Introduction to the Capability Framework
What is the Local Government Capability Framework?

The Local Government Capability Framework ...

- sets out core capabilities expected of all elected members and local government employees in NSW
- covers areas such as relationships, planning & prioritising and leadership that are essential to positive and productive functioning of councils
- describes *observable behaviour* so that everyone knows what is expected
- for employees, complements the LG State Award, providing a foundation for the full range of workforce management and development activities: role design and description, recruitment and selection, performance management, learning and development and strategic workforce planning
- for elected members, provides a clear basis for councillors professional development in line with new legal requirements.
What is the background?

LGNSW consulted with a wide range of councils and found a common strong desire to have a set of capabilities that provides clear expectations about performance and behaviour for all people in the sector.

The framework was developed by LGNSW with significant involvement from elected and workforce representatives across the state.

It was completed and approved by the LGNSW Board in August 2017.

The Local Government Framework is based on the NSW Public Sector framework, but is very different:

- it covers elected members as well as the workforce
- has some different capabilities e.g. resources and workforce leadership; and uses the language of councils eg. community
Why is it important?

- The framework provides a strong common basis for elected members and employees to bring a positive common approach to delivery of community outcomes.
- It brings into sharp focus the behaviours and attitudes that make up our desired culture in serving the community. It makes transparent what ‘good’ looks like.
- Implemented well, we expect to see sector-wide capability building resulting in measurable improvements in council performance and community perceptions of local government, also enhancing NSW local government as an employer of choice.
What are the key features?

24 capabilities organised into 6 capability groups:
• 16 core capabilities for all people in local government
• 4 additional capabilities for people managers
• 4 additional capabilities for elected people

Different capability levels each with its own set of behavioural indicators:
• 5 levels for the workforce, reflecting the varying skill and complexity requirements of different positions
• Councillor level and Mayor level for elected members
Capability Framework

16 core capabilities

Groups:
- Personal Attributes
- Relationships
- Results
- Resources
- Workforce Leadership
- Civic Leadership

Capabilities:
- Manage Self: Show drive and motivation, awareness of strengths and weaknesses, and a commitment to learning.
- Communicate and Engage: Communicate clearly and respectfully, listen, and encourage input from others.
- Community and Customer Focus: Commit to delivering customer and community focused services in line with strategic objectives.
- Work Collaboratively: Be a respectful, inclusive and reliable team member, collaborate with others, and value diversity.
- Influence and Negotiate: Persuade and gain commitment from others, and resolve issues and conflicts.
- Plan and Prioritise: Plan and organise work in line with organisational goals, and adjust to changing priorities.
- Think and Solve Problems: Think, analyse and consider the broader context to develop practical solutions.
- Create and Innovate: Encourage and suggest new ideas and show commitment to improving services and ways of working.
- Deliver Results: Achieve results through efficient use of resources and a commitment to quality outcomes.
- Finance: Be a responsible custodian of council funds and apply processes in line with legislation and policy.
- Assets and Tools: Use, allocate and maintain work tools appropriately and manage community assets responsibly.
- Technology and Information: Use technology and information to maximise efficiency and effectiveness.
- Procurement and Contracts: Understand and apply procurement processes to ensure effective purchasing and contract performance.
- Manage and Develop People: Engage and motivate staff, develop capability and potential in others.
- Inspire Direction and Purpose: Communicate organisational goals, priorities and vision and recognise achievements.
- Optimise Workforce Contribution: Hire and deploy people effectively and apply sound workforce planning principles.
- Lead and Manage Change: Initiate, support and champion change, assist others to accept and engage with change.
- Represent Communities: Understand and promote the interests of citizens and stakeholders.
- Inspire Direction and Purpose: Create and communicate council's goals, priorities and vision for the community.
- Govern Responsibly: Be a responsible and active member of the governing body, fulfilling responsibilities in line with legislation.
- Make Quality Decisions: Make considered, timely and transparent decisions based on merit, and uphold the decision of council.
Each level has its own set of ‘behavioural indicators’, statements illustrating the type of behaviours expected at that level.

