

LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN TRANSITION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESEARCHERS FORUM 2011

SYDNEY 14-15 December

About the 2011 Researchers Forum

The aim of the forum is to bring researchers together to share current knowledge and identify research needs for local government policy formulation into the future.

The Forum theme is 'Local Governance in Transition'. The papers presented in this forum cover new approaches to local governance and community engagement; governance challenges for rural, remote and indigenous councils; structural reform and financing options; workforce challenges in the context of demographic change; and responses to managing the physical environment more sustainably. ACELG supported research will feature in the program.

About ACELG

The Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government (ACELG) was established in mid 2009 to encourage the adoption of innovative practices and solutions, from the way services are delivered through to advancing the interests of local communities in national policy discussions. ACELG's activities are grouped into six program areas: research and policy foresight, innovation and better practice, governance and strategic leadership, organisation capacity building, rural-remote and Indigenous local government and workforce development. For more information, please visit the ACELG website (www.acelg.org.au).

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An Australian Government Initiative



KEYNOTE

Austin Ley, Manager, City Research, City of Melbourne, Australia's leading Local Government research organisation

Austin is an economist with a master's degree in urban planning and over twenty five years experience in strategic planning, and economic and market research in both the public and private sectors. He joined the City of Melbourne in 1995 to establish the Research Branch which is today a team of 12 staff responsible for coordinating research across the Council.

Austin understands the information needs of planners, policy and decision-makers and how to ensure Council's research resources deliver the best outcomes.

He is passionate about improving the availability and consistency of City information, across all levels of government, academia and the private sector.

Today he will share with you the insights he has gained during his career and address two questions:

- What is the future of local government research?
- How do we encourage practitioner involvement?





STREAM 1 Transition Governance

1. A Fresh Look at Municipal Consolidation in Australia

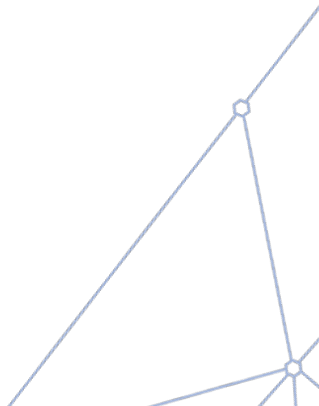
Chris Aulich, *University of Canberra*; Melissa Gibbs, Stefanie Pillora and Graham Sansom, *ACELG*; Alex Gooding and Peter McKinlay, *ACELG associates*

A recurrent theme in local government reform, in Australia, New Zealand and in many overseas jurisdictions, has been the issue of municipal amalgamation and the various benefits which are assumed to flow from it. There have been many commissions and reports aimed at reforming local government in Australia and New Zealand and almost all have had as a major focus the question of optimum size and efficiency.

The reports of these enquiries, together with the academic research in Australia and internationally, represent a huge body of literature, sometimes contradictory, often heavily focused on economic arguments to the exclusion of other issues – such as the importance of good governance and effective local democracy and representation – and rarely inclusive of any evaluation of the post-reform experience. It is little wonder that proposals for amalgamations or other forms of municipal consolidation keep recurring, when there has not been a robust meta-analysis of the data to give governments more guidance in policy making.

This paper has been developed from a collaborative research project designed to take a fresh look at the issue of consolidation in local government in Australia and New Zealand (the full Research Report is available at: <http://www.acelg.org.au/news-detail.php?id=156>). The term ‘consolidation’ was chosen to embrace a wider range of options than amalgamation that may deliver economies of scale or scope, or other benefits in terms of more effective local government. These options included shared services delivery, various models of regional collaboration, boundary adjustment, and voluntary, forced and failed amalgamations of councils.

The research design involved studies of 17 cases of different forms of consolidation, including amalgamation, together with a series of interviews with ‘persons of standing’ in the local government community triangulated with a substantial review of literature. Data revealed little evidence of economies of scale from consolidation, however we were able to conclude that consolidation has typically generated economies of scope for most local authorities. While it was not possible to disaggregate the data for particular sizes of local authority, enhancement of strategic capacity was more obvious through processes of consolidation in larger ones and less so in smaller, more remote ones. These findings are significant in terms of challenging the current public policy paradigms that amalgamation will yield economies of scale, typically asserted as an *ex ante* proposition by state and territory governments.



2. Sustainability and the Social Contract with Australia's Country Towns: Local Governance in Transition?

John Martin, *LaTrobe University*

What is known about this subject?


- The Australian Federation has a rich tradition in developing mechanisms to ensure the social contract supports all citizens when they need it;
- Much less discussion has related to the role of local government in this contract and how it impacts the sustainability of rural communities today.

What does the paper add?

- This paper frames the challenges for all levels of government advocating that local government is able to play a key role in developing this relationship.

Sustainability has become a catch-cry across Australian local governments as they attempt to live within their means and create a desirable future for the people in the places they manage. Providing an equitable level of service across all communities is a goal of the Australian Federation with its various equalisation strategies for revenue sharing. This is the social contract reflected in our democracy and the system of government that supports it. Over the last few decades we have seen a fundamental shift in the way government works. They have embraced the idea of engaging third parties to work for them in much the same way households and businesses engage firms to provide specific services. In fact we have a whole regulatory regime to make sure that such brokering by government and business is fair and reasonable, with huge penalties for collusion. This 'New Public Management' (NPM) as it is known assumes there is a market for government works and services and the neo-liberal, market-driven approach to economic and social policy underpinning it has had a profound effect on the way government works in this country.

The neo-liberal agenda has changed the cultural landscape of public sector management across Australia's system of government. Third parties now play key roles from research to strategic direction to service delivery to evaluation of government services. The distinction between the provision and production in local government is clear and the drive for economic efficiency has created lean council organisations now much less able to focus on particular locales and their needs as in earlier days of parochial local government. This is most pronounced in the larger regional councils now commonplace in Victoria and Queensland where councils of seven or nine members are responsible for communities with populations well into the tens of thousands, or over a hundred thousand as with the Sunshine Coast Regional Council. This is also the case for larger regional councils that cover very large areas such as in the Loddon Mallee region where ten councils are responsible for many different communities, in this case over 70 small towns. The way that these councils now operate under the neo-liberal, NPM culture excludes attention to individual citizens in regional cities with large populations (as in Queensland), and bypasses small towns in those larger rural regional councils (as in north-western Victoria). It is ironic that this is now the case as advocates emphasise subsidiarity, building resilient communities, engaging in adaptive planning, and so on, all processes which acknowledge the role of social capital and a sense of place in sustaining communities. Local government councils are so focussed on the structure and function of delivering efficient services that they are now bereft of any real capacity of engaging with citizens, either in large urban communities or in dispersed rural places. Local governance, by local government, has, we believe, transited to a place where it is less relevant than it has ever been. Getting back to their communities will require a cultural shift on the same scale that occurred with the introduction of the



NPM which has now effectively cuckold genuine local governance by local government.

In this paper we review NPM in Australian local government and argue the social contract is negated by large regional councils unable to provide services for the ongoing sustainability of the small rural towns in their jurisdiction using the Loddon Mallee region as a case study.

3. Divided by a Continent – Different Approaches to Local Government Reform and the Prospects for Regional Organisations of Councils in NSW and Western Australia

Alex Gooding, *Gooding Davies Consultancy Pty Ltd/ACELG Associate*

What is known about this subject?

- Regional organisations of councils (ROCs) have long been part of the Australian local government landscape, helping to overcome fragmentation in service delivery and participating in regional management. However, as state government reforms have reduced the number of councils through amalgamations, ROCs themselves have been restructured or have disappeared entirely. Now NSW and Western Australia, the last two jurisdictions with substantial numbers of councils are undertaking reforms, with significant but very different implications for ROCs.

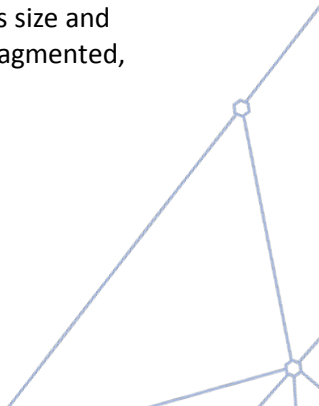
What does the paper add?

- An overview of the current status of ROCs in NSW and Western Australia;
- An assessment of the diverging impact of local government reform processes on ROCs in both states and the implications for their future;
- Initial conclusions about changes such as options for legal incorporation and for the resourcing of ROCs that would assist their development.

For over 50 years, ROCs have been a part of the Australian local government landscape and were once a prominent feature in all states. ROCs have evolved into a wide range of forms, but their structure generally involves several common characteristics such as a contiguous geographic base and some degree of councillor engagement in their management. Unlike many other shared services arrangements, ROCs also tend to have a multi-purpose agenda which seeks to gain economies of scope as well as scale, often taking a more strategic approach to broad regional issues.

Another important if not always articulated part of this role has been to overcome local government fragmentation in service delivery and regional management, especially in jurisdictions with large numbers of relatively small councils. However, in the past two decades, as many state governments around Australia have embarked on local government reform processes chiefly aimed at reducing the number of councils through amalgamation, ROCs themselves have been substantially restructured or have disappeared entirely.

Until recently, two jurisdictions on either side of the continent remained relatively untouched by these reform processes. NSW has seen a modest reduction in the number of councils to 152, still the largest number in Australia. Western Australia remains largely unchanged, with 139 councils – a very high degree of local governance fragmentation which is only partly explained by the state's size and geography. Local government arrangements in the respective state capitals are similarly fragmented, with over 40 councils in the Sydney metropolitan area and 30 in Perth.



Not surprisingly both states have also retained a large number of ROCs and other regional structures, though these have developed in very different ways. In NSW ROCs have become the primary form of regional cooperation; many organisations employ staff and some have substantial annual budgets. In Western Australia most ROCs are much more modest operations which compete for council resources with a wide range of other local government regional bodies. Most have neither staff nor even their own budgets.

Now both NSW and Western Australia are undertaking local government reform processes, though in quite different directions. In Western Australia reform has been underway for some time, with councils being encouraged to form regional groupings as a precursor to amalgamation. This process was boosted dramatically with the recent appointment of an independent panel to review local governance arrangements for metropolitan Perth and specifically to reduce the number of councils. Even before the panel's appointment, ROCs did not appear to be a significant component in the West Australian reform process and their future now looks uncertain.

The situation is very different in NSW, where the state government has embarked on what appears to be a less prescriptive and more collaborative approach. This was launched with the Destination 2036 Forum which gathered all councils and ROCs to develop a shared vision and priority actions to achieve reform. A strong theme of the outcomes was a high level of support for regional cooperation, including ROCs. Subsequent comments by NSW ministers and policy responses from the NSW Division of Local Government have raised the prospect that ROCs may have a central role in that state's reform process, possibly even acting as an alternative form of consolidation to amalgamation. This embrace by the state is not without its problems for ROCs however, and raises interesting questions about their fundamental purpose and role.

Based on a research project jointly funded and managed by ACELG and the Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils to undertake a predominantly desktop audit of the structural arrangements, financial models and activities of NSW and Western Australian ROCs as well as their operating environment, this paper seeks to review the current situation of ROCs in both states and to examine their prospects in the face of the different approaches to local government reform.

It also discusses the "evolution" of ROCs in other states and some of the issues many regional organisations now face as they respond to the challenges such as the potential for further amalgamation of their members, and the emergence of other forms of council grouping. It also examines related issues such as the proposals from the Western Australian Local Government Association for alternative forms of regional governance, and the questions raised by the NSW Destination 2036 process, in particular the extent to which ROCs can provide an alternative to amalgamation and support the government's desire to achieve more efficient service delivery without losing their primary identity and accountability as local government organisations.

STREAM 1 Sharing Services and Finance in Transition

4. Rating Policy – an *ad hoc* or Principled Balancing Act?

John Comrie, JAC Comrie Pty Ltd, Lachlan Smirl, Deloitte Access Economics, and Shane Sody, Local Government Association of South Australia

Summary

- Principles of taxation, that have been influencing tax collection models for centuries, are strangely absent from any of the Australian statutes under which Local Governments set their rates;
- The plethora of statutory rating tools and options in most jurisdictions are implicitly focussed on either the ability to pay principle or the benefit principle, with little regard to the simplicity principle or the policy consistency principle;
- There is an absence of statutory direction (and often lack of capacity) for Local Governments to balance these principles;
- The absence of statutory references to taxation principles can and does lead to the adoption of rating policies that are internally inconsistent, such as the use of minimum rates within a valuation base that has been chosen to reflect the ability to pay principle;
- Appropriate and explicit regard to clearly articulated principles would lead to better policy decision-making and improved community acceptance of rating outcomes.

"Let me have the benefits, and let others pay the costs." Frédéric Bastiat (1848)

Setting or revising a Council rating policy is one of the most difficult balancing acts that Local Government elected Members are called upon to perform. However, the wide diversity between Council rating policies reflects not only the choices made by elected Council Members, but also the diversity between the respective Local Government Acts in each Australian jurisdiction.

The statutes, and the rating policy choices made by Local Government elected Members inevitably reflect, to a greater or lesser extent, certain principles of taxation. However, it is rare for these principles to be explicitly acknowledged. In many cases, the principles are applied due to local custom or default, or even disregarded altogether.

