of progress and outcomes of the NSW Local Government Workforce Strategy.

Objectives of Strategy 8

1. To work collaboratively across peak bodies and stakeholder groups to implement and promote the actions identified in the NSW strategy

Actions for Strategy 8

| | ACTION |
|------------|---|
| 8.1 | Establish working groups with relevant stakeholder organisations to develop project plans and timeframes for delivery of actions |
| 8.2 | Establish resourcing requirements to deliver all actions in the Workforce Strategy and seek funding for actions, where necessary |
| 8.3 | Design and implement an evaluation framework to monitor the progress of workforce development in the sector |
| 8.4 | Monitor progress in implementing actions every six months and review strategies and actions every 12 months for relevance to the sector |
| 8.5 | Communicate progress and outcomes of agreed actions with councils |
| 8.6 | Publish and promote the resources and professional development opportunities available to support council activity in each of the strategic areas, regularly reviewing and updating the list for currency |

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