



LOCAL GOVERNMENT
MANAGERS AUSTRALIA
QUEENSLAND INC.

the journal

OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT MANAGERS AUSTRALIA, QUEENSLAND

MAY 2020

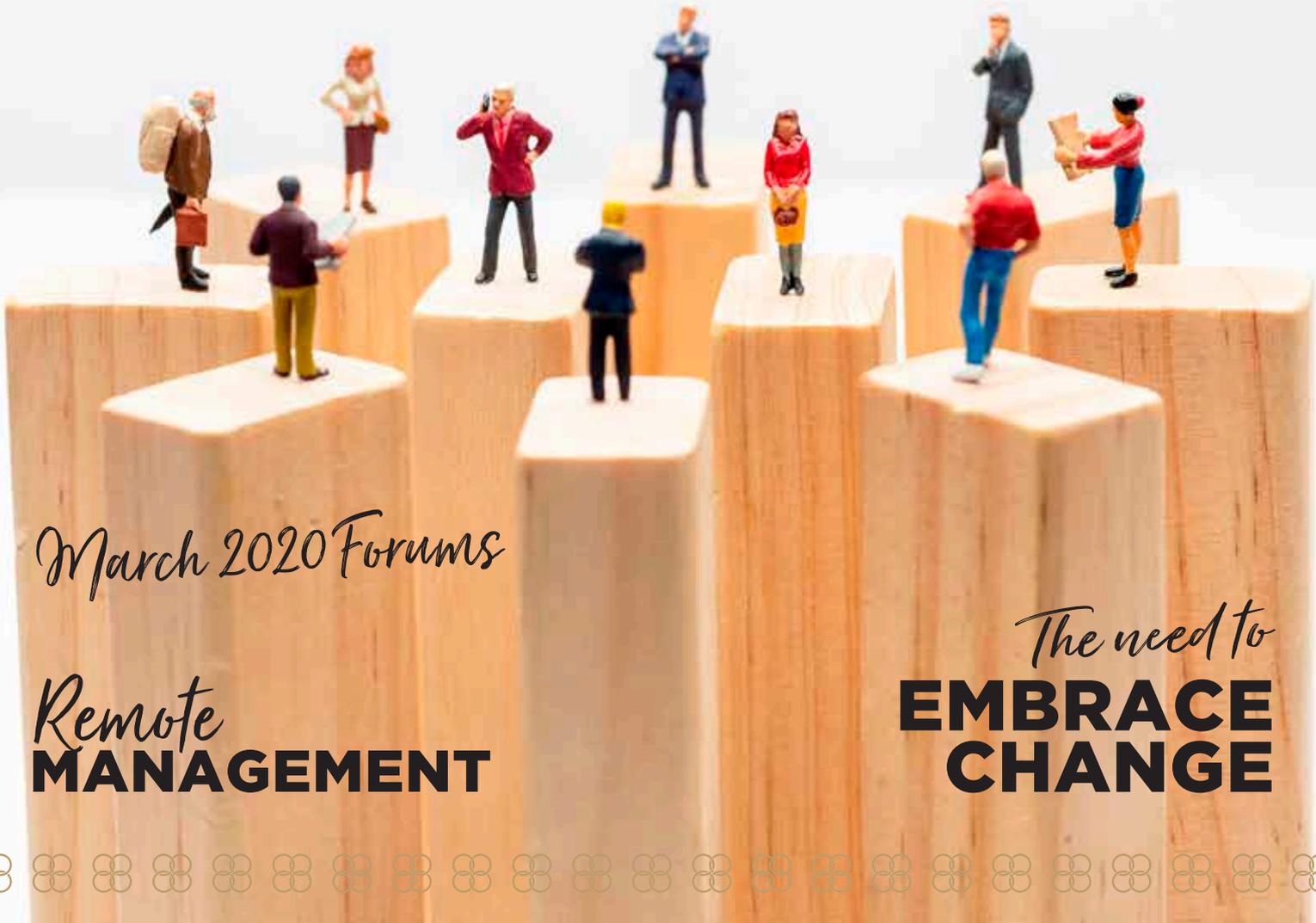
FROM A DISTANCE

CONSCIOUS
LEADERSHIP

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RELATIONSHIPS KEY TO
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March 2020 Forums

Remote
MANAGEMENT

The need to
**EMBRACE
CHANGE**



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

“Who would have thought?”

WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THAT OUR WORLD WOULD HAVE BEEN TURNED UPSIDE DOWN BY AN INVISIBLE VIRUS SWEEPING ACROSS THE WORLD CAUSING POSSIBLY THE MOST SIGNIFICANT PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS SINCE THE 1918 SPANISH FLU PANDEMIC? A ONCE IN A 100 YEAR EVENT THAT IS SIGNIFICANTLY CHALLENGING THE COMMUNITIES THAT WE SERVE AS COUNCILS.

Who would have thought that the challenges we face as leaders are different from just a few months ago? My President's column in the last LGMA magazine seems a lifetime ago highlighting how quickly the context of our leadership can change for us as leaders.

Who would have thought that such a crisis would be timed to coincide with our four yearly election cycle? Unfortunately, someone forgot to tell the coronavirus that we would already be busy in March and that this wasn't really a convenient time to cause a virtual shutdown of our organisations and communities.

Who would have thought that we would see queues at the unemployment line stretching around the block as local businesses and local economies collapse?

Who would have thought that councils could so quickly change their operating model to continue to deliver services to our communities?

I think the answer to all of these questions is virtually no one would have thought that the scale and significance of this public health threat would be so far-reaching into all of our communities. From where I sit, I think that both the Commonwealth and State governments have done an excellent job in very difficult circumstances in protecting our country from the worst of the impact compared to what other nations are facing. Yes – some communications could have been improved but put yourself in their shoes for a moment having to make actual life and death decisions in a short period of time that would have far-reaching consequences across the nation.

Emergencies such as this really highlight the importance of good leadership. As

leaders of our organisations, our teams and our communities, it is important at this time to remember some of the key lessons associated with good leadership. I think there are four key leadership traits to remember at this time:-

1. Be calm under pressure – troops never panic until they see the officers running.
2. Have clarity of purpose - there will be lots of difficult decisions being made during this time so it is always good to have a number of clear principles or goals that you can refer to when making those decisions. In my Council's case, there are two clear purpose statements at this time:-
 - a. we will continue to provide support and services to our community
 - b. we will look after our staff.
3. Lead by example – we can't ask our people to do something that we don't do ourselves.
4. Communicate, communicate, communicate - there is a good reason why this is axiomatic at this time. Our staff and communities need good, positive, up-to-date information to make sense of what is going on in the world right now.

I think that this pandemic will play itself out in three phases - survive, revive and thrive. What is unknown at this time is the timing of those phases.

We are currently in the survive phase. How do we change and adapt our organisations to deliver services to our community while keeping our staff safe? How do we help local businesses either hibernate or keep them going so that they can emerge from the other side? How do we manage our own council finances as we lose significant revenue from many council activities that are no longer operating (caravan parks, swimming pools, etc.)? How do we look after the mental well-being of many of our staff who are, for the first time, working in isolation at home for lengthy periods of time?

These are some of the challenges of

the survive phase and LGMA is at the forefront of providing assistance to our members. We are advocating with the State government regarding funding opportunities and also liaising with LGAQ in that regard. We are also facilitating weekly video conferences for CEOs across Queensland to share information and provide support. We have also reached out to each and every member to say "Hi" in recent weeks.

The revive stage will be an interesting one. How do we restart our local economies and communities? How do we transition our organisations back to normal – or whatever normal looks like in the future? If you haven't already started thinking about this, you should do so soon as this phase will take some careful planning to make sure it goes smoothly.

And finally to the thrive stage. Our future operating environment will be different to just 12 months ago. Community and staff expectations will be different. Our local economies will be vastly different and our not-for-profit sector will have different demands and needs. How can we thrive in this new environment, not just survive? Be positive in finding new ways of doing things in the future for your council and your community. Change always brings opportunities for your organisation and community to thrive.

What we want is to be able to look back in a few years at this time and have people say – “Who would have thought that Queensland councils would have adapted so well and provided such great leadership during the recent pandemic. I'm really proud of my Council”.