The result, at any given Local Government (or throughout an entire jurisdiction) may be rating practices that place undue emphasis on one or more principles of taxation, while minimising or ignoring other principles. A further difficulty in some jurisdictions is a lack of accurate, consistent and up-to-date valuation data, on which Local Governments might otherwise rely to implement a balanced rating policy.

These shortcomings may potentially contribute to public dissatisfaction with Local Government's rating practices and the rate-setting process and, ultimately, to sub-optimal policy decisions. This paper outlines the relevant principles of taxation, and then examines both:

- the respective Local Government Act in each Australian jurisdiction; and
- the availability of valuation data in each jurisdiction;
- to determine the extent to which these factors may facilitate or hinder the balanced application of the principles of taxation.

It argues that the quality of public policy decisions would be improved, and public understanding and acceptance of Local Government's role and functions would be enhanced, if State legislation, State decisions on the availability of valuation data, and each Local Government rating policy all transparently acknowledged and explicitly attempted to balance the principles of taxation.

This paper draws upon previous work commissioned from, or published by:

- The Office for State/Local Government Relations (SA);
- John Comrie (JAC Comrie Pty Ltd); and
- Access Economics.

5. Regional Performance: the Leadership Difference

Amanda Spalding, *Darrell Hair Associates – Management Consultants* and Alison Dalziel, *Dalziel Strategy and Performance*


What is known about this subject?

- That there are strong indications that regional performance in NSW and WA has lagged and the current form of local government is no longer fit for purpose in delivering community outcomes at the right level or scale;
- The recent Destination 2036 Workshop in NSW resulted in strong endorsement for strengthening regional collaboration and resource sharing and has proposed a variety of operating models for local government;
- Local Government Reform was announced in WA in 2009 with the aim of creating fewer but stronger councils that will better service WA communities into the future, and encourage a greater focus on regional long-term planning;
- There are parallel moves to improve the quality of integrated planning and reporting across Australia and New Zealand.

What does this paper add?

- Practitioner experience and analysis of issues and proposals in NSW and Western Australia with reference to New Zealand and the U.K., including partnerships of different levels of government and stakeholders, and place management;
- Derives a framework from canvassing the regional development literature for assessing the challenges and potential solutions, which identifies the role of shared leadership as a vital ingredient for successful regions;
- Testing the proposals in NSW and WA against the critical success factors;
- Recommendations for a possible model for local government arrangements in regional areas.

In Australia at the current time, there is a significant focus on local government arrangements in both New South Wales (NSW) and Western Australia (WA). Leading up to this point, there have been strong indications in both States that regional performance has lagged and that the current form of local government is no longer fit for purpose in delivering community outcomes at the right level or scale. The implications of this go well beyond a narrow interpretation of local government's service delivery role, but extend into broader spheres of economic, social, environmental and cultural performance within and across local government boundaries. This paper examines the regional challenges and potential solutions that have been identified, particularly structure and collaboration



for resource sharing. The paper takes a step back and asks: what are the real critical success factors for regions?

In the NSW context, the recent “Destination 2036 Workshop - Mapping the future for better local government”, resulted in, *inter alia*, strong endorsement for strengthening regional collaboration and resource sharing, and recognition that a variety of operating models for local government are needed that can be applied in the differing circumstances of remote, regional, rural, and Sydney basin councils (Division of Local Government, Department of Premier and Cabinet, NSW, 2011). In the WA context, a local government reform initiative was announced early 2009 with the aim of creating “...fewer but stronger councils that will better service WA communities into the future” (Department of Local Government, WA, 2010). The reform initiative also aimed to “...encourage a greater focus on regional long-term planning”. Two models were established to progress reform, Regional Transition Groups (RTGs) and Regional Collaborative Groups (RCGs).

RTGs were a vehicle for exploring the merits or otherwise of amalgamation proposals. RCGs were a vehicle to local governments in regional areas such as the Kimberley, Pilbara, Goldfields and the Murchison where amalgamation may not be a realistic option due to the vast distances involved, but where shared services could have merit.

In both States, as is the case across the whole of Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom, there are parallel moves to improve the quality of integrated planning and reporting. These requirements are themselves placing capacity and capability pressure on local government in the regions.

We canvas the regional development literature to derive a framework for assessing the NSW and WA challenges and potential solutions, and identify the role of shared leadership as a vital ingredient for successful regions, encompassing vision and drive; strategic planning; key partnerships; horizontal and vertical joining up; and place management.

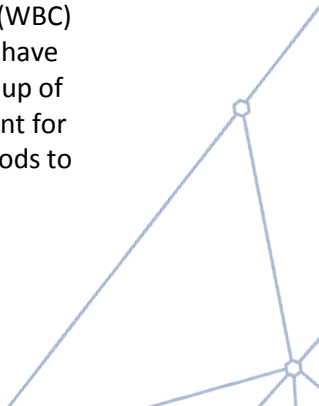
We examine how the configuration of smaller towns, larger regional centres and the State Capital City, the interdependencies among those parts (negative and positive, recognised and unrecognised) and the relevant institutional relationships (including the relationship between State and Local Government) affect the performance of regions.

We draw on experience in the United Kingdom and New Zealand with application to the NSW and WA context. In the United Kingdom, we focus on the formation of partnerships for economic development, integration of Government and local government delivery through Local Area Agreements, and lessons from reorganisation of local government in rural/urban areas. In New Zealand, we trace the policy and practice of regional development with particular reference to the role of local government and the relevant institutional arrangements (structures, processes and programmes).

6. Legal and Governance Models for Shared Services in Local Government

David Somerville, *Northbridge Management Consulting*

The proposal for this paper came from interest raised by the Wellington Blaney Carbonne (WBC) Strategic Alliance. They are three councils located on the Central Tablelands of NSW. They have achieved significant success in delivering programmes collaboratively as a sub-regional group of councils. Whilst the research is broad, we hope that this paper will provide a reference point for organisations, such as the WBC Strategic Alliance, to move forward using integrating methods to deliver beneficial outcomes to their communities.



Context

Local government in Australia and many other parts of the world is under increasing pressure to deliver higher standards of service and new areas of service delivery at a competitive cost to their communities. Recent issues raised in the Australian context tend to have focussed on the shifting of services to the local government level and an increasing expectation of service quality by the community. This situation has challenged local government to review its working practices and relationships with its stakeholders and other levels of government.

This paper explores how local government is responding to these challenges in the context of sharing service provision, production and collaboration outside a council's own municipal boundaries.

Legal Background

Legislative provision tends to form the foundation of or the starting point by which local councils can determine the options available for the sharing and delivery of services and collaborative arrangements that can be undertaken between separately constituted council entities. A summary of how legislation in each State jurisdiction can determine the methods and implementation of such activities is briefly explored.

Mechanisms and Arrangements

When exploring the sharing of services, a council needs to determine the scope of its involvement ie the range of services it may wish to share. It needs to consider the outcomes which will be achieved by these actions and foresee any unintended consequences that may also result. There needs to be an awareness by a council, as to the degree of readiness it has and a preparedness for undertaking this approach, and to identify what the key drivers to success there might be. Once a council has reflected on these aspects, there is the question of determining what type of service 'vehicle' or organisational structure could implement this approach and the type of agreements which would be appropriate to secure and minimise risk to council.

STREAM 1 Local/State Reform Governance


7. Collaborative Governance and Metropolitan Planning for South East Queensland

John Abbott, *Abbott Planning P/L and ACELG associate*

Summary

- The early SEQ 2001 phases of metropolitan planning in SEQ are well documented;
- Less has been written about metropolitan planning in SEQ between 2001 and 2010;
- This paper outlines recent ideas about collaborative governance;
- It reviews collaborative governance arrangements between State and local governments in SEQ from 1990 to 2010;
- The paper makes conclusions about collaborative arrangements in SEQ and identifies some implications for other metropolitan regions.

This paper outlines a broad concept of collaborative governance involving governments, the community and the private sector. However, the focus of the paper is on the collaboration of Local and State Governments in metropolitan planning in South East Queensland (SEQ).



Metropolitan areas are growing rapidly and expanding spatially. They are characterized by fragmented government boundaries. This creates challenges for governing these areas and, in particular, how to balance efficiency and effectiveness in public service provision and improved global competitiveness with maintaining democratic accountability. Recently, an approach has developed called 'new regionalism' which argues that improved area-wide governance can be achieved through collaborative arrangements between networks of policy-related government, community and private sector stakeholders.

Numerous joint projects have been established and research programs and papers completed to explore these collaborative governance arrangements in theory and practice. In this paper, a broad definition of collaborative governance has been used. This does not limit it to processes involving government and non-government stakeholders and can include, as in this case, partnerships among governments.

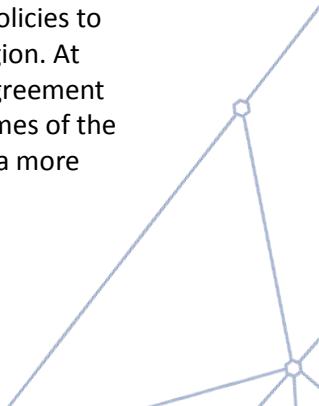
Models of collaborative governance have been developed based on contingent factors and variables that can influence the establishment and outcomes of collaborative arrangements. These include: leadership; trust building; interdependence of roles, incentives to collaborate; face-to-face dialogue; and managing uncertainties. These concepts and variables about collaborative governance are being used to review the development of metropolitan planning in SEQ. The paper outlines some results and conclusions from the ongoing research work.

South East Queensland (SEQ) is a fast growing, mega-city region and over the past 20 years innovative collaborative governance and planning arrangements have been evolving. These arrangements commenced in 1990, when a new State government and Minister recognised that a regional strategy was needed, based on joint planning between the State and Local Governments, to address the impacts of rapid growth. The Hon Tom Burns met with the Moreton Regional Organisation of Councils and agreed to work in a voluntary partnership to develop a non-statutory regional strategy. Gaining a level of trust from the Councils, who were suspicious of the State and of regional planning, was critical in getting the SEQ 2001 planning process underway.

Over the period 1990 to 1995, State and Local Governments and the community sector worked together to prepare the first, fully endorsed regional plan for SEQ called the *Regional Framework for Growth Management* (RFGM) 1995. New collaborative institutional arrangements were developed, including the Regional Planning Advisory Group (RPAG), the SEQ Regional Organisation of Councils (SEQROC) and the ongoing Regional Coordination Committee (RCC). The strength of the policy outcomes was demonstrated in 1996, with a change of State Government, when Local Governments convinced the State to continue to support the RFGM 1995 and the RCC.

Further RFGMs were prepared and in 2001 a comprehensive review of the SEQ regional strategy was initiated. Weaknesses in implementation of the non-statutory RFGMs led Local Governments to agree that a statutory regional plan was needed and they advocated this to the State Government. The State responded by establishing a powerful new agency, the Office of Urban Management, to prepare the plan in partnership with Local Governments. The first statutory plan for SEQ, called the *South East Queensland Regional Plan 2005-2026* was released in 2005 and included an associated *SEQ Infrastructure Plan and Program* and effective Urban Footprint to control sprawl.

Collaborative arrangements in SEQ have allowed governance and metropolitan planning policies to evolve and change by mutual agreement in accordance with the changing needs of the region. At various times this has involved leadership by either the State or Local Governments and agreement by the other party. Although State governments have power in all capital cities, the outcomes of the collaborative approach in SEQ have implications for ongoing arrangements in SEQ and for a more



innovative, partnership approach to involving Local Governments in metropolitan planning in other cities in Australia.

8. Collaborative Reform between State and Local Government: the Victorian Councils Reforming Business Program

Leighton Vivian and Angelo d'Costa, *Victoria Department of Planning and Community Development*

What is known about this subject?

- Local Government is required to deliver a diverse range of services to their communities
- There is increased pressure on local government to deliver these services
- Councils haven't sought opportunities for inter council collaboration.

What does this paper add?

- This paper describes a local government reform program undertaken by the Victorian State government
- Collaborative Reform is based around building partnerships and sharing resources and opportunities in order to improve processes and outcomes
- It explains the collaborative reform approach and provides case studies on two of the reform initiatives around local government procurement and infrastructure standards
- The paper describes the outcomes from these initiatives, the success and the failures and outlines the necessary conditions required to undertake collaborative reform.

Collaborative reform is a complex undertaking in the context of the state-local government relationship. The Victorian Government's Councils Reforming Business Program undertook such a challenge over three years. Two reform projects within the program enjoyed success: the alignment of engineering standards and the procurement excellence program. Both projects adopted a collaborative implementation approach, with the state government acting in a brokerage role. The need to work in a complex institutional environment resulted in the projects often operating outside formal government reporting lines, and creating alternative governance mechanisms for decision making. Collaborative reform was preferred because it encouraged sector led solutions and resource efficiency and increased the likelihood of long term sustainability. Having now concluded, the projects have highlighted the sustainability difficulties of integrating short term gains into the institutional structures of state and local government.