Behavioural indicators are not an exhaustive list and some of them may not apply to particular workforce roles. Rather, they illustrate the sorts of behaviours expected.
Example Workforce: Manage Self

**Personal attributes**

**MANAGE SELF**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foundational</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Adept</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>Highly Advanced</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Checks understanding of own role within the team</td>
<td>Understands what needs to be done and steps up to do it</td>
<td>Initiates action on team/unit projects, issues and opportunities</td>
<td>Demonstrates motivation to serve the community and organisation</td>
<td>Demonstrates motivation to serve the community, make an impact and advance the organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proactively seeks instruction and guidance</td>
<td>Pursues own and team goals with drive and commitment</td>
<td>Accepts and tackles demanding goals with drive and commitment</td>
<td>Initiates team activity on organisation/unit projects, issues and opportunities</td>
<td>Models initiative and decisiveness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approaches work tasks with energy and enthusiasm</td>
<td>Shows awareness of own strengths and weaknesses</td>
<td>Seeks opportunities to apply and develop strengths and skills</td>
<td>Seeks and accepts challenging assignments and other development opportunities</td>
<td>Applies and shares knowledge gained through experience and exposure to experts, colleagues and stakeholders</td>
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<td>Stays up to date with knowledge, training and accreditation in relevant skills areas</td>
<td>Asks for feedback from colleagues and stakeholders</td>
<td>Examines and reflects on own performance</td>
<td>Seeks feedback broadly and asks others for help with own development areas</td>
<td>Proactively seeks opportunities for growth for self and others</td>
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<td>Is willing to learn and apply new skills</td>
<td>Makes the most of opportunities to learn and apply new skills</td>
<td>Seeks and responds well to feedback and guidance</td>
<td>Translates negative feedback into an opportunity to improve</td>
<td>Actively seeks, reflects and acts on feedback, showing a strong capacity and willingness to modify behaviour</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learns from mistakes and the feedback of others</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Works to apply strengths and mitigate weaknesses and limitations</td>
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Example Elected Members: Communicate and Engage

Relationships

COMMUNICATE AND ENGAGE
Communicate clearly and respectfully, listen, and encourage input from others

Councillor
- Clearly communicates ideas and arguments
- Adjusts tone, pace and message for different audiences
- Listens when others are speaking and asks appropriate, respectful questions
- Shows sensitivity to cultural, religious and other individual differences when interacting with others
- Uses communication channels that are suitable for the diversity in the community
- Creates opportunities for people to engage with council and contribute to public discussion and debate

Mayor
- Clearly communicates ideas and arguments
- Adjusts tone, pace and message for different audiences
- Listens when others are speaking and asks appropriate, respectful questions
- Shows sensitivity to cultural, religious and other individual differences when interacting with others
- Uses communication channels that are suitable for the diversity in the community
- Creates opportunities for people to engage with council and contribute to public discussion and debate
How can councils use the framework?

Councils can use the framework to build a common culture and expected behaviours across elected members and workforce. Workforce implementation should be subject to established consultation arrangements.

For **employees of councils**, the framework may be used as a complement to the LG State Award to underpin all aspects of people management.

For **elected members**, the framework may be used as a basis for community and prospective candidate information, councillor induction and professional development.

A suite of support materials provided by LGNSW will assist councils realise the benefits of the framework. These include:

- An implementation and change management guide
- A guide on how to use capabilities in workforce planning
- A Position Description Builder tool – an online interactive tool to enable the development of position descriptions that include capabilities.
- A guide on how to use capabilities in recruitment and selection
- A guide on how to use capabilities in performance development
- Professional Development in a Box (PD-in-a-Box) – professional development for councillors and mayors.
How do I find out more?

Access the Capability Framework on the Local Government NSW website

www.lgnsw.org.au/capability

Contact the LGNSW Capability Framework Team

member.services@lgnsw.org.au