Stay safe, stay strong, stay apart. We will get through this together.



Minister for Local Government Stirling Hinchliffe

TIME AND AGAIN, QUEENSLAND COUNCILS HAVE PROVEN THEMSELVES INNOVATIVE LEADERS IN TIMES OF CRISIS – AND THERE IS GREAT PRIDE TO BE DRAWN FROM THE FACT THAT DURING THIS COVID-19 PANDEMIC, LOCAL GOVERNMENT HAS RISEN TO THE CHALLENGE ONCE AGAIN.

Right across Queensland, councils are finding new ways of easing this unprecedented burden in their communities.

I speak often of local government being the most grassroots level of government, and never has this been more important than in the current climate where maintaining connectedness in the face of enforced isolation is critical.

The Sunshine Coast Regional Council has produced 'Help a Neighbour' cards; in Noosa and Rockhampton, staff have been redeployed into community organisations or made available on a register to help rural health services; Logan has teamed up with charities to deliver meal packages to people in isolation.

Other innovative ideas are being put into effect throughout the State to the benefit of all. Many libraries are reading to children online and connecting with older visitors by offering access to books and much-needed human contact.

Information and advice from experts are augmenting welcome financial relief measures that some councils have been able to extend to businesses and residential ratepayers.

RIGHT ACROSS QUEENSLAND, COUNCILS ARE FINDING NEW WAYS OF EASING THIS UNPRECEDENTED BURDEN IN THEIR COMMUNITIES

That these efforts have been implemented during councils' own enforced partial "lockdown" and the application of caretaker provisions for the 28 March elections makes them all the more praiseworthy.

Following the elections, this is very much a bedding-in period for our new councils, posing its own set of challenges even as local pandemic responses are being coordinated.

There is reassurance in the fact that council

officers this term will work with the best prepared set of elected representatives ever to grace Queensland council chambers following the implementation of mandatory pre-election "So you want to be a councillor" training.

Support from the Department of Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs continues with the delivery of councillor induction training.

This invaluable voluntary training will contribute greatly to the delivery of the good governance all council constituents are entitled to expect, and councillors should be encouraged to take advantage of it.

Taking up elected office for the first time, or returning to the role, can be both exciting and daunting. I well remember standing up to give my first speech as a new member of parliament some 14 years ago. I spoke then of my great passions: among them, my community.

Today, as Local Government Minister, I am charged with caring not just for my community, but for yours as well. It is a responsibility I consider to be a great honour.

These uncertain times in uncharted waters bring challenges none of us have ever faced. From such challenges emerge learning and growth.

Delivering good governance and essential services for all our communities has never been more important, and I am delighted but not surprised to see the positive steps being taken by councils to get on with this core business while reaching out to help their communities in new and innovative ways.

I urge you to keep up the good work, and I join all Queensland communities in thanking you for it.



CEO SNAPSHOT

WE LIVE IN STRANGE TIMES AND, AS WITH ALL ORGANISATIONS, THESE TYPES OF CRISES CAUSE ORGANISATIONS TO REFLECT ON WHAT THEY DO AND WHY THEY DO IT. IN PARTICULAR, WHAT IS THE VALUE THEY OFFER AND WHAT IS THE IMPACT THEY HAVE?

For LGMA, this reflection has highlighted some weaknesses in our structure and also highlighted where we shine.

Financially, our reliance on professional development and training revenue, supported by corporate partner participation, is a clear risk in crisis of such a global nature. Much of our core activity in relation to advocacy and support is not revenue-raising and, although that work continues in times of crisis (and often increases) it does not generate any income.

On the other hand, income generating activities such as training and events are on hold and although some can be offered remotely, most councils are not in a position to undertake training – from both a staff preparedness perspective and due the financial constraints they are facing. LGMA's calendar of events and activities, which we were very proud to share in 2020, is now out the window. Some events will still happen, just in a different timeframe, but others might have to be cancelled.

What bothers us most about that is the opportunities lost for those people who were looking forward to attending a particular training programme or who had put aside time this year to commit to their own development. For those of you in that boat, the opportunity will come round again and we will be delighted to have you join us at whichever programme you had planned for.

While the financial structure is showing weaknesses, it is difficult to know how to alleviate this in the future. In fact, few organisations can continue to generate income in crises like these when you consider that customers (councils and officers) are experiencing cashflow challenges and our partners are facing the same restrictions. (There are a few notable exceptions including PPE manufacturers, alcohol retailers, videoconferencing providers and home office equipment vendors – none of which I think are a good fit for LGMA, although I welcome efforts

to convince me on the second of those). So, I suspect that while there are some tweaks we can make, this is not something we can ever fully future proof against (without impinging on our core purpose).

What has allowed LGMA to weather the crisis to date and into the foreseeable future is a sound financial cushion built over a decade through cautiously courageous growth (my words), conservative financial planning and smart innovation under the oversight of consecutive Boards, operating with very low overheads and having low staff numbers (the latter is an accident of timing rather than any great foresight). We have also been able to access some government support through JobKeeper.

WHAT WILL ENSURE THAT LGMA IS IN A POSITION TO THRIVE POST-CRISIS IS THE RELATIONSHIP WE HAVE WITH MEMBERS AND VALUE THAT LGMA OFFERS WHEN THINGS ARE TOUGH. EVERYDAY THE LGMA TEAM IS TALKING TO MEMBERS (AND NON-MEMBERS) ACROSS THE STATE, PROVIDING A CONDUIT FOR INFORMATION AND GENERALLY BEING A SUPPORTIVE VOICE ON THE OTHER END OF THE PHONE

Our advocacy work continues as we are working consistently with State Government (DLGRMA) to identify new and pending issues and troubleshoot current issues. I have been impressed at the Department's efforts to find a balance between taking control to ensure consistency and on the other hand allowing local governments to get on with the job they do in a way that meets the needs of their own communities. LGMA has a philosophical objection to State Government 'imposing' undue restrictions on local government but a crisis like this can test that philosophy. Whilst things have not all gone smoothly and not all Departments have shown the same understanding of

councils' role and capacity, I do see the effort that has gone into finding a middle ground. What I have also seen is clear acknowledgement, certainly from DLGRMA, that in these situations, local governments bring significant expertise to the table.

In the event and training area, please be assured that as soon as we know it is safe for all of you and your communities, we will start rescheduling our events. In particular, we are looking for to the Awards for Excellence because goodness knows we will need chance to celebrate getting through a pandemic and all coming out the other side having learnt and still achieved (just not what we planned to achieve when we started the year).

What will ensure that LGMA is in a position to thrive post-crisis is the relationship we have with members and value that LGMA offers when things are tough. Everyday the LGMA team is talking to members (and non-members) across the State, providing a conduit for information and generally being a supportive voice on the other end of the phone.

But it is not about what LGMA staff do. What this has highlighted is that members get a great deal through their connection to each other and the support they provide – whether it be a one-on-one phone call or an online meeting to share lessons and experiences.

I tried to explain this to someone recently, that it is not what I or the team do that matters or is the real value for the sector, it is what the umbrella of LGMA allows members to do off their own bat. This is what gives LGMA (or IMM and IMA in previous iterations) its longevity. Longevity and relevance that will surpass the term of any CEO, board or team member.

So please, stay safe and I cannot wait to see you (without two screens between us) soon!



WAGE THEFT

IT WAS ANNOUNCED EARLIER THIS YEAR THAT THE STATE GOVERNMENT WILL INTRODUCE LEGISLATION TO MAKE WAGE THEFT A CRIMINAL OFFENCE.

This decision comes as a result of a Queensland Parliamentary inquiry which found that wage theft affects approximately 437,000, or one in five, Queensland workers. Under the new rules, employers who commit wage theft in the future may be liable to a maximum term of imprisonment for 10 years for stealing or 14 years for fraud.

Wage theft doesn't just refer to the underpayment of nominal hourly rates, it also refers to having entitlements such as leave and penalty rates withheld, or an employer not making the required superannuation contributions.