STREAM 1 Remote Rural and Indigenous Local Government

9. Local Government Service Delivery to Remote Indigenous Communities: Funding and Service Delivery Model Design

Michael Limerick, *ACELG associate*; and Dr Robyn Morris, *Edith Cowan University*

Summary

- It is widely recognised that to date the standard of local government services delivered to remote Indigenous communities has been inadequate, and that governments and communities share a desire to close the gap in service standards compared with mainstream communities;
- In recent years, reforms in several jurisdictions have sought to improve this situation, particularly through shifting service delivery responsibility from Indigenous community councils to regional providers or regional or sub-regional local governments;
- A literature review combined with case studies drawn from several Australian jurisdictions enabled ACELG to formulate a set of guiding principles for consideration in the design or further development of funding and service delivery models for remote Indigenous communities;
- The principles highlight the importance of: benchmarking service delivery against mainstream standards; balancing the costs and benefits of regionalised and community-based delivery models; avoiding undermining Indigenous community governance; innovating to achieve better place-based coordination of the many stakeholders; meeting the challenges of sustainable resourcing; and enhancing local employment and economic development outcomes for Indigenous communities;
- These evidence-based principles will assist policymakers and practitioners seeking to improve the delivery of local government services to remote Indigenous communities.

In 2011 the Australian Centre of Excellence (ACELG) partnered with the Western Australian Department of Local Government (WADLG) to investigate funding and delivery model options for local government service delivery in remote Indigenous communities. The first phase of this research which forms the focus of this paper, involved a review and analysis of models and approaches in various jurisdictions across Australia to identify key principles and success factors underpinning leading practices and innovative solutions to current challenges.

This research used a case study approach that employed a combination of desktop research and telephone interviews with selected policymakers and practitioners. In consultation with key stakeholders in various Australian jurisdictions, six case studies were selected for in-depth investigation. The case studies were chosen for their potential to yield valuable information that could be used to design future funding and service delivery model options. The aim was to elicit information on leading practices and innovative approaches for addressing typical challenges involved in delivering local government services in remote communities. Amongst the key issues examined in the case studies were legislative and land tenure challenges, modes of service delivery, funding approaches and options, benchmarking service delivery standards, governance issues, joint planning and coordination of service delivery between tiers of government, opportunities for private sector involvement and contribution, and capacity building for better service delivery.

For each case study, the key learnings on local government service delivery to remote Indigenous communities were drawn out. The case studies were complemented by a review of recent academic and policy literature on remote service delivery to provide an important context in which to frame the case study analyses. The knowledge gained from the case studies and the literature review was then synthesised to identify key considerations relevant to this issue. This paper concludes by presenting a set of key principles that need to be considered in the design of any model for funding and delivering local government services to remote Indigenous communities.

The research findings provide an evidence base that can benefit practitioners, policy-makers and researchers alike. This paper presents useful, up to date information and analysis that will not only inform jurisdictions involved in the process of transitioning the responsibility for municipal service delivery in remote Indigenous communities from the Commonwealth to local governments, but also provides helpful insights for those jurisdictions focussing on improving local government service delivery in remote communities.

10. The Role and Expectations of Rural-Remote and Indigenous Local Government

Alan Morton, *Morton Consulting Services P/L*


Summary

- A common perception is that rural-remote and indigenous councils provide a greater range of services than their regional and urban counterparts, acting as a 'provider of last resort';
- A key concern is that, when councils step in to fill the gap, it takes their focus away from 'core business' and stretches their capacity to deliver municipal services;
- However, the functional priorities of remote councils vary significantly depending on factors such as their demographic structure (particularly in relation to the indigenous population), their geography and economic base;
- Seeking to define a specific range of 'core' services would be contrary to the long held view of local government on the importance of having a general competency power, which puts each council in the driver's seat in determining priorities for their community;
- Integrated planning which provides sound community, corporate or strategic plans linked to long term financial plans is the key tool for these remote councils in managing community and external agency expectations and achieving sustainable outcomes.

This paper presents key findings from a research project undertaken for the Rural-Remote and Indigenous Local Government Program of the Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government (ACELG). The project is part of an overall strategy to identify key steps in building the capacity of small rural-remote and Indigenous councils across Australia – and especially in the north – to deliver adequate and appropriate local government services to their communities.

Because of the relatively low proportion of own source revenue, rural-remote and Indigenous councils are more heavily impacted by government policy changes, including withdrawal of services and cost shifting. At the same time they must deal with community expectations which often see the council stepping in as 'provider of last resort'. These issues do not, however, preclude these councils from taking on additional responsibilities provided long-term funding commitments are made.

The paper reviews the revenue and expenditure patterns of 70 remote-rural and indigenous councils across Western Australia, the Northern Territory and Queensland. The diversity in roles, functions



and capacity across the group of councils is examined, along with differences in functional priorities of individual councils which reflect geography, demography and economic circumstances.

Local government legislation in the three jurisdictions requires councils to plan for the future of the community through preparation of strategic, community and/or corporate plans accompanied by longer term financial plans that seek to meet community needs in a sustainable manner. How these small rural-remote and Indigenous councils identify and prioritise their services to reflect particular circumstances and the needs of their community is explored. It is argued that sound community plans backed by robust long term financial plans are a key tool in managing community expectations and achieving sustainable outcomes.

11. Who Defines 'Sustainability'? Perspectives on the Recent Transition from Community Councils to Regional Shires in the Northern Territory

Thomas Michel, *Roper Gulf Shire Council*

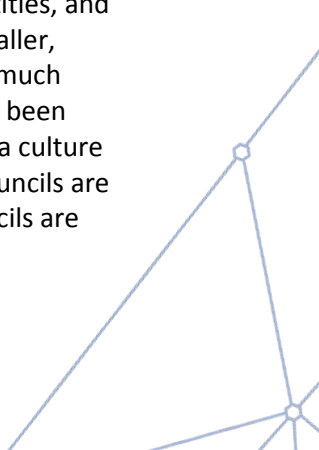
What is known about this subject?

- Striving for financial sustainability is a priority strategic goal in the Australian local government sector;
- Council amalgamations have become an oft-used policy solution in Australia to improve the sector's financial sustainability;
- Major structural reforms to local government have occurred in NSW, Victoria, South Australia, Queensland and most recently Northern Territory;
- A common and widely accepted justification of council amalgamation is that it will help achieve economies of scale and improve cost efficiencies.

What does the paper add?

- This paper argues that the dominant definition of local government sustainability is overly narrow in scope, and focuses too heavily on councils' perceived internal structural deficiencies;
- The example of the 2008 amalgamation process in the Northern Territory is used to dispel the economies of scale justification for local government structural reform in rural and remote regions;
- External, non-scale factors that impact on local government's financial sustainability, in particular intergovernmental relations, are highlighted to demonstrate the need for a broader understanding of the influences on organisational resilience;
- Some non-financial costs (and benefits) of amalgamation for rural-remote councils are discussed in order to broaden the evaluative framework for future local government restructuring policies.

In recent years, much debate in Australia has centred on the scale of local government entities, and whether larger, amalgamated local government structures are more 'sustainable' than smaller, fragmented polities. This concept of 'sustainability' as applied to local government is very much contested, however in policymaking circles at higher levels of government, it has generally been understood in financial or administrative terms. This conceptualisation is convergent with a culture of narrowly positivist evaluation practices and downward accountability, whereby local councils are monitored from above and deficits in the administration or financial management of councils are



perceived as primarily due to internal or structural shortcomings. In such a setting, it is not surprising that a policy bias towards council amalgamation – with its appeal to the laws of economies of scale and financial efficiencies – has emerged in Australia over the past few decades.

This paper argues that the mainstream perspective of local government ‘sustainability’ is overly narrow in its scope, and omits from its analysis many other influencing factors. The 2008 amalgamation process in the Northern Territory (NT), whereby 53 rural-remote Community councils with majority Indigenous populations were amalgamated into eight Regional Shires, is given particular attention as an example of the complexity involved in defining organisational sustainability. Factors such as the limitations of cost efficiencies through economies of scale, the intergovernmental interplay between the NT Shires and external funding agencies, and political tensions surrounding amalgamations all serve to add richness to our definitions of local government sustainability.

STREAM 1 Leadership

12. Local Political Leadership in Transition: Lessons from Auckland Council

Christine Cheyne, *Massey University*


What is known about this subject?

- There is significant interest in metropolitan governance reform and the creation of a unitary council for the Auckland region at the end of 2010 contributes a new empirical setting for scholarly research. To date, there has been little attention to Auckland's new governance arrangements and indeed until some time has passed it is difficult to assess the new arrangements;
- However, a year on, it is possible to evaluate some key elements in the new model of political leadership. The international literature recognises the growing influence of celebrity politics/presidential leadership, a typology that includes strong mayor and weak mayors and also the importance of facilitative leadership.

What does the paper add?

- It outlines the background to the Auckland governance reforms and focuses on the emergent style of local political leadership;
- There are context-specific factors which are discussed but it is also possible to identify trends seen in local government elsewhere in western democracies;
- The relationship between local and national governments is one that is of critical importance in contemporary societies if local government and local democracy is to be strong and healthy;
- The Auckland example provides a particularly interesting case study given the political differences between the executive at each of the two levels.

The creation of a unitary council in Auckland, New Zealand, in November 2010 represented a major shift in local governance in Australasia. Together, the directly elected mayor, Len Brown, and Auckland Council govern a third of New Zealand's population, the largest population of any unit of local government in Australasia. As a result, the mayor of Auckland is potentially a very powerful political figure. In addition, Len Brown has a track record of political leadership that saw him garner



strong support from Auckland's Polynesian population and from voters in lower socio-economic areas. This, together with strong expectations from Auckland's indigenous Maori population, has resulted in significant new initiatives to ensure more inclusive decision-making and to foster civic leadership that potentially have wider application internationally.

For New Zealand local government, the question of the 'Auckland effect' is now of pressing importance, with many councils considering governance reforms in the wake of the structural and other changes in Auckland. The government's announcement in early 2011 of a major review of local government is a further signal of continuing change for the local government sector. Titled *Smarter Government, Stronger Communities: Towards Better Local Governance and Public Services*, the review aims to explore the structure, functions and funding of local government, including the usefulness of unitary authorities for metropolitan areas and the relationship between central and local government.

This paper examines the changing nature of local political leadership and local governance with the emergence of the Auckland Council, by reviewing the first two years of Len Brown's leadership. A particular focus is on central-local relations recognising the critical importance of the interaction between central and local government in Auckland, and on the exercise of leadership through the new statutory requirement to prepare a spatial plan. The aim of the paper is to identify principles to guide the reviews of local government such as that occurring currently in New Zealand, drawing on recent domestic and international experience of metropolitan and community governance reforms.

13. Leadership in Australian Local Government Reform: Institutional and Ethical Approaches

Bligh Grant, *University of New England*

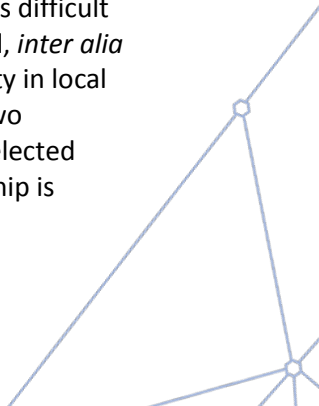
What is known about this subject?

- Leadership has emerged as a key focus for local government;
- This has been matched in reform processes globally;
- Different models of leadership could, potentially, be applied to Australian local government;
- Yet how these influence the nature of democratic processes is by no means clear.

What does the paper add?

- This paper provides an account of the elected executives model of municipal leadership;
- This paper also provides an account of Moore's (1995) theory of public value;
- The paper examines the relevance of both ideas to the Australian milieu;
- The prospects for institutional reform are assessed as problematic;
- However, the prospects for ethical reform are assessed judged favourably.

Internationally, the increased emphasis placed upon leadership roles in local government is difficult to overstate. Across a wide range of different types of jurisdictions, leadership is perceived, *inter alia* as the key to increased economic development, community engagement and accountability in local government. This paper explores the implications of this for Australia by focussing upon two different types of reform. Firstly, an 'institutional' approach examines the applicability of elected executives for Australian local government. It is argued that this type of municipal leadership is



problematic when assessed against concepts of democracy and representation in Australia. Secondly, the paper examines the case for public value in local government as a set of ethical practices for municipal leaders. It is argued that the latter is more applicable to the Australian context, and provides a practice of both leadership and followership for Australian local government.

14. Political Management Leadership in Australian Local Government

John Martin, *LaTrobe University*; and Chris Aulich, *University of Canberra*

What is known about this subject?

- One of the key relationships in local government occurs at the top of the council and the administration. We appreciate that the working relationship between the Mayor and the CEO is an important one in a local government;
- If it goes well then there is a good chance the whole council and administration will work well. If not then the administration and the community will receive less value for money as the respective parties sought out their differences.

What does the paper add?

- This paper reports on a multifaceted research project which has examined the nature of the working relationship between CEOs and Mayors and reports on the key factors critical for success.

The working relationship between the mayor as the leader of the council and the chief executive officer leading the council organisation is one of the most important relationships in local government. Recognised as such by mayors and CEOs as the breakdown in this relationship can have long lasting, negative impacts on the capacity of the local government to deliver value for money services to its community.

In this paper we explore the dimensions of this relationship asking: how much should it be structured via rules and guidelines and how much should it rest on the integrity and common sense of the people involved?

