



# LOCAL GOVERNMENT CAPABILITY FRAMEWORK

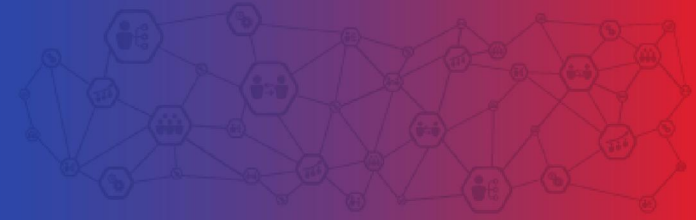
## Introduction to the Capability Framework

# 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.

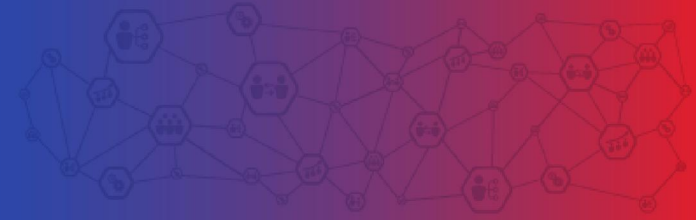
The framework was developed by LGNSW with significant involvement from elected and workforce representatives across the state.

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:

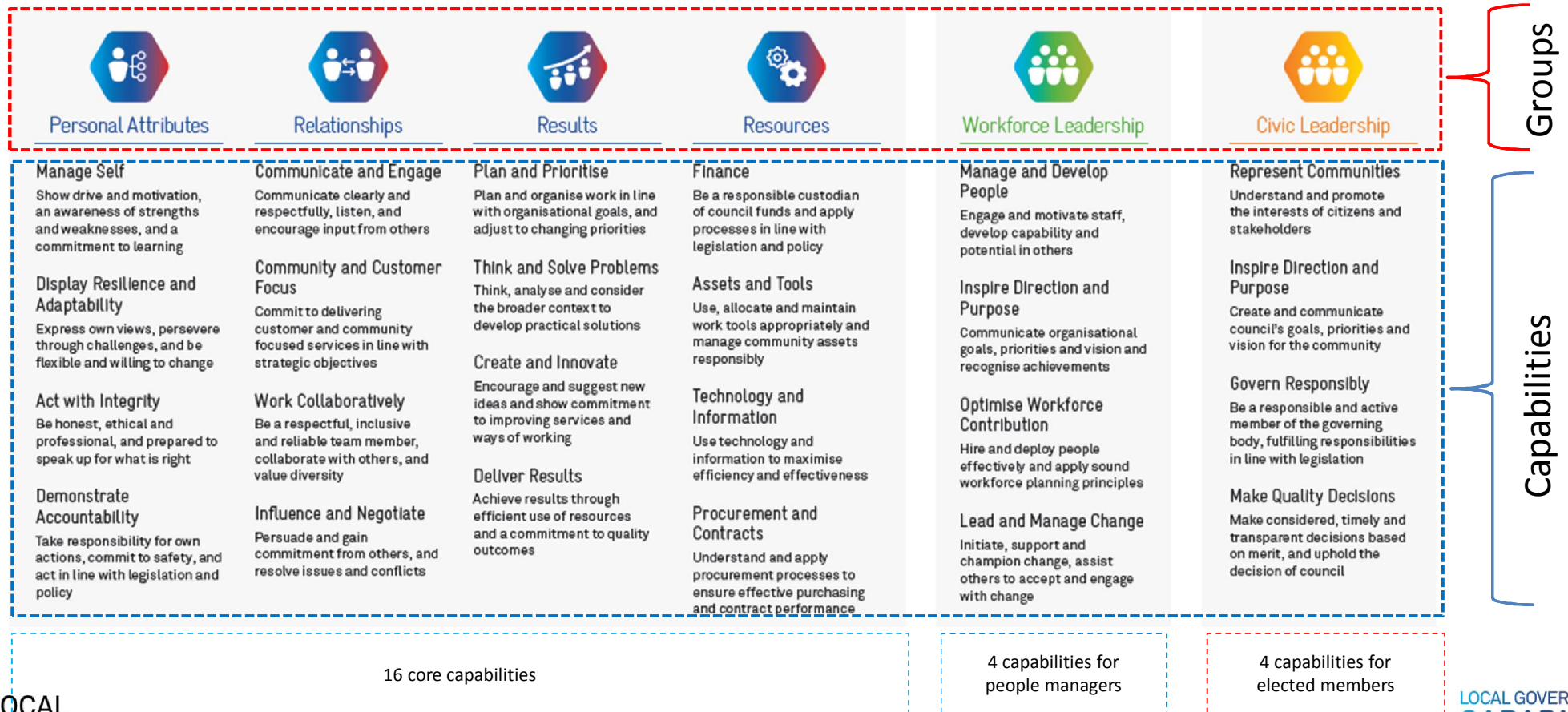
- 16 core capabilities for all people in local government
- 4 additional capabilities for people managers
- 4 additional capabilities for elected people

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



# Capability levels



5 capability levels for the workforce,  
from *Foundational* to *Highly Advanced*