In a lot of cases, annualised salaries or flat hourly rates are behind underpayments. For some employers and council's, it is common practice to pay their employees an all-inclusive salary or hourly rate. However, employers have an obligation to ensure that annualised salaries fully

compensate employees for all entitlements payable under the applicable stream award. An annualised salary can cover entitlements such as minimum weekly wages, allowances, penalties and overtime.

WAGE THEFT DOESN'T JUST REFER TO THE UNDERPAYMENT OF NOMINAL HOURLY RATES, IT ALSO REFERS TO HAVING ENTITLEMENTS SUCH AS LEAVE AND PENALTY RATES WITHHELD, OR AN EMPLOYER NOT MAKING THE REQUIRED SUPERANNUATION CONTRIBUTIONS

Lately there have been some high-profile cases of wage theft in the Federal workplace relations system. In February 2020, Coles announced that they have underpaid employees an estimated \$20million dollars in entitlements. Coles announced that so far, they have found

approximately 5% of managers who were paid a salary from their supermarket and liquor stores were not paid correctly.

Coles was just one of a growing list of major companies that announced they failed to pay employees their lawful entitlements. In October 2019, Woolworths also revealed it had underpaid nearly 6000 workers over a period of 9 years an estimated \$300 million. The company has also identified other underpayments for employees working at its Big W, Dan Murphy's and BWS stores.

Generally, for council's, wages will increase in accordance with the state wage case published by the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission or in accordance with a Certified Agreement. The state wage case usually decides to increase Queensland minimum wage rate and wage or salary rates in modern awards from the 1 September each year. Regardless of whether a Certified Agreement applies to employees, it must not include a provision or wage rate that is inconsistent or less favourable than the Queensland Employment Standards, or relevant modern award.

If there has been an underpayment of wages, the *Industrial Relations Act 2016* allows an employee up to six years to recover an amount. Therefore, it is essential for Council's to review their pay structure and banding each year once the state wage increase is announced to ensure they comply with their obligations.



Preston LAW



PRESTON LAW
Danielle Turner

Remote MANAGEMENT

FOR MANY LOCAL GOVERNMENT MANAGERS, MANAGING TEAMS SPREAD ACROSS VARIOUS LOCATIONS IS THE NORM. FOR OTHERS, THE PANDEMIC HAS MEANT A NEW APPROACH TO MANAGING THEIR PEOPLE.

But has it really?

ARE THE FUNDAMENTALS OF MANAGING TEAMS AND PEOPLE ANY DIFFERENT WHEN APPLIED TO FACE-TO-FACE MANAGEMENT THAN THEY ARE WHEN APPLIED REMOTELY?

In reflecting on management principles and practices, what becomes clear is that managing remotely amplifies the good and the bad of a manager's approach but does not necessitate a change in that approach.

What remote management does is remove the opportunity for incidental check-ins – for example, a correction or clarification in response to something you might notice as you walk past an employee. It also means that colleagues are less likely to step in and fill a gap – perhaps to explain what the manager meant or to pick up a task another teammate missed (maybe because they did not understand the instruction). Remote teams mean staff do not have the same visibility to help each other out the way they might otherwise.

They do also mean that the one-on-one instructions and directions you give become more critical than they are in a physically connected environment. That instruction becomes the primary source of information and does not have the benefit of multiple filters and interpretations that are often offered, discussed and explored when people are informally gathering and engaging.

So, if the 101 of good people management is **clarity, consistency and communication**, remote teams highlight your abilities in each of these areas. They show how well you are able to communicate in every interaction, how consistent your messaging and approaches are and the strength of the team's

communication (measured by the extent to which it relies on a single communication source – generally being the manager).

If you are finding cracks appearing, or that your management style is not cutting it as you thought it would, start by reviewing performance against the three Cs to troubleshoot.

Communication comes to the fore as people are operating outside their business as usual. Maybe the work, the location or the focus has shifted. Whichever it is, and in some cases it is all three, the way we do things has altered and adjustment is required. When that happens, people naturally want to touch base and affirm their understanding. Also, with many

people taking leave and the removal of most incidental discussion, regular and even repetitive communication is now vital.

To address the communication and clarity issues, managers are adjusting their processes, many having a daily, short meetings via videoconference and then using email to follow up during the day. For others, it is an end-of-day wrap-up. There are lots of different ways to manage communication needs based on the nature of the team but the fundamentals are the same; finding ways to connect people daily. A good option is to encourage people to stay on the call after you have gone so they can flesh out ideas or discuss between themselves. Not all people and not every call but it is worth leaving the option open for the team to use as needs.

Some councils have brought in virtual watercooler conversations. To capture incidental discussion and avoid an increase in silo behaviour (which can result from remote teams), they randomly select 5 or 6 people from across teams to 'meet' remotely each week as if at the watercooler.

Whichever the method chosen for your team, these regular catch-up sessions are critical for resetting priorities. Given all the changes people are facing, priorities are not always obvious to everyone in the team. In fact, what is a priority this week may have changed next week so regular restatement of priorities is required in this environment. Set and forget does not apply.

One of the challenges with remote management is that if you have gaps in your delegation skills, especially relating to clarity and consistency, the remote environment will highlight those gaps. In delegating remember the following:

- **Pick the right person** – especially at the moment when people might be doing work outside their usual experience. Make sure they have the skills needed. If they are not yet confident, start by delegating smaller task or parts of the task with regular check-ins.
- **Ensure clarity of direction.** What is being delegated and has it been explained well with parameters and expectations outlined? If there is a specified process, make sure they know what it is and how to apply it. Get the staff member to repeat the task back to you or email their understanding once they have had time to consider and flesh the task out. What will a



well-completed task look like? If this is something that has been done before, examples of prior output might assist.

- **Do they have the authority and tools to undertake the task.** In the work-from-home environment where it is not as easy to access materials or check in with others, do your staff have what they need?
- **Have you explained your success measures?** For example, do you know there is a tight turnaround on a task but you need the deadline met even at the expense of some quality? Or is there plenty of time to get the task done to an exceptionally high standard? What are the success measures, do they involve buy-in and commitment from others, timelines, etc.?
- **How available are you?** Another thing to watch with remote management is the level to which you are available. In delegating tasks, it is important to be sufficiently available to troubleshoot but not too available that you end up doing the tasks by default. The impact of failing to get this balance right is increased when managing remotely.
- **Trust.** Managing remotely also requires, in some cases, more visible demonstration of trust. Control-freaks beware: you have to trust people to get on with the work, knowing you have provided the tools and support to do the job. 'Trust but verify' should be your motto. That is, give people an opportunity to do the tasks required but do not abandon them to it. Check-in and support along the way.

• **Feedback.** As always, be conscious of the need to praise when done well, correct if off track and ensure milestones are clear and adhered to. Even people who are usually confident and don't require feedback are likely to be looking for reassurance (praise and/or correction) in this uncertain environment.

• **Lastly, find opportunities for your team to have fun.** You may have to manufacture these opportunities in a way you wouldn't normally. Maybe start with thinking about what can you share remotely that will give your team a chance to relax and enjoy time together?

Some teams have shifted from casual Friday (which for those working from home is now casual everyday), to formal Friday where they dress up to the nines to 'come to work'. Others have allocated a small part of the team meeting to share their favourite COVID meme or videoconference fail, etc. Some have introduced team morning-teas where all exhibit their baking endeavours (or those of their kids and family members). One team rotated hosting roles where each meeting one team member hosts and shows off something in their homes that they want to share (lots of pets are introduced this way!). Find what works for your team and, as a manager, you don't have to come up with the ideas, let others show their flair.

As a last, last thought, remember, remote management is a misnomer. The last thing you want to be as a manager is remote from your people. Physical distance may be required but this means you have to step up and ensure that connection is maintained or even increased.