Drawing on research carried out by the two authors over the last twelve months and a consideration of the literature on the nature of this relationship, which occurs at all levels of government, we draw conclusions and make recommendations about how elected councillors and appointed staff can best assist individuals in these roles to establish a successful and effective working relationship.



STREAM 2 Communities in Transition

15. Local Government and Community Engagement in Australia

Jade Herriman, *UTS Institute for Sustainable Futures*; and Stefanie Pillora, *ACELG*

This paper was commissioned by the Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government (ACELG) as part of its working paper series aimed at reviewing the 'state of play' in important policy areas.

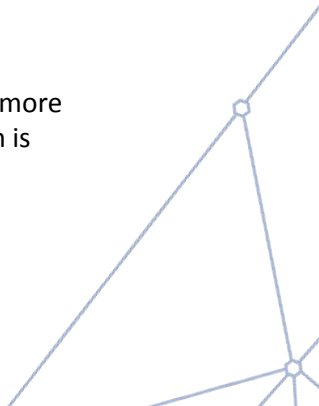
Local councils across Australia are giving increasing attention to how they keep communities informed about their activities, and also how they involve communities more actively in decisions that affect their lives and the future of their community.

- The research, which was based on a review of literature and interviews with community engagement practitioners and stakeholders, explores several questions:
What are some of the influences on community engagement practice, including legislative requirements and changing community expectations?
- What methods of engagement are being used, including more innovative approaches such as deliberative methods?
- What resources and training opportunities are being provided from within and outside the sector?

In addition to addressing these questions, the paper presents some of the themes that emerged from the interviews:

- Professionals involved in engagement are interested in reframing their work to be more about participatory democracy and community governance, and not just about carrying out particular engagement methods or techniques
- Community engagement is increasingly being reframed as core council business, and the responsibility of all staff, including senior staff, not just something which is isolated to individual projects
- There is an interest in new approaches, including futures methods, deliberative democracy, appreciative inquiry and online engagement techniques
- Changes in requirements for councils to conduct community planning create an opportunity for more extensive, representative and futures focused engagement with communities
- The involvement of the community in more deliberative approaches requires access to appropriate information, and the space for consideration, reflection and questioning
- The role of councillors is changing with their roles as representatives being complemented by the direct engagement of citizens in decision making processes
- While there are extensive resources on methods and approaches available across jurisdictions, training, support and guidance, and adequate resourcing all need continued attention if councils are to engage with these broader shifts in practice.

The paper concludes by summarising the ongoing questions and challenges for councils in more effectively engaging with their communities, and highlighting areas where further research is needed.



16. Meeting Challenges through Empowered, Deliberative Participation: A case study of a WA regional local government

Rob Weymouth, *Western Australian Local Government Association*

Summary

- A medium sized regional WA local government is currently undertaking a 3 year initiative to build mutually agreed strategies and actions to deal with its future challenges through several levels and types of public deliberation and the fostering of a participative local community;
- An innovative governance team of key government, industry and NGO regional decision-makers as well as randomly selected local citizens has been created to provide the project with strategic direction, oversight, accountability and to help determine and implement prioritized proposals;
- An early community survey showed high levels of support for local action to create a sustainable region which surprised statutory decision makers;
- A Community Forum which followed the survey achieved representativeness by duplicating community views found in the survey;
- A large scale planning exercise was recently conducted under this collaborative framework. Participants were surveyed longitudinally across the event on a number of variables with a range of results. Analysis of the effect of involvement in this event by local government staff is ongoing but emerging themes indicate a significant effect in the direction improved perceptions of legitimacy and community support for more detailed planning action.

Local authorities in Western Australia are facing a range of serious challenges in the short and medium term. Issues like population changes, demographic shifts, boundary reform, climate change and growing community service expectations contain elements of both threat and opportunity. Many of these issues may impose a cost, but will also stand to benefit the local governments that have effective strategies for adaptation to the challenges. Many scientists and commentators have proposed that the key to effective strategies in this case will centre on localism and depend on new and enhanced forms of cooperative governance between Councils, local industry and their communities (Ostrum et al, McKibben 2006). The barriers to these effective, coordinated local strategies exist at several levels, but often are bound up in the very 'wicked' nature of the issues (ie. complexity, uncertainty of cause and effect in time and space, large, broad impacts). This nature leads many to believe that the search for expert solutions and top-down decision-making will be insufficient in overcoming these barriers. Instead, it is necessary to search for best practices in stakeholder collaboration, but also to create systemic shifts in governance, where ordinary citizens have a critical role to play.

This paper presents a case study of an attempt to develop civic deliberation and collaborative governance at a local government of 40,000 people in regional Western Australia to improve resilience in the face of the issues discussed above. A participative local community is attempting to create mutually agreed strategies and actions through several levels of public deliberation, from small-scale deliberations carried out by trained volunteers to large-scale public events and online interaction. The overseeing and implementation of the outcomes of these engagements is being facilitated through an alliance of industry, government and NGO decision-makers. The interim results of this unique project are explored on the broad level as well in the case of specific statutory planning requirements.

17. Evolution in Community Governance: Building on What Works

Peter McKinlay, *Local Government Centre, AUT University and ACELG associate*

Australian local government has gradually become more involved in various forms of engagement with the communities it serves. In some states this has been in response to the statutory obligation now in place to prepare community strategic plans – for example in New South Wales with the now close linkages between community strategic planning, the demonstrated effectiveness of community engagement and the ability to secure rates increases above the cap. In other states, notably Victoria through the state government supported initiative to encourage community planning, there has been more of a collaborative approach.

Literature review points to a growing academic, activist and policy interest in how governing bodies engage with the communities they serve – the UK policy evolution through total place to big society and the open public services white paper; the Canadian co-design initiative now being workshopped in Victoria (Lenihan & Briggs, 2011), New Zealand's experiments with community outcomes. It also suggests a shift in priorities at the level of citizen from working through the electoral process to 'customer' and 'participatory' democracy as preferred means for engaging on citizens' priorities – which are increasingly person or place specific (Haus & Sweeting, 2006; Schaap et al, 2009).

A unique Australian initiative, the community banking network of the Bendigo & Adelaide Bank Ltd, presents an additional dimension in community engagement. Each branch within this network of individual community owned banking franchises distributes a proportion of profits for community purposes and is gradually moving from relying primarily on the local knowledge and networks of branch directors to various forms of engagement intended to identify their communities' priorities.

The purpose of this project was to gain an overview of how community governance – the diverse processes through which decisions are taken about a community's preferred options – is evolving through the engagement and planning processes both of local government and of community banking. The opportunity to compare two quite different institutional settings was seen as especially valuable, permitting an insight into the actual 'ownership' of community governance.

Twelve councils and 6 community bank branches from across Australia were selected for interview in each case seeking a balance between urban and rural/regional. In addition 4 experienced observer/practitioners from each sector were also interviewed to provide a 'whole of sector' perspective.

Interviewees were asked about their understanding of community, the role of their governing body, shared decision making, their role in expressing the community's aspirations to other parties and the pre-conditions for effective engagement.

Responses showed a very wide range of different approaches within both councils and community banks, with most councils and a number of community banks seeking innovative means of engagement which best reflect the circumstances of their own communities (with community banking generally at an earlier stage of evolution).

When the project began one hypothesis was that community banking could be emerging as a separate albeit complementary form of community governance. What our findings suggest is that the information base and capabilities needed to underpin a community governance approach is itself extremely resource intensive and dependent on the unique role of local government. Community bank branches which are now following a community governance approach have opted to rely on findings from their local council's engagement, research and policy development

capabilities. We now hypothesise that local government has a unique role as the 'soft infrastructure' needed to underpin a community governance approach regardless of whether that approach is being followed by local government, community banking or any other group committed to a community governance approach.

Findings highlight a number of areas for further work. They include the extent to which the complexity of regulatory and compliance requirements is becoming a real barrier to effective community engagement, the respective roles of elected members and officers in engagement, whether a community engagement approach may require a shift from functionally based to place based local government, the need for capacity building – for elected members and people from the community. Facilitating closer working between local government and community banking (and for that matter other business based initiatives with a commitment to improving community outcomes) is another area for attention.

This project's purpose was to provide an overview rather than to be definitive on the future of community governance. It has highlighted a great deal of very promising innovation and some significant policy and practical challenges if its potential is to be fully realised.

STREAM 2 Workforce in Transition

18. Location as a Factor in Gender Equity in Local Government

Karen Purser, *ACELG*

Local government throughout Australia has a responsibility to represent its community. Data collected by the LGMA in 2009 suggests that women are significantly under-represented in both senior management (> 20%) and elected representation (>30%) in local government.

A 2009 national survey by ALGWA of more than 3,500 women in local government found that more than one quarter of employed women and one third of elected women experience difficulties due to their gender.

For elected members the key issues were the time demands and efforts to balance family life, lack of access to training and confidence building, financial considerations, inadequate support from the CEO and other senior staff, and the need to access better information and support about elections. For staff the key issues were a negative workplace culture, training and confidence building, bias in job selection processes, and inconsistent application of family-friendly policies.

In the LGMA Local Government Management Challenge 2010 Pre-Challenge Task Summary, Kerry Sefton identified six topics or themes which might represent the range of challenges for women in local government:

1. Corporate culture and attitudes;
2. Limited communication and low equity awareness levels;
3. Minimal performance accounting and measurement;
4. Strong and often negative self perceptions of women;
5. Complexities of people management and leadership; and
6. Scope, scale and diversity of family flexibility options and approaches.

A number of initiatives have been implemented at state and federal level to address issues of gender equity, including the national 50:50 Vision – Councils for Gender Equity program, and state level programs promoting women in local government.

What is not clear from the research is the extent to which the barriers to women in achieving leadership roles in local government, either in senior management or as elected representatives vary by size and type of council.

Anecdotally, it is apparent that the challenges facing women in seeking to achieve those roles do vary considerably depending on the location of the councils – remote, rural or metropolitan.

This research proposes to explore in more detail the extent to which opportunities for women to progress in local government are impacted by the location and type of council by conducting 28 structured in-depth interviews with women in local government in the matrix:

State:	NSW		VIC		TAS		SA		WA		NT		QLD	
Type*:	P	E	P	E	P	E	P	E	P	E	P	E	P	E
Rural:	1			1	1		1			1	1			1
Remote:		1	1			1		1	1			1	1	
Regional	1			1	1		1			1	1			1
Metro:		1	1			1		1	1			1	1	

The interviews, which would be conducted primarily by phone, but with some face-to-face contact, will explore the extent to which the themes identified in the research apply or have applied in the interviewee's experience, and the way in which they manifested themselves where they have been present. Interviewees will be encouraged to discuss personal achievements and strategies they may have developed to overcome those barriers.

There will be three main outcomes from the research:

- Firstly the research will identify the extent to which barriers to women achieving leadership roles in local government are influenced by the size and or location of council, allowing gender equity initiatives to be more effectively targeted.
- Secondly, 21 case studies will be developed which can be made available to women in local government to learn from real life experiences.
- Thirdly, the national focus of the research will identify jurisdictional differences where they occur.

19. The Learning in Local Government Project

Sarah Artist and Geraldine O'Connor, *UTS Centre for Local Government*

Summary

- The Learning in Local Government project is an exploratory review of the specific and complex needs of education and professional development in Australian local government, and aims to inform and facilitate programs to be developed over the life of the Australian Centre for Excellence in Local Government (ACELG);
- In September 2010 an online Learning in Local Government survey was distributed to councils across Australia as well as professional and training organisations’;
- This paper provides observations about the experiences and aspirations of participants in the online survey and associated consultations.

An exploratory review of the specific and complex needs of education and professional development in Australian local government, and aims to inform and facilitate programs to be developed over the life of ACELG. ACELG has committed funds through its Workforce Development Program to undertake this review. Preliminary sector consultations have suggested the following difficulties in developing and accessing good education and professional development in local government:

Within Individual Councils -


- Training budgets are scattered across councils, have to compete with other resourcing priorities, and are often at the discretion of individual managers;
- Individuals may lack the capacity or the information to clearly define their own training needs;
- There is a variable level of access for individuals for funds to complete further education because policies vary between councils;
- Individuals are motivated to undertake qualifications which contribute to job security and career progression, however this may not be the reality within each individual council; and
- Individuals may have a reduced capacity to attend training because of the need to travel, take time away from work, or because of limited literacy skills.

Amongst Training Providers -

- The “thin market” problem – councils are separated by distance and include small numbers of individuals in multiple professions, which reduces the financial feasibility of program development;
- The intensive labour and cost in preparing relevant sector training materials, and the need for experienced local government practitioners to deliver training;
- Lack of facilitated pathways for individuals within councils between RTOs, TAFEs and tertiary education qualifications; and
- The speed of change within the operating environment which outpaces the time needed to develop and accredit courses.

Across the Local Government Sector -

- Good training development and provision at a broader scale requires a high degree of collaboration and significant commitment of time between councils, training providers and professional associations; and
- Between states there is inconsistent access to federal funding through the Productivity Places Program (PPP) program for Vocational Education training (VET), and an underutilisation and lack of knowledge of the local government training package.