2 levels (Councillor and Mayor) for  
elected members

- 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



### Foundational

- Checks understanding of own role within the team
- Proactively seeks instruction and guidance
- Approaches work tasks with energy and enthusiasm
- Stays up to date with knowledge, training and accreditation in relevant skills areas
- Is willing to learn and apply new skills
- Learns from mistakes and the feedback of others



### Intermediate

- Understands what needs to be done and steps up to do it
- Pursues own and team goals with drive and commitment
- Shows awareness of own strengths and weaknesses
- Asks for feedback from colleagues and stakeholders
- Makes the most of opportunities to learn and apply new skills



### Adept

- Initiates action on team/unit projects, issues and opportunities
- Accepts and tackles demanding goals with drive and commitment
- Seeks opportunities to apply and develop strengths and skills
- Examines and reflects on own performance
- Seeks and responds well to feedback and guidance



### Advanced

- Demonstrates motivation to serve the community and organisation
- Initiates team activity on organisation/unit projects, issues and opportunities
- Seeks and accepts challenging assignments and other development opportunities
- Seeks feedback broadly and asks others for help with own development areas
- Translates negative feedback into an opportunity to improve



### Highly Advanced

- Demonstrates motivation to serve the community, make an impact and advance the organisation
- Models initiative and decisiveness
- Applies and shares knowledge gained through experience and exposure to experts, colleagues and stakeholders
- Proactively seeks opportunities for growth for self and others
- Actively seeks, reflects and acts on feedback, showing a strong capacity and willingness to modify behaviour
- Works to apply strengths and mitigate weaknesses and limitations



# Example Workforce Leadership: Manage and Develop People

## Workforce Leadership MANAGE AND DEVELOP PEOPLE

Engage and motivate staff, develop capability and potential in others



### Foundational

- Clearly explains work required, expected behaviour and outputs
- Gives regular feedback about positive behaviour and areas for improvement
- Provides appropriate support to enable development
- Recognises ongoing performance issues and seeks advice on managing them



### Intermediate

- Clearly communicates roles and responsibilities in the team
- Discusses and sets clear performance goals and standards
- Gives regular feedback with the aim of improving performance and helping others learn and develop
- Recognises development needs of individuals and identifies suitable learning opportunities
- Recognises ongoing performance issues and works towards resolving them



### Adept

- Seeks to understand the individual strengths, weaknesses, goals and concerns of team members
- Defines and communicates roles and responsibilities and sets clear performance standards and goals
- Coaches team members to help improve performance and development
- Regularly discusses performance with team members and provides accurate, constructive reviews
- Identifies suitable learning opportunities, including stretch assignments, based on individual needs, interests and goals
- Addresses team and individual performance issues, including unsatisfactory performance, in a timely and effective way



### Advanced

- Knows the individual strengths, weaknesses, goals and concerns of members of the team
- Fosters high performance through effective conversations and feedback and by providing stretch opportunities
- Identifies and develops talent across the organisation
- Coaches and mentors staff to foster professional development and continuous learning
- Implements performance development frameworks to align capability with the organisation's current and future priorities
- Resolves team and individual performance issues, including serious unsatisfactory performance, in a timely and effective way



### Highly Advanced

- Creates a climate in which people across the organisation want to do their best
- Ensures the organisation engages in effective performance management, development planning and talent identification
- Drives executive capability development and ensures effective succession management practices
- Creates a climate in which senior staff value regular feedback, continuous learning and new experiences
- Ensures workforce management systems, policies and practices are inclusive of all individuals
- Instils a sense of urgency around addressing performance problems among leaders in the organisation

# Example Elected Members: Communicate and Engage

Relationships

## COMMUNICATE AND ENGAGE

Communicate clearly and respectfully, listen, and encourage input from others



Councillor

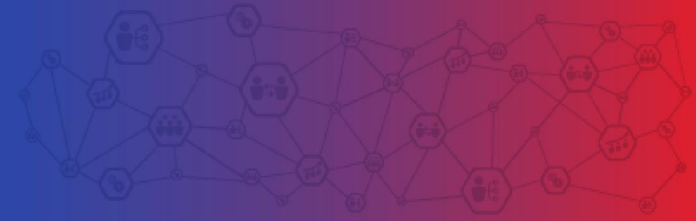
- Clearly communicates ideas and arguments
- Adjusts tone, pace and message for different audiences
- Listens when others are speaking and asks appropriate, respectful questions
- Shows sensitivity to cultural, religious and other individual differences when interacting with others
- Uses communication 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.

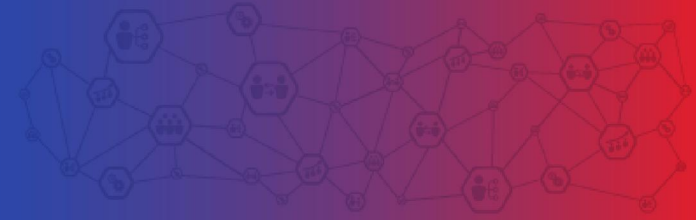
For **elected members**, the framework may be used as a basis for community and prospective candidate information, councillor induction and professional development.

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](http://www.lgnsw.org.au/capability)