The 101 of good people management is **clarity, consistency and communication**



NEW CORPORATE BUSINESS SYSTEM – OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS

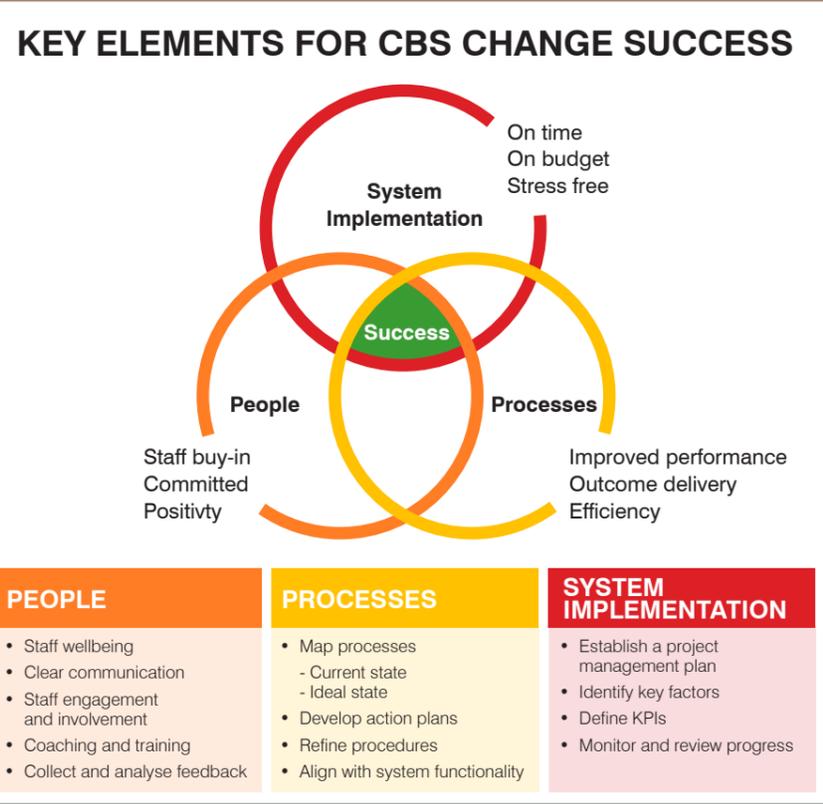
The Queensland Audit Office (QAO) recently released a better practice guide which reported learnings identified as part of the development of their report **“Effectiveness of the State Penalties Enforcement Registry ICT reform (Report 10: 2019-20)”**, which was tabled in the Qld Parliament in February 2020 (www.qao.qld.gov.au/reports-resources/reports-parliament).

The better practice guide highlights the significant risks associated with ICT procurement projects and identifies ways in which these risks can be managed. Through our work with councils, we have seen examples of well managed ICT procurement and implementation projects that have delivered performance improvement and net financial benefit to councils and others that have delivered the opposite. Unfortunately, the latter is most prevalent.

Changing a corporate business system (CBS) is not only a significant financial investment but is also one of the most challenging organisational changes a council can face. In most instances, however, it also presents a rare opportunity to make significant performance improvement and to deliver real benefits to the community.

In all instances, a new CBS will cost money, put pressure on staff resources and create change anxiety for individuals. It is not something to be done lightly or to take on underprepared. How it is undertaken will be the difference between success and ongoing cost and dissatisfaction for the organisation.

In our view, as shown below, there are three critical elements to getting a good outcome from a CBS change. Ultimately all three need to be addressed eventually, but if they are worked on proactively “up front” a successful outcome is much more likely and at much less cost.



As pointed out by the QAO, governance and probity are critical aspects of the process. This includes ensuring contracts are appropriate and managing how steering committees operate. Importantly they state that **“When an entity lacks the expertise it needs for a major ICT project, it should engage a ‘critical friend’ who is independent of the delivery team and can provide objective and independent advice to the project steering committee on risks.”**

Taking on a project of this magnitude and complexity will challenge any organisation and inevitably strain customer and supplier relationships to the detriment of the project. In our experience, having an independent party or “critical friend” to liaise between supplier and council and maintain accountability ensures that the project progresses and maintains an outcome focus.

In addition, a dedicated third party can maintain an internal focus on progress and

importantly support and maintain a focus by staff on agreed business process change and alignment to system functionality to ensure that Council gets the best possible return from its significant investment.

We are pleased that ICT reform has been recognised by the QAO as a significant issue for the Public Sector. At MPG we have the skills, experience and capacity to support council through procurement, implementation or reengineering and would be happy to discuss how we may be able to help you.



RELATIONSHIPS KEY TO CITY OF LOGAN'S RAPID COVID-19 RESPONSE



WELL-ESTABLISHED RELATIONSHIPS WITH LOCAL NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANISATIONS HAVE BEEN THE KEY TO LOGAN CITY COUNCIL'S ABILITY TO RESPOND QUICKLY AND EFFECTIVELY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC. STANDING UP ITS LOCAL RECOVERY GROUP QUICKLY, IT HAS SINCE WORKED THROUGH A RANGE OF COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC RESPONSE MEASURES.

Within a week of the World Health Organisation declaring the pandemic, Council established a Logan Emergency Relief Hotline and teamed up with more than 20 local not-for-profits to deliver hundreds of packages of food and other essentials to people isolated or in need. It endorsed a \$1.2m Phase 1 Economic and Community Relief Package, redirecting grants funding to establish an Emergency Relief Fund, as well as providing rate and other licensee and lease fee relief and prioritising local procurement.

It also set up a COVID-19 information hub to support residents. Staff then partnered with e-waste social enterprise Substation 33 to acquire, re-build and distribute computers to vulnerable families, to ensure students could continue with school lessons once learning went online.

While the City of Logan is a thriving community of more than 330,000 people from 217 cultural backgrounds, it has pockets of emerging and inter-generational disadvantage. So, when COVID-19 arrived with its associated social distancing and isolation measures, there was an urgent need to support the city's most vulnerable citizens.

IDENTIFYING AND RESPONDING TO NEED

The Local Recovery Group identified there were many in the Logan community

with limited or no access to food, hygiene and medicine, particularly those more vulnerable. These people relied on face-to-face contact, so it became critical to ensure they had access to the support and services they needed.

Council came together with not-for-profit organisations YFS and Lighthouse Care, the State Emergency Service, food charity OzHarvest, Givit, Share the Dignity, businesses and Logan residents to deliver care packages to those most in need. Some of Council's redeployed casual staff also assisted with packing food parcels to assist the community.

The service is continuing, with the greatest demand being from residents who are self-isolating or unemployed, single parents, and families with small children.

Meanwhile, street services have adapted the way they do business to ensure the safety of their staff and volunteers and the Department of Housing and Public Works has taken the lead to find accommodation for those sleeping rough, via the Logan Housing Service Centre.

Council was already partnering on housing and homelessness solutions with the Department of Housing and Public Works – as well as with the Queensland Police Service on a myriad of community safety



Ella Misisa of Slacks Creek with her computer

initiatives – so collaborating in response to COVID-19 was an easy next step in those inter-government relationships.

EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC SUPPORT

In addition to helping fund re-built computers for students, Council now also has an online Home Learning Hub through its libraries and is helping generate re-skilling opportunities with new community-based projects to be pitched to the Queensland Government for Skilling Queenslanders for Work funding.

Staff in Council's Logan Office of Economic Development continue to check on the wellbeing of local businesses and provide advice and support. They are also surveying businesses to fully understand local impacts and develop further responses.

NEXT STEPS

The response to COVID-19 in the City of Logan has involved finding immediate solutions to issues that will have the potential to still exist when the pandemic and its associated restrictions have passed. The next priority will be working with community to explore longer-term solutions and understanding what needs to change to facilitate this.

To that end, Council has developed a Local Recovery Action Plan with short, medium and long-term actions across human social, economic, environment and infrastructure recovery measures. The medium-term measures are already being implemented and the timeframe around long-term measures is based on when the majority of social distancing restrictions have been lifted.





The need to EMBRACE CHANGE

IT WAS ON FRIDAY MARCH 13TH THAT I REALISED COVID-19 WAS REAL.

Events over 500 people were banned on this date. Little did I imagine that this would be reviewed and amended only four days later. Events and gatherings for over 100 people were then banned with more restrictions to be announced. As the event organiser for LGMA, I then spent a week unravelling our calendar – cancelling and postponing days, dates, contacting our ever-loyal corporate partners and suppliers, generally battening down the hatches, leaping into the unknown.