By taking a national approach ACELG aims to participate in the Federal agenda and extend the sector beyond local and state boundaries. A collaborative approach to developing future programs will aim to ensure that successful experiences and approaches in each state are shared and supported, that the sector makes better use of limited resources, and that an integrated approach increases the potential for identifying and sharing good practice. ACELG is working with stakeholders that are mutually supportive of creating greater development opportunities and who actively champion a national network of best practice education and professional development. ACELG is advocating an integrated national approach to education and training for the local government workforce that:

- is forward looking and reflects the changing environment and role of local government;
- addresses sector needs for essential skills now and into the future;
- focuses equally on people working in the sector and meets their personal needs to enhance their skills and develop their careers; and
- offers seamless pathways between vocational and higher education and ongoing professional development.

This paper will include an analysis of over 900 responses to the Learning in Local Government Survey undertaken in 2010. Generally the respondents were long serving local government staff and executive. Almost three-quarters of the summary group have worked in local government for over five years with just over 50% having worked for over ten years. Survey respondents came from across the range of locations with the greatest number of responses from metro urban areas and the least from remote areas. The survey questions explored respondents' involvement in education and professional development while working in local government, their current level of education, the modes of learning used, as well as the quality of the learning experience.

The survey results were reviewed at the 2011 National Workforce Development Forum, and submissions were also received from local government educational and professional development organisations. The engagement process has led to the identification of some themes and issues for consideration, and will inform the next steps to be taken for the Learning in Local Government project.

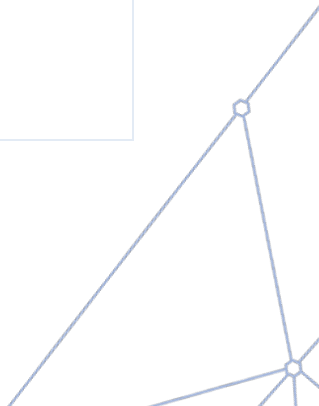
20. South Australian Local Government Workforce Planning Project

Sandy Semmens, Julie Sloan and Wendy Perry, *Local Government Association of South Australia*

What is known about this subject?

- Workforce capacity and associated productivity are the most important levers for success in achieving organisational reform and operational priorities;
- Councils need evidence based data to fully understand their current and future workforce requirements and enable them to deliver on organisational priorities.

What does the paper add?

- Details of the process for undertaking workforce planning in Councils;
 - Examples of evidence based data collected from pilot Council employees;
 - Next steps to embed workforce planning in SA Local Government.
- 

Australia is confronted with the global experience of technological and demographic changes that present both challenges and opportunities. All developed nations are heavily reliant on their capacity to drive economic growth through innovation and this in turn is dependent on the skills and knowledge of their workforces.

There is a growing amount of international research and documentation that demonstrates the link between the application of workforce planning processes, targeted workforce development strategies and increased productivity. It is now clear that if you are not developing workforce planning capabilities that enable you to produce evidence (supply-gap analysis and risk assessment of supply) on which to base your workforce decisions, your organisation will be less competitive in the labour market.

Local Government Councils need access to high-quality data to manage their workforce needs as well as a good understanding of internal and external labour markets to ensure that they are retaining, developing and attracting the right people to meet service demands and strategic objectives.

The Local Government Association of South Australia (LGA) has undertaken several workforce planning projects over the years to assist the Local Government sector in South Australia to respond to emerging trends and changing needs that impact on the workforce.

The project currently being undertaken involves six comprehensive workforce planning pilot projects - in small, medium and large country and metropolitan Councils. The pilot projects are testing current thinking and approaches and the knowledge and data gathered will then be used to establish a workforce planning service that will be available to all South Australian Councils.

The pilot Councils received assistance and support from the LGA and experienced workforce planning advisors to undertake a workforce profile and from this develop comprehensive evidence based workforce plans and workforce development strategies covering skills gaps, staff retention, succession planning, recruitment, training, mentoring, resource sharing and collaborative initiatives and practices.

This paper outlines the process undertaken for this innovative project with the six diverse pilot projects, and the summary results from the workforce data collection, the workforce plans and the workforce development strategies.

STREAM 2 Cultures of Transition

21. Building the Capacity for Local Government Innovation

Mark Evans, Chris Aulich, Anne Howard, Megan Peterson, *University of Canberra*

What is known about this subject?

- The secondary literature provides a good understanding of the international drivers of public sector innovation at different levels of government;
- It also presents important insights into what we mean by innovation, how it can be achieved and what it looks like in practice.

What does the paper add?

- The secondary literature is less insightful on the strategic purpose of innovation in the management of change; particularly in the local government arena;
- There is limited knowledge of the views of Australian local government managers on these issues with the exception of John Martin's work in 2000;
- This paper provides important insights into these issues drawing on primary data derived from a comparative case study evaluation of innovation practice at the local scale in Australia, New Zealand, and the UK.

There are a number of key international drivers which are prompting local governments across the world to re-consider the way they organise themselves, manage service delivery, work with stakeholders, engage with citizens and hold themselves accountable. These drivers can be summarised as: changes in community requirements of local government; changes in community attitudes towards local government; changing central government expectations of local government; and, the changing nature of local government work including the emergence of new partners in local governance. Of course these drivers are not confined to local government but have had a significant impact on all levels of Australian government.

Indeed the Rudd government's decision to establish an Advisory Group on the Reform of Australian Government Administration (RAGA) in 2010, was testimony to its commitment to engage in a further process of administrative modernisation to meet the challenges of 'increasing complexity, increasing public expectations, demographic change, technological change, globalisation, financial pressures and workforce planning and retention'. The Gillard government has continued to pursue this agenda although with a limited funding base. It is arguable that in combination the Australian Centre for Excellence in Local Government's (ACELG) six programs are aimed at responding to similar pressures [research and policy foresight; innovation and better practice; governance and strategic leadership; organisation capacity building; rural-remote and indigenous local government; and, workforce development] to enhance the knowledge base, leadership and capacity of local government in an era of governance.

At the same time the Australian public services have entered a difficult phase in their institutional development. The global financial crisis, public sector borrowing requirements and the need to pay for various fiscal stimulus packages, and the incremental impacts of demographic change have helped to usher in an era of austerity. The governing rhetoric underpinning this process has oscillated between 'slash and burn' and the need for 'governance innovation'.

Drawing on domestic and international evidence, we pose two main arguments as a starting point to our research enquiry and as a basis for professional reflection. Firstly, while New Public Management (NPM) instruments remain important tools within the public management toolkit they are no longer sufficient to meet the challenge of public service provision in an era of governance. This is because NPM tends to privilege the role of public servants as the arbiter of the common good, it takes the politics out of public policy deliberation and its market orientation is at odds with the concept of public service sitting more easily with the language of the consumer rather the language of the citizen. In consequence, the success of local government reform rests on the development of citizen-centred governance underpinned by the concept of public value. This is the 'Big Idea' both to lend principles, form and clarity to the local government reform process and to confront integrity challenges. Secondly, the establishment of a culture of public value innovation is central to the achievement of this aim. By public value innovation we refer to the creation and implementation of new products, services and methods of delivery through collaboration with

citizens and stakeholders which result in positive social and economic outcomes for the citizenry. So the emphasis here is on engaging directly with both citizens and stakeholders.

In the investigation which follows we draw on primary data derived from a comparative case study evaluation of innovation practice in Australia, New Zealand, and the UK to evaluate the following questions:

- Why public value management?
- What do we mean by public value innovation?
- What does it look like in practice?
- What are the major barriers to public value innovation in local government?¹
- How are these barriers best navigated?

In conclusion, it is argued that the following factors are central to the creation of a culture of public sector innovation:

Principles of engagement -

- The search for public value.
- Every idea matters
- Innovation involves everybody.
- Create interdisciplinary teams with effective disciplinary integration
- Stakeholder and citizen participation is important at all stages
- Experiment – question received wisdom and search widely for ideas.

Leading innovation -

- Mayors and CEOs must champion innovation from the top.
- Innovation requires resources [e.g. ring fenced funding/internal and community award schemes]
- Innovation champions should be formally identified and organised at all levels of the organisation using performance appraisal schemes
- Rewards must be invested in innovative individuals and teams
- To access knowledge develop high quality knowledge networks which encompass theory and practice and include governance partners.

Maintaining a culture of innovation -

- Design the workplace in a way that is conducive to the development of and incubation of new ideas
- Invest in research and development to identify, incubate, develop and trial new ideas
- Invest in innovation coaching and mentoring
- Develop regular lesson-drawing forums and other mediums for communicating success stories and identifying potential innovations
- Use monitoring and evaluation processes as an ongoing condition for effective learning
- Embrace cyclical external evaluations and other practices which allow for genuine professional reflection.

22. Current Perceptions and Trends of Local Government as an Employer of Choice

Jennifer Fredericks, *Logan City Council*

What is known about this subject?

- There has been much research undertaken on the perceptions and realities of Local Government being a last choice employer;
- Research indicates that the status of employment with a Local Government varies depending on other employment sources in close proximity. Other factors influencing views of Local Government employment include salary, working conditions and individual values.

What does the paper add?

- This paper is written by Local Government officers who offer a different view on what working for Local Government means to them. Research to date has focused on an 'outside looking in';
- This paper adds to current knowledge from an 'inside looking out' approach whereby a greater understanding of why people are committed to local government is gained;
- A more in-depth understanding the motivations that draw and keep people in Local Government will be beneficial in moving forward with promoting Local Government as an employer of choice.

Each year future leaders of Queensland Local Government undertake the Propeller Programme course and examine a focus area by undertaking a project. The purpose of the 2011 project is for Local Government practitioners to undertake research in order to explore the topic that "Local Government is not generally seen as an attractive employment option to school leavers, graduates and adults returning to the workforce".

It is acknowledged that research into this topic has previously been undertaken, however, the methodology utilised by LG practitioners to address this question differs markedly. An asset based approach has been applied to research and findings relating to this question, by drawing on the experiences of those already working in Local Government.

Skills shortages in particular professional fields has left Local Government unable to compete with commercial entities on a salary focused employment market. As such, this project explored alternative methods of attracting and retaining professional staff, suitable for use by Local Governments.

Further to this outward focused research, this paper examines how training and development opportunities, such as the Propeller Programme, assist in attracting and retaining employees in the Local Government sector. A trend analysis of employees who have participated in the leadership development course provides an insight into the effectiveness of the strategic aims of Local Government Managers' Association Propeller Programme in strengthening Local Government across Australia as an employer of choice.

Potential for future linkages between Local Government practitioners and the Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government will be explored in the context of challenges and learning experienced by participants of the Propeller Programme over the past three years.

STREAM 2 Community Engagement

23. The UK Transition Network and Community Governance: A Discussion Paper for Australian Local Government

Hazel Storey, *The Storey Agency*/ UTS: Centre for Local Government Associate

What is known about this subject?

- We know that change on sustainability matters requires actions by all sectors of society. Little research has been done on how well councils are working with the Transition Network to bring this about- even though councils are recognised by Transition as key partners to effect community change.

What does the paper add?

- The five year birthday of the Transition Network provides an opportunity to see how things are going between councils and Transition Networks in the UK and what we can learn in Australia from their experiences.

In light of increasing expectations of, and interests in, collaboration between councils and community when planning and delivering on local priorities (particularly with regard to sustainability) this paper looks specifically at the relationships between members of four local Transition Initiatives* and their respective local authorities in England.

Using primary and supporting desktop research including interviews with council staff and members of the Transition Network it explores expectations and experiences of both groups of stakeholders. It looks for ways in which groups in the third sector and local government might work more effectively together to bring about mutually agreed outcomes at the local level.

It poses questions that can be considered by Australian Local Governments and Transition Initiatives when applying principles of community governance and looking for productive ways of working together in the future.

This research was conducted in a climate of uncertainty for the stakeholders regarding the new Localism Bill and sweeping budget cuts. The research was supported by ACELG.

**The Transition Network is comprised of local Transition Initiatives (previously called Transition Towns). They encourage, connect, support and train communities interested in self-organising around the transition model to rebuild resilience and reduce CO2 emissions.*

24. Winning Positive Community Outcomes Through Good Governance of Stakeholder Relationships: The Case of the City of Melville, Western Australia

Raymond De Silva, *City of Melville*

What is known about this subject?

- Stakeholder engagement is covered by a plethora of literature-both theoretical and applied;
- In practice, many activities are carried out in the name of engagement which create unrealistic stakeholder expectations and adversely impact project outcomes;
- Many Local Governments are restricted by resources, poor understanding and even attitudes towards engagement which prevents its true potential from being realised.

What does the paper add?

- Makes the distinction between engagement and other relationships a typical local government would undertake;
- Provides some useful processes for establishing whether engagement is required for Local government activities in the pre-planning stage;
- Provides a means for achieving greater consistency in interpreting and applying engagement principles;
- Offers insight into the challenges and opportunities of engagement- related cultural change within a local government context;
- Uses project-based evidence to support the argument that there is a positive correlation between authentic engagement practices and the transition to good governance.

This Paper seeks to explain the theoretical and practical reasoning behind the development of the City of Melville's (the City's) Stakeholder Relationships Model. It is a small but significant step in the journey undertaken by the City towards better Relationships –especially improved Engagement Practices- with its Stakeholders.

Although concepts such as Stakeholders, Engagement and Governance are not new, there is a multitude of literature around this topic which has led to wide inconsistencies in interpretation and application. Although some standards have emerged to address these issues, they do not always reflect the realities of local government and fail to accommodate the diversity of relationships undertaken.

