

## CAPABILITY FRAMEWORK FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

### An Overview

LGNSW is currently undertaking a project to develop a Capability Framework for Local Government in 2017. This follows exploratory consultations with the sector in 2016 that generated great interest and enthusiasm across the councils. A summary of the exploratory phase findings is available at [www.lgnsw.org.au/key-initiatives/capability-framework](http://www.lgnsw.org.au/key-initiatives/capability-framework).

This overview document provides information about the project, its aims and how councils can get involved.

#### **What is a capability framework?**

Capabilities are the knowledge, skills and abilities people need to be effective in their position in an organisation. Capabilities are expressed as behaviours - the things colleagues/co-workers can see the person doing and saying as they go about their responsibilities.

A capability framework articulates a common set of core capabilities and it applies to roles across a whole organisation or to a subset of roles types within the organisation. It describes expected capabilities at different levels of responsibility.

#### **What will a local government capability framework look like?**

LGNSW aims to develop a framework that will apply to both elected members and employees, with some common areas of capability (for example governance and collaboration) but with separate streams for capability areas that only apply to one of the domains.

The exact structure and content will be determined as the project progresses, with input from the sector.

#### **What are the benefits of a capability framework?**

We are designing the capability framework so that it will:

- Provide a common framework based on local government aims and values
- Provide elected members with practical information about expectations for their role and a framework for their professional development
- Support NSW local government as an employer of choice
- Provide a sound basis for developing the next generation of local government leaders in NSW, informing their role descriptions, recruitment, performance management and professional development
- Enhance councils' ability to develop well-targeted workforce plans as part of their annual Integrated Planning and Reporting requirements
- Better align councils' workforce planning and management practices, including the description of roles and potential mapping of career paths within and across councils

## **How will the capability framework be used?**

The framework will define the core knowledge, skills and abilities required by councils to achieve their goals and responsibilities and for employees to achieve fulfilling careers.

The capabilities, expressed as behaviours, will set out clear expectations about performance in local government, “how we do things around here”, building on organisational values and creating a common sense of purpose.

The capability framework will be available to councils as a foundation for councillor professional development, workforce planning, developing position descriptions, conducting recruitment, determining learning and development needs, mapping career paths, encouraging mobility and managing performance. Employees may use the framework to plan their development and career options across the sector.

## **What will be the outcomes of the LGNSW project?**

We are aiming to design and produce the capability framework in 2017.

We also intend to develop supporting tools by the end of 2017, such as role description templates and guidelines on how to use the capability framework in various ways. These tools will hopefully avoid the need to ‘reinvent the wheel’ across the sector.

## **Will councils have to use the framework?**

LGNSW believes that common use of the framework across the sector will bring great benefits, however it is up to each council to decide whether and how to adopt it.

## **Who is leading the project?**

The project is led by Sarah Artist, Senior Manager Innovation & Capacity for LGNSW, working with Jo Grisard (Principal of Grisard Consulting) as technical lead, and supported by a small team.

## **How can councils get involved?**

The recommendations from the exploratory project were based on extensive consultation with the sector. The success of the next stages of the project will also largely depend on input from the sector - from both elected members and the workforce. This might include:

- Secondments to work directly on the project as part of the project team
- Participation in working groups
- Participation in regional forums; or
- Providing comment on draft documents.

An invitation to participate has been sent to all councils. For further information or to get involved please contact Sarah Artist on [sarah.artist@lgnsw.org.au](mailto:sarah.artist@lgnsw.org.au) or on 9242 4016.