By Monday March 23rd we were all working from home. It only took ten days to change my norm. The good news was we finally had time to telephone and chat with LGMA members and friends. At one stage I can remember thinking, wow, we can now do all the things that get pushed to the side because we are always time poor. Cleaning the database, sorting through the 'Y' drive, downloading training photos from my phone, finishing the delivery plan for specific training packages, amending our templates and completing all of the outstanding items in Outlook's tasks. I then recall thinking *'be careful what you wish for'*.

For somebody that travels an average of 6 days per month and liaises with a host of Queensland council officers through training and events, being housebound and completing alternative tasks to that of the norm, requires some adjustment. Weeks one and two I threw myself into the 'to do list'. I was methodical and had a mission. By week three I was losing the plot and going around in circles.

Easter came at an opportune time. Talking to myself, the message was to re-group, get your head in the zone, you are doing the best you can. In my lifetime I have seen two, once in a hundred-year floods. I never in my wildest dreams thought a pandemic (similar to Contagion) was on the horizon changing our way of lives and resonating like a b-grade movie.

AS THE EVENT ORGANISER FOR LGMA, I THEN SPENT A WEEK UNRAVELLING OUR CALENDAR – CANCELLING AND POSTPONING DAYS, DATES, CONTACTING OUR EVER-LOYAL CORPORATE PARTNERS AND SUPPLIERS, GENERALLY BATTENING DOWN THE HATCHES, LEAPING INTO THE UNKNOWN.

Don't get me wrong, I am very grateful for having a safe home, family and good health. I guess I am pondering and trying to make sense of where we find ourselves. With all the technology and innovation of this era, it is ironic that we are in this predicament.

Is it because there were some strategic inaccuracies (or were they old fashioned cross-continent porky pies), compromised basic hygiene, lack of common sense

and some questionable leadership from supposed world leaders?

Forget the toilet paper issues and or incidents, it is the fact that simple soap, water and consistent hand washing and sanitising can hinder this deadly virus. It took me a while to admit to being angry, frustrated, scared and sick about the welfare of people with regards to jobs, homes, finances and their mental wellbeing.

I have been wondering what the lessons are going forward. Do we all need to slow down, go back to some good old-fashioned basics including being grateful, having mindful manners, being honest and thoughtful, assisting others, acting with integrity and considering the universe as I am sure nature is trying to tell us something?

It is a great time to think about what really matters and identify personal values. It is also a great time to nourish the soul and look after yourself. Certainty drives a lot of people and change creates havoc and chaos for many. During this unprecedented event we need to create our own certainty and deal with change one day at a time. One way of coping (for me) was to compile a lock down list to make sure I do take the time to embrace the imposed changes whilst nurturing my mind, body and soul. I created a great go to *list* whilst in the sanctuary of home...

Lisa's lock-down list

1. Make the bed and clean/tidy the bedroom/s – each day – gets you off to a good start
2. Walk daily – helps clear your head
3. Do a home pamper – manicure or a relaxing bath for example
4. Meditate for 15 minutes in the morning and again in the evening
5. Do your own yoga session and or stretch sessions
6. Create a series of new playlists (try to train Alexa too)
7. Read a book that has been on your shelf for a while or re-read a classic
8. Use your words - Find a Word, crosswords and or Scrabble
9. Gardening (the challenge is to limit your trips to Bunnings)
10. De-clutter one room and one area of that room at a time
11. Cook some soul nourishing old staples – apple crumble, lemon meringue pie, Anzac bickies ...
12. Do some weights (use bricks/canned goods in the absence of gym equipment)
13. Have a weekend Nanna nap
14. Phone a friend and talk (no texting)
15. Be grateful for five basic things each day (health, water, food, shelter, family/friends)
16. Jot down your thoughts via regular reflection time and or journal entries
17. Easy Diet Diary – download the app and track what you eat.... just a thought. This may assist with knowing where the extra five kilos came from when working from home
18. Groom the dog (and/or cat)
19. Track down the old board games and puzzles that are lurking in the hall cupboard
20. Volunteer and or help a neighbour (Care Army, mow their lawn)
21. Photos – sort the printed copies and arrange soft copies into sensible folders
22. Cleaning is therapeutic – dance your way through your new playlist/s
23. House roster (cooking, shopping, vacuuming etc.) – share the load – not mentioning any names
24. Recycle and compost (the kids might like a worm farm)
25. Put your mobile down (minimum of 3 x 30-minute periods each day)
26. Get off social media – check only once per day – a great new habit
27. Drink more water (it does not count when you add caffeine to it, and apparently the same goes for Vodka with soda and a splash of fresh lime)
28. Research your next holiday – dare to dream
29. Plan out goals (1, 3 and 5 years)
30. Do a household budget and update regularly (now is not the time to check your Super – just saying!)
31. Learn a new skill such as a second language – try Duolingo
32. Communicate, communicate, communicate

Stay safe and look after each other.

*"God, grant me
the serenity to
accept the things
I cannot change,
the courage to
change the things
I can, and the
wisdom to know
the difference*

Reinhold Niebuhr

PROGRAMME
FACILITATOR -
LGMA

Lisa Hamilton



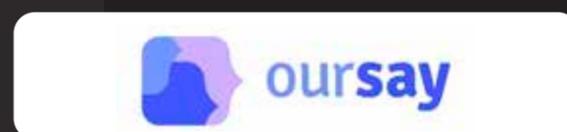
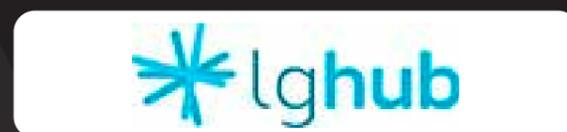
CORPORATE PARTNERS

WE ARE GRATEFUL TO WORK WITH NUMEROUS LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORTERS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR TO PROVIDE OUR SERVICE TO THE SECTOR IN QUEENSLAND.



Thank you to our 2019-2020 Corporate Partners - it has been a disrupted year and we appreciate your ongoing support:

Click on the logo to find out more about each partner - all who provide services to Queensland councils.





CONSCIOUS LEADERSHIP

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT COACHING

Coaching has been at the core of many LGMA programmes over past years. Now, LGMA is making its coaching expertise available to individuals on a standalone basis.

If you need assistance working through the challenges you face leading and managing teams, one-on-one coaching with someone outside your organisation might help you gain perspective and develop new approaches.

Of maybe you are someone who is always looking to improve and constantly seek new ideas and tools to add to your toolkit? Spend time with a coach who can share what others in similar situations are doing, current best practice trends and, importantly, the 'why' of people's behaviour and responses.

Perhaps someone in your team needs advice and outside reinforcement? LGMA can assist, supporting your staff to work through challenges and apply new ways

LGMA's experienced coaches offer insight, perspective and tools to assist in working through the challenges of leading and managing teams and people. All sessions are grounded in an understanding of the local government context.

LGMA can also conduct 360° Feedback surveys, with results delivered and discussed in a coaching session, to support greater understanding of your impact.



COACHING SESSIONS:

\$160 per session
\$700 for a five-pack
\$1,300 for a 10 pack
360° Feedback survey \$370 (includes up to 25 respondents)

Council purchasing packs can allocate to different staff members - the packs do not have to utilised by a single individual.

See the website for details or contact admin@lgmaqlid.org.au

As an added member benefit, LGMA Members can access one, free coaching session per year.

Members, watch for an email with all the details coming to you soon.

March 2020 Forums

The first week of March proved to be extremely busy by way of hosting four forums, along with a CEO breakfast and CEO dinner. The Human Resources Forum was held at the Queensland Law Society on March 4th, kindly supported by LGIASuper, Preston Law and LO-GO Appointments.

Thank you to the participating councils and delegates for attending this forum. We received extremely positive feedback from the event and highlights included presentations from Mark Puncher (Employer Branding); Martine Care (Legal update); Matthew Hogno (TPD); Kerry Youdale (Redland City Council Case Study); Chris Rose (Recruitment and Selection Strategies) and Tania Major (Keynote Presentation). The presentations are available on our website for your reference.

Concurrently we hosted the Onboarding New Councils Forum. Similarly at capacity, this forum was designed to assist officers in building effective working relationships with the newly elected member team as quickly as possible and to tackle the potential problems associated with reporting to council and ensuring quality, strategic leadership and decision-making. The forum focused on two key components - the induction process and building relationships and a leadership culture.