This paper starts with a contextual discussion of the background to the stakeholder relationships mode and alludes to Good Governance principles as the basis for any sound framework in this area. It explores the implications of moving from Government to Governance. The argument is then made for a more balanced approach to decision-making between Community, Elected Members and the local government body corporate which administers the strategies and operations.

This leads to a general discussion centring around the definitions developed and on the different practical relationships that local governments consider integral to their daily operations. A generic continuum of relationships is proposed which distinguishes between reactive, proactive, interactive and deliberative connections with stakeholders. It is suggested that this enables users to move to more appropriate strategies for relating to the respective groups identified.

From the generic, the paper moves to a specific focus on engagement, and draws together a variety of ideas from a variety of theoretical and applied sources. Out of this, a six- step process is proposed which outlines the basics for planning, implementing, evaluating and reporting on engagement activities. An important departure from the mainstream literature here is that international guidelines are used as the basis of our approach but have not limited the process-as some rigid standards would have-and adaptations have been made wherever relevant.

Ultimately, the model developed advocates that in order to achieve positive community outcomes, the organisation pursues a parallel culture of change . Based on findings from this journey, it is anticipated that the adoption of this model has and will continue to challenge the organization to provide a wider and more inclusive approach in the consensus- building/ decision-making process. This reflects a commitment to the spirit of validating and testing a product which is always subject to continuous learning and improvement.

25. Citizen Participation and Murray Darling Basin Futures – Better Practice Design

Linda Botterill, Mark Evans and Lawrence Pratchett, *University of Canberra*

What is known about this subject?


- The secondary literature provides a good understanding of the international drivers of citizen-centric governance, the normative and instrumental arguments in support of the value of public participation, the methodologies of community engagement available to practitioners and the capabilities required to do it well.

What does the paper add?

- Existing research is less insightful on the strategic potential of citizen-centric governance in managing communities under stress. Moreover, there are few diagnostics available to help communities identify the best forms of engagement for them. This research makes three main contributions:
 - We develop a diagnostic tool – the CLEAR model – to evaluate the effectiveness of the consultation process underpinning the Guide to the Murray Darling Basin Plan. At a later date we will also evaluate three official participation schemes in high, medium and low risk MDB communities;
 - Secondly, we use the findings from this evaluation to identify principles of community engagement which provide the best possible conditions for effective social mobilisation;
 - Thirdly, the research identifies the capabilities that are necessary to deliver effective citizen-centred policy outcomes in communities experiencing high levels of stress.

This paper argues that the inability of the Commonwealth and State governments to affect water reform is largely a product of their inability to win the hearts and minds of rural communities. Hitherto the failure to bring the politics back in and integrate community voices into the process of policy development has proved the major obstacle to the achievement of a balanced social and environmental perspective in the Murray Darling Basin (MDB) and has served to reinforce traditional prejudices.

This paper explores the opportunities and challenges of greater grassroots community engagement with water reform by Murray Darling Basin communities. It does this in three parts. Firstly, it evaluates the effectiveness of three official participation schemes in high, medium and low risk MDB



communities using the CLEAR model (Lowndes and Pratchett et al., 2006) which argues that participation is most effective where citizens:

- Can do – have the resources and knowledge to participate
- Like to – have a sense of attachment that reinforces participation;
- Enabled to – are provided with the opportunity for participation;
- Asks to – are mobilised through public agencies and civic channels;
- Responded to – see evidence that their views have been considered.

Secondly, it uses the findings from this evaluation to identify principles of community engagement which provide the best possible conditions for effective social mobilisation. Thirdly, it highlights the capabilities that are necessary to deliver effective citizen-centred policy outcomes in communities experiencing high levels of stress.

STREAM 2 Communicating in Transition

26. Local Government and the National Broadband: How the Sector is Preparing to Capture the Benefits

Ian Tiley, *Centre for Local Government, University of New England*

What is known about this subject?

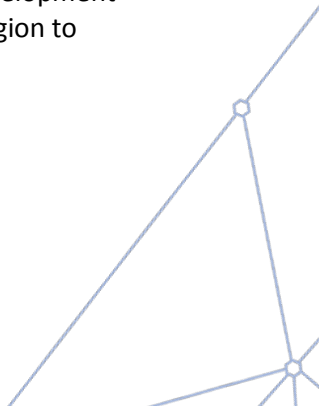
- The subject of the high speed broadband and the rollout across Australia has been topical for some time;
- Not much is known in local government circles or elsewhere about what councils can be doing in terms of working with NBN Co and planning to capture the benefits of the technology for communities.

What does the paper add?

- The paper explores how a sample of local councils are interacting with NBN Co, developing Digital Economy Strategies and preparing with their communities to capture the benefits of high speed broadband.

A local government perspective is provided on how the sector is preparing for and considering the National Broadband Network (NBN) rollout and how local government might capture the benefits of high speed broadband for their communities. Municipal governments are heading towards a seamless transaction based relationship with their customers. Local jurisdictions are adopting varying forms of electronic transactions and participatory e-governance mechanisms.

The paper canvasses current opportunities for interaction with the NBN Company, Australian Local Government Association policy concerning NBN is discussed; and activities by local government broadband alliances and some proactive councils is explored. The capacity of Regional Development Australia Committees to undertake practical measures to assist the local councils in the region to prepare themselves and their communities for broadband take-up is considered.



It is argued that it is incumbent on the local government sector to take the lead to a greater extent than is generally now occurring so that the benefits of broadband will be captured for communities and to ensure that such benefits will be equitably and widely enjoyed.

27. Engaging City Futures: Social Media Success Factors

Colin Russo, *Gold Coast City Council*

What is known about this subject?

- Proliferation of the medium continues as successful for users and valued by project delivery teams and community recipients of new project outcomes;
- commercialisation and innovation is driving a plethora of platforms and software that is revolutionary in the community engagement field in terms of providing access;
- New capabilities are emerging technologically, which will help to drive more effective community engagement methods on a City Wide or even global scale;
- The community is becoming active in the online democratic decision making space.

What does the paper add?

- What are the long term future impacts on the decision making processes of Councils that must be considered now to avert potential crises in communication and engagement?
- Will Citizen Generated Media and increased individual to corporate agency change the way Council's should engage?
- What are examples of new methods that are developing and how can they be wound into community engagement in large City projects?
- Will agency encourage responsibility naturally or will Councils need to play a role in managing online democracy to make effective decisions?
- What models can be developed to for a Council to maximize its engagement? What is the preferred future, the weights, and the drivers of that model?
- What scenarios are emerging which suggest risks need to be managed?
- What is the value to projects such as Bold Future and Community Plans, where social media could be integrated?

The recent proliferation of social media has changed forever the macro context of community engagement and with it, methods for planning and delivering the long term future of cities. The future of engagement is now interwoven with that of social media. The successful engagement of communities into the future will rely upon factors such as information mindset marketshare, reach, access, online monitoring etc.

Gold City Council's largest ever community engagement, the long term visioning project "Our Bold Future" played a significant role in planning the future of the Gold Coast. Like other cities, an aim was to develop a city vision. To actually unite the community around a vision is a combined and ongoing task. This paper highlights how social media and engagement can work successfully in and around long term futures projects.



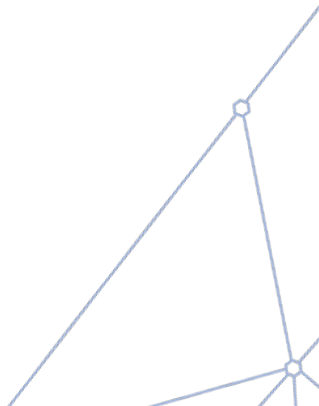
The following engagement areas will be explored:

1. The recent proliferation and critical factors of social media **information**.
2. Engagement **capacity** and the resources available to scan the city and to build awareness of the city context so that resources can be appropriately directed into the city. Also, the context of a cities' size, age, position affects capacity to engage online.
3. Governance aspects of **advocacy** and how advocacy enhances or hampers the proliferation of online engagement. A possible scenario is that Councils join the ranks of the community when building a case to present to higher levels of government.
4. Developing **partnerships** to integrate and sustain a city's vision amongst the general community of business, government and not for profit community groups (etc.) A further issue is how to learn from projects such as Bold Future and Community Plans, in terms of where social media can be integrated. Large projects such as GCCC's Bold Future 2040 Blueprint for the City of the Gold Coast are meant to align Council and city practices. Once a city vision is in place, the challenge is how social media can be utilised to develop better ongoing engagement partnerships to sustain a credible online presence.
5. The **education** and participatory methodologies and activities that will work well in terms of the latest social media.

Community consultation is a core decision making process of Council engagement and its planning, implementation, evaluation frameworks. The aim of democratic city decision making with its values of transparency, validity and representativeness may become challenged by social media. Councils may react with greater openness as well as by asking community members to participate responsibly and with greater awareness of the impact of participating online. Through external stimulation, increased awareness may bring resources to review, not only the online capability, but all areas of engagement. Community interest in 'engagement standards' may be part of the solution.

But how long into the future can this cycle of social media proliferation and Council resourcing continue? There is no doubt at this stage, that social media proliferation has not stopped. City communities are fuelled by increasing access to products and services such as iPads, iPhones and faster broadband. Cities that do not participate online may lose the race for information meritocracy and the physical rewards that it precipitates. New success factors (strategies, actions and open dialogue with the community) may need to be adopted and managed carefully to ensure that democracy is enhanced rather than hindered.

The Causal Layered Analysis (CLA) model will be used to section the above engagement issues into "Litany, Systems, Worldview and Mythology" components.



28. From Extension to Engagement – Application and Use of Social Media to Enhance Local Government Performance

Anne Howard, *University of Canberra*

Digital technologies and social media are fundamentally changing the way people and organisations generate, transfer and apply data, information and knowledge. The multi-dimensional nature of social media has fundamentally changed the way people communicate.

This Issues Paper will focus on social media and the opportunity it provides for local government to interact and engage more effectively with its constituencies and stakeholders. It will examine how social media can be a highly useful, cost-effective and timely communication and engagement tool for Councils, and explore its potential to drive productivity and performance improvements.

In addition, the Paper will place social media in a strategic context for local government by addressing the way it contributes to planning, priority setting and resource allocation.

The Paper will work within a conceptual framework that looks at social media from a political, management and legal dimension which provides the opportunity to improve engagement, performance and accountability.

From the political dimension the Paper will seek to understand how social media allows for a greater level of participation by providing constituencies with a stronger voice. For example, how do social media change the traditional communication function of Councils from a one-way broadcast function to an interactive and listening function which allows citizens to represent their views to Council as never before?

From a management dimension, the Paper will examine performance and how social media has the opportunity to improve service efficiency, quality and effectiveness. For example, in what ways do social media impact cost, timeliness, relevance and appropriateness?

From an accountability dimension, the Paper will examine issues around compliance and improving transparency and reporting.

The research for the Issues Paper will involve a review of scholarly and practitioner literature in social media particularly that relating to communications, platform design and channels (e.g. Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, Yammer, Ning, Blogs, Youtube, etc.) in both Australia and the UK. It will also involve structured one-on-one interviews and case studies.

The research will be supplemented by a national survey sent to every Council in Australia aimed at understanding how local government is using social media as well as what Councils see as the barriers to adoption, such as risks, competencies and capabilities, as well as resourcing requirements. The survey will collect information from every type of Council from metro right through to remote.

29. Health Impact Assessment in a Local Government Context: the Mackay Experience

Colleen Gunning, Felicity Carless, Patrick Harris, Jaco Ackerman, John Mallet, Robert Ryan, *Mackay Public Health Unit*

What is known about this subject?

- Health impact assessment is increasingly being used in Australia and elsewhere to influence the consideration of health and wellbeing in strategic plans and policies;
- Local government, while familiar with the use of environmental and social impact assessment on projects, may benefit from using processes like HIA during strategic planning and policy development;
- At the same time, the health sector has a role to play in facilitating or collaborating with councils using processes like HIA.

What does the paper add?

- This paper highlights the process and main findings of a health impact assessment undertaken by the health system in collaboration with a local council to assess and make recommendations concerning the potential impacts of a plan for increased housing density;
- The paper will be of interest to those with an interest in local government strategic planning generally and the relationship between housing density and health specifically.

Aim

This Health Impact Assessment (HIA) sought to identify potential indirect health impacts that associated with Mackay Regional Council's *Draft Residential Densities Strategy* (2011) and propose strategies to mitigate these impacts.

Method

Using the Centre for Health Equity Training, Research and Evaluation's Guide (2007), Queensland Health and other stakeholders undertook a rapid Health Impact Assessment, structured across these steps:

- Screening
- Scoping
- Identification
- Assessment
- Decision making and recommendations
- Evaluation and follow up (in process).

Results

The HIA's eleven recommendations aligned with the "regional strategies" identified in the *Draft Mackay, Isaac and Whitsunday Regional Plan* (2011) and were included in the HIA report which was submitted to Council for its consideration. A formal presentation to Council has been scheduled. Although this HIA has yet to be formally evaluated, as at the completion of the recommendations stage, indications are that this process has been worthwhile. Project team members have gained the

experience of undertaking a HIA in partnership with Local Government, and plans are in place to evaluate the HIA process.