Thank you to LGIASuper for partnering with LGMA for this forum. Thank you also to the guest presenters, the Mayors and CEOs from Lockyer Valley Regional Council and Southern Downs Regional Council. We greatly appreciated your time, involvement and insights.

The CEO Forum was hosted by McCullough Robertson on March 5th and featured presentations from Troy Webb, Mark Ogston, Gary Kellar, Greg Chemello, James Ward - Investment Director from Palisade Partners and the panel session featured Rob Noble, Gary Stevenson and Ian Church. Justin Commons provided an update about his International Manager Exchange Programme experience and Brett de Chastel updated the group regarding LGMA. A big shout out to our corporate partners - McCullough Robertson, Leading Roles and thank you also to LGIASuper for hosting the pre-forum breakfast and the presentation from Palisade Partners.

On March 6th LGIASuper kindly hosted the ILG Chiefs' Forum at their offices. Supported by Preston Law and the Mead Perry Group, this event featured the following presentations:

- **Kate Farrar** - LGIASuper
- **Rachael Rangihaeata**, Information Commissioner and Phil Green, Privacy Commissioner
- **Julian Bodenmann and Martine Care**, Preston Law - Legal Tips and Traps for a New Council
- **Wade Lewis**, Electoral Commission Queensland - Remote area polling service and election update
- **Trent Wilkinson**, Tourism Policy, Partnerships and Events - Year of Indigenous Tourism, including potential funding provisions
- **Scott Sullivan**, Department of Environment and Sciences, ESR Division
- **Scott Mead** - Mead Perry Group Update

We look forward to hosting these Forums once again in the not so distant future!



THANK YOU MARCH CORPORATE PARTNERS



THANK YOU MARCH SUPPLIERS





MEET THE MEMBER

LUKE PORTER
MLGMA

Being involved in each stage of a project, from conception to completion, is very satisfying and has also been extremely beneficial to my professional development. However, I would have to say the most rewarding experience is seeing the community continually benefit from the projects that I have been involved in.

LUKE PORTER, HAS BECOME A FAMILIAR FACE AT LGMA EVENTS, PLUGGED INTO THE NETWORK TO LEARN FROM OTHERS AND SHARE HIS OWN EXPERIENCES.

We asked him about his time in local government along with a few cheeky personal questions.

WHAT MADE YOU PURSUE A CAREER IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT?

I had a keen interest in engineering towards the end of school and I always knew that I wanted to work in engineering of some kind. I originally considered studying full-time on campus, however, when the opportunity arose to complete my studies while working in local government, I jumped at the chance. Looking back, this was the best thing I could've done as it allowed me to get straight into the engineering workforce and learn on-the-job straight away - something that studying full-time wouldn't have allowed me to do for a number of years.

WHAT IS THE MOST REWARDING EXPERIENCE THAT YOU HAVE HAD SO FAR WHILE WORKING IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT?

Being involved in each stage of a project, from conception to completion, is very satisfying and has also been extremely beneficial to my professional development. However, I would have to say the most rewarding experience is seeing the community continually benefit from the projects that I have been involved in.

It is also very rewarding to be part of improving procedures and practices in the workplace and watching this lead to more efficient and effective outcomes for both Council and the community.

WHAT'S YOUR GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT OR CONTRIBUTION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN QUEENSLAND?

While working in local government, I was able to complete a Bachelor of Engineering Science degree majoring in Civil Engineering. Juggling full-time work with study was certainly tough at times, however, I wouldn't have done it any differently. It was very rewarding to complete my degree with years of industry experience under my belt. Completing an engineering degree has allowed me to apply technical skills to my role and thus successfully manage projects that continually make a positive difference to the community.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE CHALLENGES OF ANY LOCAL COUNCIL?

All councils face the challenge of delivering more with less - whether it's less money or less staff. As time goes on local governments are facing increased public expectations regarding delivery of existing and future services. This is not going to go away and so councils must ensure that funding is utilised wisely to ensure that local communities get what they need and deserve.

Regional councils can really struggle to retain younger staff and to attract technical staff to their areas. There are so many different career opportunities that local governments offer and so it is a matter of encouraging the next generation to take advantage of these. I believe that opportunities to act in other positions and temporarily work in other departments will be a key part of retaining staff in the future. By allowing staff (where practical) to temporarily step into roles that may differ from their usual duties we will provide the autonomy that can encourage staff to stay in local government.

WHAT ONE THING DO YOU KNOW THAT THAT YOU WISH YOU KNEW WHEN YOU STARTED?

I wish I was fully aware of the range of professional development opportunities that local governments have access to. I have since taken advantage of these and have completed a number of development programmes including technical courses, personal development programmes and leadership training. It's not just knowledge that I gain from these courses but also networks that I get to create which has led to professional growth and relationships with local government leaders from all over the country.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO ANYONE WILLING TO WORK IN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT SECTOR?

I'll narrow it down to three pieces of advice.

1. Listen, listen listen! What I have learned from other experienced members of staff has been invaluable to growing both technically and professionally. Take any opportunity to learn from experienced staff and don't be afraid to ask questions.
2. Talk to your supervisor about what your goals are and what you want to achieve over the next six months, 12 months, 5 years etc. Having this conversation is a great way for you and your supervisor to get on the same page regarding your development goals.
3. Don't be afraid to put yourself out of your comfort zone - it's the only way to grow.

ONE BUCKET LIST ITEM.

Visiting the Roman Colosseum

DOGS OR CATS?

Dogs every day!

Thanks for your time Luke and to readers, watch out for Luke when you next attend an LGMA event – he is sure to pop up.

NEW ZEALAND

INTERNATIONAL MANAGER EXCHANGE PROGRAMME

YOU KNOW IT IS GOING TO BE A GOOD TRIP WHEN YOU ARE CALLED TO BOARD FIRST AT THE BRISBANE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT. THIS STROKE OF GOOD FORTUNE SET THE SCENE FOR WHAT WAS AN EXTREMELY MEMORABLE AND EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE.

The first stage was hosting Alan Adcock, General Manager - Corporate of Whangarei District Council. Alan was hosted by the South Burnett Regional Council and myself and his account of his trip is available on the website along with my full report. It is interesting to see what others' experiences are and what they find different or unusual about the way Queensland local governments operate.

After a day of travel, my immersions in all things New Zealand Local Government commenced with the 2019 SOLGM Summit – "If it takes a village ..." which was held in Napier. The evening before the summit commenced was a pre-conference networking event at Mission Estate Winery for "Ask Your Team". The conference opening was deeply moving and uplifting. Hau Mai Ki Ahunn – Rāhiri (welcome) and Karakia whakataki (opening blessing).

Almost the entire hour-long session was conducted in Māori. Doors were shut at

8:30 sharp with everyone to be seated at that point. Once the doors were shut there was no entry in respect to the welcome.

Conference similarities and differences - there were no trade displays and lunch and morning teas were broken into the three breakout areas which did make it a bit trickier to meet a range of people other than the group you were with. The Summit used Slido.com for questions and surveys. Topics included the upcoming amendments to the Local Government Act with the "Well Being Amendments". Inclusion, equality, difference and diversity with the concept of what are we missing played a recurring theme. As was the question "When have we recovered?" being raised in various guises.

There were many interesting and diverse presentations from an extremely relatable and practical discussion on illegal building work (New Zealand is having some difficulties including the small house concept) to listening to the Local Government Minister discuss the current legislation and reforms to a presentation by Jo Miller who was the Chief Executive at Doncaster in the UK and is now Chief Executive at Hutt City Council in New Zealand. Stewart Todd, LGPA National Director, participated in the International president's panel with representatives from a

number of Local Government Associations. We were even treated to a school student climate strike and protest at the venue.

It was an excellent start to the exchange which was an extremely enjoyable conference and highly informative. Overall, my time was well spent and I would like to acknowledge my exchange partner Alan Adcock, his family and the Whangarei District Council for making Nicola and I feel so welcome and organising an extensive programme whilst we were in their Local Government area. My full report is presented on the LGMA website.

Mark Pitt FLGMA PSM



MOVERS and SHAKERS

This edition of Movers and Shakers is littered with relieving roles:

Edwina Marks is relieving as CEO at McKinlay Shire Council

Sean Rice is relieving as CEO at Paroo Shire Council

Pauline Gordon is relieving as CEO at Gympie Regional Council

Jane Stroud is relieving as CEO at Southern Downs Regional Council

Jason Bradshaw is relieving as CEO at Whitsunday Regional Council

Warren Bunker is relieving as CEO at Sunshine Coast Council

Have you changed jobs recently?

Let us know so we can share the news and keep our records up to date.

Contact LGMA Queensland at admin@lgmaqlid.org.au or telephone 07 3174 5006





LGMA PROPELLER PROGRAMME



The LGMA Propeller Programme is a dynamic professional development programme offering participants a broad understanding of local government in Queensland – its nuances, challenges and opportunities.

The LGMA Propeller Programme offers a tailored blend of knowledge sharing from experienced local government specialists and experiential learning, providing intensive interaction amongst Propeller participants and host councils.

If you want a long-term future in local government, this programme is the best place to start.



WHAT IS THE PROPELLER PROGRAMME?

This is a question I am constantly asked and after partaking in four of the past eight programmes, I still find it difficult to answer!

It is so many things to different people. I am not fond of the word 'journey', so I like to think of it as a **'series of learning excursions'**.

WHY IS PROPELLER FOR YOU?

- Exciting, interactive and comprehensive programme designed to develop future leaders in local government
- Practical, 'hands on' programme that provides outstanding networking opportunities and skill development
- Clear objectives designed to enhance each participant's outcome
- Relevant research, expert speakers, practical exercises, council case studies and projects
- Learn from host councils
- Meet counterparts and council officers from a range of departments at each host council as well as the Propeller participants themselves

Typically, in November of each year we commence accepting nominations for

the next year's programme whilst we are also on the lookout for host councils and workshop destinations. By the end of January, we usually have approximately 16 delegates committed, with various levels of trepidation, to proceed from February to July. This includes the following:

1. February Introductory Forum in Brisbane (2 days)
2. Workshops 1 and 2 – hosted by two Queensland Councils (2 days)
3. Workshops 3 and 4 – hosted by two Queensland Councils (2 days)
4. Workshops 5 and 6 – hosted by two Queensland Councils (2 days)
5. Final Forum in Brisbane (1 day)

The Introductory Forum includes self-awareness and self-development opportunities. In the second half of day

two, the delegates are briefed about their team allocation, workshop participation, the group project and the group memoire. In small teams, the participants self-manage 1-2 workshops, necessitating the use of good communication skills, a high level of negotiation and influencing skills, project management and interpersonal skills.

The locations for the six workshops are varied each year. For maximum exposure and experience for the participants, we attempt to include; shire, regional, metropolitan and aboriginal councils as workshop destinations and hosts.

Each workshop is allocated a topic, such as: leadership; coaching and mentoring; communication; community engagement; governance; maintaining a leading and learning experience; and LG from varying perspectives – rural, shire, regional, metropolitan and or political.

In 2018, the groups organised the following workshops:

- Sunshine Coast Council – Smart Centre Tour (Caloundra) and Governance workshop (Nambour)
- Rockhampton Regional Council – Community Engagement
- Livingstone Shire Council – LG from a political context
- Wujal Wujal – Leadership – welcomed by the Traditional Owners and hosted by the CEO
- Central Highlands Regional Council – LG from a Regional Perspective
- Gympie Regional Council – Business and Industry Development
- Noosa Council – Coaching and Mentoring

The 2019 Workshops included:

- Banana Shire Council – Shire Perspective – Business and Industry
- South Burnett Regional Council – Economic Development and Tourism
- Fraser Coast Regional Council – Change Management
- Tablelands Regional Council – Communication
- Aurukun Shire Council via video and Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council – Leadership
- Isaac Regional Council – Governance
- Lockyer Valley Regional Council – LG from a Regional Perspective
- Redland City Council – LG from a Metropolitan Perspective

The teams' visual memoires are on the LGMA website for your review.

The objectives for Propeller include:

- Increased local government skills and knowledge through exposure to different approaches
- Develop people who will lead local government in Queensland in the future
- Provide an opportunity for participants to build valuable and relevant networks, providing stronger links and understanding between professions and councils
- Develop people who will lead at all levels and across professions in their councils
- Build appreciation and understanding of the wider issues in local government in Queensland
- Utilise practical experiences and learnings from the local government sector to enable further professional leadership capacity
- Provide training for emerging leaders that is not solely 'management' focused and exposes them to a wide variety of council situations
- Retain passionate, skilled and competent employees in the local government sector



The 2020 Propeller Programme kicked off in Brisbane in late February. Unfortunately, the teams were stopped in their tracks whilst organising the first two workshops. Hence Propeller 2020 is currently 'on hold' and we look forward to discussing suitable options with the amazing delegates and host councils as soon as practicable.

Lisa Hamilton

IN-HOUSE TRAINING PROGRAMMES AND FORUMS

LGMA QUEENSLAND OFFERS A HOST OF SHORT AND EXTENDED COURSES THAT ARE AIMED AT INCREASING THE SKILLS AND CAPABILITIES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICERS.

As with all LGMA programmes, these workshops offer practical, hands-on learning within the local government context in order to maximise application to officers' roles.

Sessions can be provided for an individual council at their location or, alternatively groups can be formed from officers of neighbouring councils to reduce costs and share knowledge and experience. This joint-council format is great for preventing reinforcement of 'the way we do things around here' and also showing new ways of doing things.

Topics offered are diverse and can be tailored to align with specific policies and procedures. Depending the desired learning outcomes, the programmes offered can range from 2 hours to 5 days.

TRAINING TOPICS INCLUDE:

- Code of Conduct (including Employee Responsibilities and Ethics)
- Communication Skills
- Community Engagement
- Work Life Satisfaction

- Leadership Development
- Management Bootcamp
- Legislation Training
- Mentor Training
- Reporting to Council
- Team Building
- Performance Management
- Managing Time
- Conflict Resolution
- Coaching

Council Subscribers receive a 25% discount on in-house training. We are happy to provide itemised quotations based on your needs, ready to include in council's budgeting processes.

VILLAGES / FORUMS / WEBINARS

LGMA also offers a range of Forums targeted to specific areas of interest within Council:

- Compliance
- Customer Service
- Governance
- Human Resources
- Communications and Media
- Community Services
- Tourism and Economic Development
- Libraries
- Procurement
- Investigations

These forums are generally 1-day face-to-face workshops. The Forums are networks that connect officers across the state who are undertaking similar roles. The forums provide an opportunity to hear from a range of speakers; look at case studies and discuss current and emerging issues and trends. The forums are offered throughout the year by LGMA and are held in both Brisbane and regional centres. Alternatively, webinars can also be considered for these topics.

BUSINESS SERVICES AVAILABLE

- Reviews
- Business Planning
- Corporate Services

OTHER SERVICES

- Secondment
- Locum Register
- Advocacy

Don't hesitate to contact LGMA Queensland for further information or assistance.

T: 07 3174 5006
E: admin@lgmaql.org.au
W: www.lgmaql.org.au

VIDEOCONFERENCE *Etiquette*

BY NOW, MANY OF US HAVE SEEN THE 'WHAT NOT TO DO' VIDEOS AND MEMES AROUND VIDEOCONFERENCING – FROM THE INTERRUPTIONS BY PETS AND CHILDREN, FAILING TO WEAR CLOTHES, TO THE ULTIMATE OF VIDEOCONFERENCE FAILS – THE STUDENT WHO HEADED OFF TO THE BATHROOM, VIDEOCONFERENCING PHONE IN HAND AND PROCEEDED TO SPEND A PENNY WHILE DISBELIEVING FELLOW STUDENTS LOOKED ON.

But, assuming you all know to avoid these mistakes, there are other ways we can get caught out and make things uncomfortable for our colleagues when using videoconferencing tools. After 6 weeks of multiple daily videoconferences, here are the top complaints about colleagues' behaviour (and this is only partly tongue in cheek!).