Discussion

Recognition of the relationship between land use planning and health is not a new phenomenon and nationally there is much interest in translating this knowledge into practice. A tool which has emerged to contribute to this practice is HIA, a process which engages decision makers to consider health impacts in their planning, policy and program deliberations. The Centre for Health Equity Training, Research and Evaluation (CHETRE) has been working with Queensland Health staff since 2008 to build their capacity to undertake HIA. In Mackay, Public Health Unit Health Promotion staff work with three Local Governments in a range of ways. In particular, Health Promotion has a strong working relationship with Mackay Regional Council (MRC).

The MRC area is one of the fastest growing in Queensland, with strong growth forecast over the coming decades. Managing the challenges associated with high population growth is one of the drivers of Council's *Draft Residential Densities Strategy* which outlines its vision for more compact urban areas within the region.

In this HIA, data collection via a literature review and stakeholder consultation, and the development of a population profile, enabled the HIA project team to assess the proposal and develop recommendations.

The CHETRE undertook the literature review, which examined the association of higher housing density and health, with a particular focus on physical activity, community safety, and mental health. The review found that the relationship between housing density and health is complex and context specific, and the literature on the impact of housing density on health outcomes is inconclusive, suggesting that the impacts of housing density are context specific and the design of higher density housing needs to be fit for purpose.

To perform the assessment phase of the HIA, the project team developed a context-specific tool, which captured, for each indicator, any specific assumptions. The differential impacts for the general population and two selected demographic profiles were assessed against each health determinant / indicator. Notes for possible recommendations/ mitigation strategies were also recorded. On completion of the matrix, key themes were distilled from the document and considered by the Project Team. Through this process, mitigation strategies to maximise positive health outcomes which emerged could be categorised around the themes of environment (design considerations in the built environment and enhancing the natural environment), transportation (planning and infrastructure) and communities (access to services and infrastructure, and community development). These concepts were refined further to form the HIA's recommendations.

30. Connectivity, Sustainability, Flexibility and Accessibility - Indicators for Liveable Rural and Remote Communities A Liveable Communities Assessment of Gunnedah Shire

Rosemary Pollock, Mia Bromley, Milly Licata and Karen Gillham, *Hunter Reform Transition Organisation (Northern)*

What is known about this subject?

- There has been a lot of work on community indicators in urban areas, but little research on whether the same indicators apply in rural communities and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations.

What does the paper add?

- This paper describes the development of liveability indicators that can be applied in urban and rural settings;
- It compares liveability data for both urban settings, rural settings and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations;
- The paper also outlines a methodology for working in a culturally appropriate manner with Aboriginal communities in rural NSW.

Aim

To pilot the development and utilisation of liveable community indicators for rural and remote communities, which will assist Local Government and Health to incorporate health and wellbeing factors into community planning, with particular reference to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations.

Rationale

While some work has been undertaken in developing evidence-based frameworks and indicators to assist in the planning of liveable urban centres, there has been little addressing the divergent needs of rural and remote communities. Residents within these areas often face different challenges and concerns from those of urban communities, resulting in differing planning priorities. High Aboriginal populations also place different demands in addressing needs in culturally appropriate ways.

Method/Project Description

Through literature review and stakeholder and community consultation, the project team has identified and developed liveable community indicators of relevance to rural and remote communities. Following establishment of the indicators, a tool was developed to obtain and analyse data based on these indicators. On completion of the analysis of this data and its reporting to the Shire Council, the tool is being refined to facilitate expansion of the program to other Local Government areas.

A separate data collection and reporting process was undertaken with the Aboriginal community in the LGA. These results were compared to those of the wider community. This highlighted areas where there were significant differences, identifying the need to address these differences.

Results/Outcomes

A comprehensive literature review of potential indicators has been conducted, with indicators grouped under the four principles of: sustainability, accessibility, connectivity and flexibility. A refined

set of indicators has been developed along with accompanying data sources and results of computer aided telephone interviews and pen and paper surveys of the target community have been analysed and reported for the pilot rural/remote local government site.

The Aboriginal organisations within the LGA retain ownership of their data and are able to utilize it in funding and other application.

Conclusions/ Lessons Learnt

Conclusions and lessons learnt in respect to indicator development, data sourcing and capacity building within remote/rural areas will be presented.

31. Options for a Local Government Framework for Measuring Liveability

Ruth Goldsmith, Allegra Zakis and Carmel Hamilton, *Penrith City Council*


Summary

- The use of community indicator frameworks is becoming commonplace by governments and organisations across the world as a way of reporting on progress towards particular goals, or to allow comparison and benchmarking;
- There is significant work being undertaken in this area across Australia by all spheres of government, which emphasises the need for consistency in measuring and reporting on community wellbeing and liveability;
- This paper reports on research being undertaken to identify indicators and statistics that can act as appropriate benchmarks for the activities of local government, that are aimed at improving quality of life for their communities;
- Detailed analysis of a range of existing community indicator frameworks, and the indicators within these frameworks, has been undertaken to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each;
- This report identifies a number of key requirements to ensure best practice in a community wellbeing indicator framework and recommends their inclusion in the design of any new framework.

Local Government across the country has a broad sphere of influence and numerous councils are currently trying to report on a range of 'quality of life' indicators that are important to their communities. The approach taken to report on city wide issues is, however, inconsistent. This has been highlighted by the introduction of the Integrated Planning and Reporting legislation in NSW which requires that councils prepare Community Strategic Plans which incorporate both community aspirations and ways to measure progress towards them.

There is also substantial work being done on indicator development at a state and federal level, which has the potential to both inform and influence the use of indicators at a local level. The development of any indicator framework for local government must consider this work and, where possible, complement it.

The Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government and Penrith City Council are undertaking a project to increase the consistency and reliability of local government quality of life reporting. Ultimately, the research aims to answer the question:



What issues / statistics can act as appropriate benchmarks for the activities of local government that are aimed at improving quality of life for their communities?

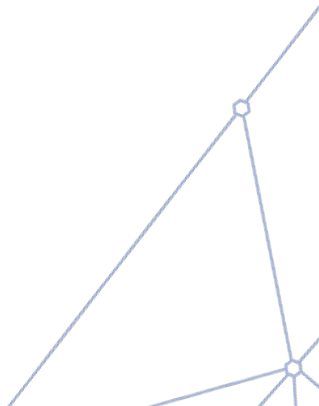
This research does not include organisational or productivity type indicators, it is restricted to 'community' indicators that attempt to measure and report on issues influencing quality of life. The project is being undertaken in two stages, with Stage 1 consisting of a review of existing indicator frameworks against a series of parameters to determine their usefulness to local government, and the key features of successful frameworks. This information will guide Stage 2, which will culminate in the development of a set of community indicators for use by growth area, metropolitan councils.

Stage 1 included the initial analysis of twenty six frameworks. This was reduced to six for detailed analysis on the basis of structure, content and overall assessment. Aspects analysed included grouping of indicators within frameworks, how indicators relate to organisational policy directions, availability of data, whether benchmarks can be established and the relevance of the indicator to local government issues.

Stage 1 of the project has been completed, and the report has been published. The key points from the Stage 1 report are:

- Generally frameworks cover a large range of quality of life issues, which often fall partially or sometimes even fully beyond the influence of councils. Key issues covered by most frameworks include climate change, waste and recycling, health, satisfaction and belonging, education, services and facilities, safety, mobility, affordability and employment;
- There are a number of recommended features for community indicator frameworks, including an underpinning set of principles, alignment with the strategic goals and reporting requirements of the organisation, reliable and appropriate data sources and the ability to be relevant in multiple contexts;
- Any local government framework should reflect state and national work in this area.

Work has commenced on Stage 2 and it is possible some information will be available by mid December. At this stage it is anticipated that the indicator set will consist of a number of 'core' indicators, which should be used by all councils adopting the framework and will therefore cover issues of generic concern. A secondary set of indicators will also be developed, which allow for the incorporation of local issues for Penrith. Consultation with relevant state and federal agencies will be a key part of this process, to ensure that the final indicator set does not conflict with frameworks being established by other levels of government.



STREAM 3 Climate Change and Transition Governance

32. Climate Change Governance by Local Councils

Heather Zeppel, *University of Southern Queensland*

Summary

- Council requirement to assess and/or report greenhouse gas emissions in CCP, NGERs etc.;
- Carbon tax from 1 July 2012 will increase energy and materials costs for all local councils;
- Climate change survey of environmental officers at 14 Greater Adelaide (SA) councils;
- Profiled carbon mitigation actions, emissions auditing, and motives for emissions reduction;
- Main reasons for carbon actions were a climate change plan, climate leadership, cost savings;
- Climate change governance issues include council policies, funding, and staff resources.

There is growing concern about climate change impacts on local government areas (ALGA, 2009). The proposed carbon tax (from 1 July 2012) will also increase costs for local councils. From 1997-2009, some 238 Australian councils participated in the ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability Cities for Climate Protection (CCP) program, by collecting emissions data and analysing the carbon footprint of council operations and local communities. Larger local governments are legally required to report their emissions under the National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Act 2007. There is limited research on climate change mitigation by councils, apart from case studies of greenhouse gas reduction initiatives by CCP participants and other individual councils (ICLEI, 2009; Pillora, 2011). In Queensland, one report has reviewed mitigation actions by south east councils (Burton, 2007), while a manual outlines mitigation actions for councils (LGAQ, 2009). This paper profiles a research project about climate change mitigation and carbon offsetting by Queensland and Adelaide (SA) councils (www.usq.edu.au/acsbd/projects/councils). It evaluates what mitigation (i.e. energy, water, & waste management) and carbon offsetting actions have been implemented by local councils and why. It also identifies opportunities for councils in sustainable technologies, renewable energy, and carbon offset markets linked to council governance of climate change actions.

Australian local council websites were reviewed for information on climate change strategies, carbon mitigation and offsetting measures. Other mitigation actions were identified from articles, CCP partners and the climate change programs of local government associations. This review was used to develop a survey about climate change mitigation practices by local councils. The final survey included 28 questions in four sections: your local council, climate change, climate change mitigation, and carbon offsetting. A checklist of 56 mitigation actions covered energy, water, wastewater, vehicles, and other council climate change initiatives. Two council sustainability officers provided feedback on a draft of this climate mitigation survey, followed by a pilot survey of mitigation and offsetting actions by Greater Adelaide councils. Key results from this pilot survey of mitigation measures by 11 Adelaide councils are presented in this paper. These highlight crucial issues with climate change governance in councils, including council policies, funding, and staff resources for implementing carbon mitigation programs and services. This survey and the results of this research are relevant for all local councils and sustainability practitioners involved in carbon reduction activities.

33. Strategic Planning for Collaborative Practice: Understanding Whether Inter-Organisational Cooperation Overcomes Constraints to Climate Adaptation in Regional Australia.

Lorraine Bates, Melissa Green, Rosemary Leonard and Iain Walker, *CSIRO*

What is known about this subject?

- In the last five years more attention has been paid to the role of local government in the assessment of vulnerability to climate change;
- Most effort in Australia has focussed on mitigation efforts;
- There has been some effort to assist local governments develop adaptive capacity;
- Internationally, there is recognition of the need to be concerned about climate adaptation and the need to act;
- Local institutions (rules, regulations, informal norms, regional practices and protocols) are known to influence adaptation and vulnerability in critical ways.

What does the paper add?

- The research will assist regional decision makers by providing insight into the way organisations perceive and respond to climate change risks;
- The paper will demonstrate the potential gains in regional adaptive capacity achieved by supporting knowledge sharing forums and partnerships among organisations;
- The paper will provide an overview of strategies to determine attitudes and responses to climate change across a diverse range of organizations including not-for-profits; state and local governments; service industries, primary and secondary industries and educational facilities for example;
- As the research will be conducted in the Hunter – Central Rivers area and the Swan Canning area of WA, the paper will provide insight into how regional differences effect organisations ability to adapt;
- The paper will identify barriers and enablers of climate adaptation capacity and practice among organisations.

The Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) and the Australian Centre for Excellence in Local Government (ACELG) are the peak bodies for local government in Australia. Both have given unequivocal support for action on climate change and recognise the need and pivotal role of local government in motivating citizens and businesses within their jurisdiction to respond appropriately. (ALGA, 2010) (Pillora, 2010). A draft strategic plan sets out the outcomes that local government aspires to achieve by 2014 and calls for the involvement of all sectors: government, business and community; to collaborate and accept a contributing role. The formation of partnerships is perhaps the best way to address the challenge, offering significant opportunities for learning and leadership amongst the diversity of players within a region.

CSIRO's research examines important and inter-related aspects of climate adaptation planning and practice within regions. The researchers, from the Climate Adaptation Flagship (CAF), will investigate four features of the socio-political context within which decisions are made by a broad spectrum of organisations including local government, non-government groups, industry and utility agencies,

among others. The research will take place over three years in two case study regions: the Hunter-Central Rivers area of NSW and the Swan Canning area of WA.