1. LOCATION

You are at home or not in your usually workplace. While we aren't looking to judge your décor or whether you did this morning's dishes, it does make others uncomfortable when your smalls are visible hanging out of the laundry basket behind you. It is also hard to

take you seriously if you are taking the meeting lying on a bed, perhaps with a plate of food or nibbles next to you (not as uncommon as you might expect). Experienced videoconferencers say they got around the fact that they had to meet in a bedroom by setting up a chair against a wall rather than using the bed. Depending on the tool you are using, the 'blur background' or 'set background picture' functions might help you mitigate the risk of over-share due to location.

2. BE CONSIDERATE OF OTHERS AROUND

Please let other adults in the vicinity know when you are having a meeting with video/audio on – it is uncomfortable for them and for us when we see them coming in partially dressed, or even fully dressed but asking about something that you would probably prefer not to share. (Children excused).

3. BODILY NOISES

From eating and drinking and sneezes through to other sounds. For some reason, the noises you make while eating and drinking, along with all those other sounds that might happen, seem to be amplified on a videoconference.

Remember, even if you can't see yourself or others, they can hear you. Use the mute rather than sharing, at volume, all the special chewing, swallowing and nose-blowing sounds you make. And, as for the others, would be great to skip these just as you would avoid making them in a face-to-face setting (we hope!).

4. MANAGING INTERRUPTIONS

If someone comes into your office or room, please don't start having a conversation with them in the meeting, even if on mute – you wouldn't do it in person, so please don't in virtual mode.

5. AVOID HANDHELD IF POSSIBLE

Moving images are distracting and can make people feel unwell. If you are on a handheld device, perhaps turn off video except when absolutely required.

General rules are if you wouldn't do it in a face-to-face, don't do it on videoconference and, if in doubt – Mute.

Oh, and whatever you do, never put a phone on hold – when you do this everyone has to suffer the hold music and the whole meeting has to wait until you re-join before they can continue the conversation.

A note to those home-schooling/parenting while working from home: We get it! It is hard (often impossible) to try and be at work while also supervising kids. And the more tense and worried you get about it, the higher the likelihood said child will make their presence felt. Don't sweat it, do your best to be present but know that we all understand the situation is not optimal and we are just glad to have you on the call!





AUSTRALASIAN MANAGEMENT CHALLENGE

MORE CHALLENGING THAN EVER BEFORE!



THE AUSTRALASIAN MANAGEMENT CHALLENGE TESTS COUNCIL TEAMS' ABILITY TO RESEARCH, LEARN, APPLY NEW KNOWLEDGE, DEAL WITH THE UNEXPECTED AND COLLABORATE.

In 2020 it does all that but on steroids!

For the 15 Queensland teams competing in the Challenge this year, even the known has now become the unknown. What they thought they were getting when they signed up, has now changed and instead of having a set day to complete a range of tasks in a curated environment, they will tackle tasks virtually, over a period of time.

As everyone is aware, 2020 has been a challenge unto itself, and the demands on councils from the current pandemic have only added to this. Many councils have had to restructure their workforces and are now grappling with new ways of organising and managing staff in response to the crisis and, in some cases, workloads have increased to respond. This presents real challenges and limitations for participating teams in continuing their ongoing development. But the rapidly changing environment also presents a unique opportunity to adapt and grow.

The reengineered 'virtual' Australasian Management Challenge will ensure staff continue to develop their ability to solve complex problems and respond to their community's needs – more valuable

Good luck to Brisbane City Council, Cairns City Council, Central Highlands Regional Council (two teams), Isaac Regional Council, Lockyer Valley Regional Council, Moreton Bay Regional Council, Noosa Council, Redland City Council, Rockhampton Regional Council, Southern Downs Regional Council, Sunshine Coast Council, Townsville City Council, Western Downs Regional Council and Whitsunday Regional Council!

than ever during the current crisis – and that organisational and professional development is not side-lined.

For those councils going ahead in the Challenge, it is an amazing development opportunity – it could even be called unprecedented.

Instead of an in-person regional event, teams will utilise digital tools, including videoconferencing platforms, to complete newly designed tasks which will be released electronically. Teams will face the same pressure-cooker environment of previous years and will still need to manage their time well to complete multiple tasks.

Team building is one of the unique benefits of the Management Challenge as a learning experience, and this is no different under the virtual programme. Teams will work out how to build and strengthen relationships while breaking down organisational silos through digital platforms despite the social distancing restrictions. They will find ways to manage remote teams that they can apply after the Challenge. Online networking will allow participants across councils to connect, to learn about each other and to build networks throughout their State and across the country.

So, while the 2020 Management Challenge may feel a bit different, this year's teams will have faced more than any team before and may take the crown as the most tested Challengers ever!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2020

4 MARCH Human Resources Forum - Brisbane <i>Yay this happened!</i>	28 MAY LGMA Queensland Awards for Excellence Gala Dinner also Coronaponed. But it will be back and we will have a huge celebration of achievements, including weathering a global pandemic with poise and grace!	14 OCTOBER Human Resources Forum - Townsville <i>waiting to see...</i>
4 MARCH Onboarding Forum (for Council Officers) - Brisbane Thankful we got this in - with plenty of councillor turnover it was much needed!	16 JUNE Office Professionals Forum - Brisbane <i>neyt, return TBA</i>	14 OCTOBER Governance Forum - Townsville <i>as above...</i>
5 MARCH CEO Forum and Dinner - Brisbane We promoted this dinner as the Last Supper - I promise we had no insider information!	16 JUNE Communications/Media Forum - Brisbane <i>also no - return TBA</i>	22 OCTOBER SQ Regional Branch Forum <i>thinking will be all good...</i>
6 MARCH ILG CEO Forum - Brisbane <i>Last face-to-face we had :(</i>	29 JULY Manager of the Year - nominations close Oh my goodness, this is still happening as advertised (but no idea when we will announce winner)	11 NOVEMBER NQ Rural Management Challenge <i>yes, because we really need another challenge in our lives!</i>
28 MARCH Queensland Election <i>...in the middle of a pandemic!!!</i>	4 AUGUST Investigations Forum - Cairns <i>As above</i>	12 NOVEMBER NQ Regional Branch Forum sure, will want to catch up after so many of us being closed communities for so long
1 APRIL International Manager Exchange - nominations close On hold because who knows when you will get to travel and a virtual exchange does not have the same buzz!	5 AUGUST Procurement Forum - Cairns On hold because who knows when you will get to travel and a virtual exchange does not have the same buzz!	19 NOVEMBER CEO Forum - Brisbane any still standing after surviving election in the middle of pandemic welcome to attend
6 APRIL Young Manager of the Year - nominations close Extended until 26 May as date to award also postponed	6 AUGUST ILG CEO Forum - Cairns or maybe online if we aren't totally over zoom by then?	20 NOVEMBER ILG CEO Forum - Brisbane Find out who exercised their way through the shut down and who ate their way through (unfortunately, I know which category I fit into)
8 APRIL LGMA Queensland Awards for Excellence - nominations close Extended until 26 May ditto above	24-26 AUGUST LGMA Queensland Local Government Conference No, come back in 2021, who knows when, who knows where...	20 NOVEMBER Retired Members' Christmas Luncheon maybe we can find out the pandemic was not as bad as when...
29-30 APRIL Inspire Conference - Brisbane Coronaponed until 2021. Programme was a cracker so watch for its return!	8-10 SEPTEMBER Executive Management Programme - Brisbane This one we can do online on different days - express your interest now to make it happen	25 NOVEMBER CQ Rural Management Challenge by now we all have crisis deprivation setting in. So, LGMA will create and artificial crisis to tide you over
6-7 MAY Australasian Management Challenge 16 teams entered what is turning out to be the challenge to end all challenges - patiently waiting to see the revised format...	7-8 OCTOBER Women in Local Government - Brisbane <i>maybe...</i>	26 NOVEMBER CQ Regional Branch Forum this time last year was where it all began... little did we realise.





LGMA Queensland's mission is to lead, advocate for and support Queensland local government managers: providing relevant and quality professional development opportunities; and actively contributing to the advancement of local government in Queensland.

For more information about LGMA Queensland and *The Journal*, please contact us at admin@lgmaqlld.org.au.

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The Journal welcomes contributions from its readers. If you would like to contribute to an upcoming edition of *The Journal*, contact the Editor.

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