The first aspect investigates the connection between adaptive capacity and adaptive practice. Despite strong support for the concept of adaptive capacity in the literature, we contend that there is a need to understand more about the factors that motivate organisations to move beyond capacity building as an adaptive response towards a greater emphasis on strategically planned and resourced adaptive practice. We are interested in the state of preparedness among organisations, their commitment to planning for climate change and involvement in activities designed to address the impacts of climate change within their sector either with the aim of complete avoidance or in an attempt to minimise effects. Secondly, we are investigating the networks of relationships among organisations and whether the structure of these networks influences the efficacy and utility of the adaptive practices undertaken.

A third factor, with the ability to constrain or hamper climate adaptation efforts, revolves around the intricacies of regional governance arrangements. These extend beyond formal levels of government and the rules and regulations embodied in statutory prescriptions to informal norms, regional practices and protocols in effect. The project will assess the extent to which these formal and informal institutions constrain and or inhibit individual organisational action and collaborative efforts.

The final component will adopt a multi-level perspective to examine how interactions and processes within policy and decision-making forums attended by organisational representatives flow out into local communities. Examples of forums include senior officers meetings, inter-agency task forces, sector advisory committees and public / private planning processes. Organisations participate in these forums to solve complex mutual problems. Some participants take part in multiple arenas which tends to enhance complexity, and influence individual and group strategies as they attempt to address multiple inter-connected issues.

The regional climate adaptation project will assist a diverse range of stakeholders dealing with the complex issue of climate change by providing insight into how organisations' perceive and respond to climate change risks. This will support the development of strategies to encourage and support regions and reduce vulnerability. The improved understanding of inter-organisational relationships will strengthen and enhance collective action at the regional level. Finally, clearer knowledge of the interplay between institutions, organisations and policy games has the potential to help guide effective strategic engagement at the local to regional level. In this paper we will describe our research progress and learnings from the first stage of the project.

34. Foreseeing and Managing the Health Risks of Climate Change: A Translational Pilot Project for Local Government

Erica Bell, *University of Tasmania*

What is known about this subject?

- Climate change represents one of the biggest threats to human health and community well-being in the 21st Century;
- The Australian Government's national policy framework Climate Change Adaptation Actions for Local Government makes health services development one of the six key functions required of local government in helping their communities adapt to climate change;
- Local governments in Australia and overseas are conducting climate impact and risk assessments but these are often paper-based and lack a health focus.

What does the paper add?

- This paper describes early lessons learnt from a pilot Tasmanian project that is building on existing work in local government to help them and their communities better manage the health effects of climate change;
- It explains the key challenges and strategies in developing an online tool to help find out what is happening or has happened (impacts) as well as what might happen (risks) and what should happen (adaptation) for the health and well-being of local communities;
- The paper also describes special issues in climate and health for local government in those regions where the health risks are great and the adaptive capacity is likely to be lowest: rural and regional Australia.

Aim

Climate change is increasingly acknowledged as one of the biggest threats to human health in the 21st Century. It is in fact one of the biggest *foreseeable* health threats. This paper examines how local government could help their communities better foresee and manage the health threats of climate change.

Background

Increasingly, local councils are assuming a leadership role in helping communities adapt to, and mitigate, climate change in areas such as planning decisions, natural resource management, and infrastructure development. The Australian Government's Climate Change Adaptation Actions for Local Government places the onus on local government to make the development of health services one of their six key functions in helping their communities adapt to climate change. It is known that councils in Australia and overseas are already actively researching the health risks of climate change and have been developing a wide range of initiatives in this area.

In a context in which local governments are emerging regional leaders in adaptation to climate change, a critical task in Australia and many other countries lies in better equipping them to manage the health effects of climate change. Unless local government and their communities have knowledge relevant to minimising the health burden of climate change, they and policy-makers cannot act to protect communities from the sometimes tragic and now far-reaching health effects of climate change. Our pilot project, a partnership between rural health leaders, climate scientists and peak local government organisations, aims to enable this to occur.

Method

The paper describes early lessons learnt from our current pilot Tasmanian project, funded by the Office of Climate Change. It describes how this project is building on the work already being done in local government to help them and their communities better foresee health risks and act to minimise the rising health burden of climate change. It explains how we are developing an online tool to achieve this in an integrated way for Australia, so that data from both climate science and local risk assessment exercises can be better shared within a translational research model. It explains the key challenges and strategies in developing our pilot online tool to help find out what is happening or has happened (impacts) as well as what might happen (risks) and what should happen (adaptation) for the health and well-being of local communities. The paper also describes special issues in climate and health for local government in those regions where the health risks are great and the adaptive capacity is likely to be lowest: rural and regional Australia, the focus of our pilot tool.

Conclusions

Health is the missing sector in too many impact and risk assessments done at local community level. Yet such exercises have critical importance for rural and regional Australia which often lies far from urban planning and service hubs. To be optimally useful to local government and policy-makers, health impact and risk assessments need to be online with sophisticated data sharing and data visualisation capacities. These assessment exercises must also be capable of helping local government efficiently bring together diverse community stakeholders and experts to reach consensus about the nature of the risks and appropriate responses. Our pilot project offers early indications that while such complex challenges lie ahead for local government and their researchers, they can be met within a translational research framework.

STREAM 3 Governance

35. Impacts of the Local Government Reform Process in New South Wales: Was it the Panacea to Cure all Ills, or Merely 'Snake-Oil'? An Examination of the Recent Reform Process in NSW Local Government

Philip Willis and Mike Paddon, *UTS Institute for Sustainable Futures*

What is known about this subject?

- Much has been written regarding the reform process itself, and the original driver for reform; the 1993 Local Government Act; which generated a plethora of informed comment and analysis;
- No substantive review of the impacts of that Act or any subsequent reforms was undertaken.

What does the paper add?

- The Paper sets down some initial definitive conclusions as to the impacts of the reform process generally, and the 1993 Local Government Act in particular;
- It concludes that whilst the '93 Act has achieved many of its objectives, it has not necessarily delivered benefits to all parties;
- It also indicates that the research, as with the subject matter is a 'work in progress' and that further detailed research remains outstanding.

This Paper will examine the undercurrents and drivers which powered the reform process during the 1990s, and will identify those shortfalls occasioning the need for a further round of major reforms which occurred between 2008 and 2010. It will draw on primary and secondary textual sources available at the time, and back these up by the observations resulting from interviews with informed commentators.

The Paper will reveal that the initial intent was to place local government on a 'business' footing, whilst at the same time making local councils accountable to their communities. In the pursuit of this endeavour, it will evidence that the machinations of local councils were to be transparent.

The Paper will focus primarily on legislation; viz. the introduction of the '93 Local Government Act and subsequent Amendments; particularly the Amendment calling for Integrated Planning and Reporting. Other reforms, e.g. Accounting Standards and the Local Government (State) Awards will be referenced to add weight and credence to the commentary.

An in-depth desk-top research was undertaken to gain an understanding of the drivers and leading players in the reform process in the early '90s. The research endeavoured to ascertain the aims and aspirations of the reform process; particularly the drafting and preparation of the '93 Local Government Act. In particular, recourse was made to statements, opinions, and commentaries at the time submitted by representatives of the following:

- NSW Department of Local Government and Co-operatives (now NSW Division of Local Government, Department of Premier and Cabinet)
- Local Government and Shires Association of NSW
- Institute of Municipal Management (now Local Government Managers Association [NSW])
- Informed commentators and observers
- New South Wales polity.

To gain an understanding of the impacts of the reforms, interviews were conducted with informed sources, many of whom had been intimately involved with the reform process. The interviewees, in addition to commenting on the reform process generally were requested to submit their opinions as to its success (or otherwise). These opinions are documented in the Paper for purposes of contrast with the textual comments. They also provide an insight as to the impacts of the reforms. These informed observations were drawn from representatives of the following:

- NSW Division of Local Government, Department of Premier and Cabinet
- Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW
- Local Government Managers Association (NSW)
- Unions
- Eminent local government academics and practitioners.

The conclusion will be drawn that generally the reforms have proved beneficial, and have been generally successful. However, there are still apparent flaws which need to be addressed. Amongst these are:

- Still a too prescriptive approach
- Problems with long term strategic, sustainable, and financial planning
- Over bureaucratisation
- Too rigid a control and oversight by the State Government.

The Paper will conclude that the above commentary remains observations only at this time; and that recourse should be made to a more rigorous, empirical analysis of the reform impacts. This is being undertaken by the writer; and future commentary may be anticipated in this regard.

36. Responding to the Challenges of Collaboration: Developing an Innovative Research Partnership Between Local Government and Global University

Richard Howitt, Dominic Johnson, Angela Jones-Bayley, John Neish, Jim Piper, Judyth Sachs and Gail Whiteford, *Macquarie University*

What is known about this subject?

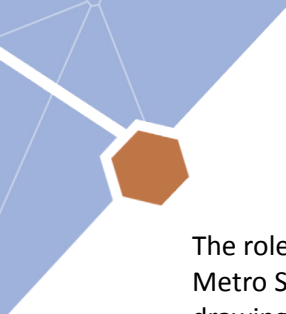
- Partnerships between local governments, communities and universities have been subject to critical scrutiny over many years, with clear findings that mismatched expectations, cultures and priorities create significant barriers to success.

What does the paper add?

- The emerging partnership between Macquarie University and the City of Ryde acknowledges these findings;
- This paper reflects on how the partners are using an integrated approach to teaching and research, a commitment to social inclusion within both institutions and diverse research capacity and research needs to build a different sort of long term partnership. It suggests a way forward for expanding formal collaboration between higher education and local government in future.

In Sydney's inner north the co-location of a research intensive university, a nationally significant research and business centre and a sector-leading curriculum innovation has opened opportunities to shape an exciting collaborative relationship between Macquarie University and the City of Ryde. In establishing a collaborative agreement for the period 2012-2032, the partners are pursuing a vision that integrates City of Ryde's innovative approaches to key local government roles with Macquarie's commitment to research performance and student engagement. The intention is to encourage research that contributes directly to strategy development, community capacity building, urban planning, place making, workforce planning, leadership development, environmental sustainability and the utilisation of technologies to enhance citizen engagement and customer service.

The University's recent curriculum developments require all students to include 'Participation and Community Engagement' in their studies, and this has opened exciting opportunities to develop longitudinal research that engages students in data collection and analysis with capacity for high resolution local studies across a range of fields.



The role of the Macquarie Park precinct in the global economic corridor identified in the Sydney Metro Strategy has also emerged as a driver of research collaboration, as has a global vision for drawing research capacity into long term service of both the wider local community and the local government's strategic priorities. This paper explores the challenges and opportunities that emerge from developing this agreement and identifies the possibility of benefits to local communities as a result.

STREAM 3 Environments in Transition

37. Delivering Improved Climate Change Projections to NSW Councils – NARClIM

Erin Roger, NSW Office of Environment and Heritage

What is known about this subject?

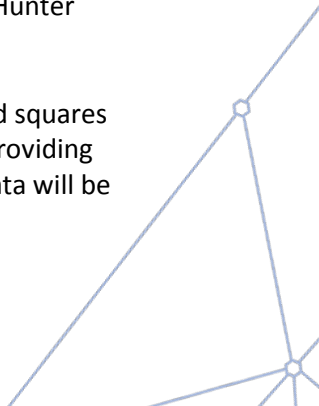
- Global climate models are routinely used in developing future climate projections. This is the first time, however, that regional projections at this fine scale will be available for NSW;
- Current projections for NSW are available through the NSW Climate Impact Profile (DECCW 2010). Current projections have a number of limitations which reduce their usefulness in predicting future climate at a regional level;
- The Government's mandate for the NARClIM project is laid out in NSW 2021 which commits to minimising the impacts of climate change in local communities. End-users from a wide range of sectors have been invited to consult with OEH staff, detailing their data delivery needs.

What does the paper add?

- An overview of a recently commenced modelling project that is being jointly developed by the Office of Environment and Heritage and the Climate Change Research Centre;
- An explanation of local scale projections will be developed from existing global climate projection datasets using scientifically robust methods;
- Information on the kinds of parameters will be generated from the model. A summary of the various applications of model outputs will enable various sectors to make adaptation decisions;
- Information on the means for the wider community to access both raw data and processed information.

In the recently released document *NSW 2021*, the NSW Government has committed to “minimise the impacts of climate change in local communities”. One action to deliver on this target is the completion of fine scale climate change projections for NSW, to be made publicly available to local councils and government by 2014. The NSW Office of Environment and Heritage is leading the NSW and ACT Regional Climate Modelling (NARClIM) project to provide a more robust picture of the likely regional impacts of climate change in NSW. It will be developed by the UNSW Climate Change Research Centre and project partners include Sydney Catchment Authority, ACT Government, Sydney Water Corporation, Emergency Management NSW, Department of Transport and Hunter Water Corporation.

Dynamical downscaling of climate projections will be modelled at a resolution of 10km grid squares for the State of NSW and the ACT. A sub-project will be developed for the Sydney region providing modelling at a resolution of 2km grid squares. Ensuring accessibility and usability of this data will be



paramount. This presentation will outline the project and open discussion on identifying how local government researchers can use the project outputs, as well as to identify specific data requirements for local government end-users.

38. Visualising the Complex Web of a Locality's Environmental Risk Governance

Dick Osborn, *PhD Researcher National Centre for the Public Awareness of Science, Australian National University, Canberra*

Summary

- The meaning of 'a multi-level perspective to guide transition to sustainability', and of its operation, is explored through two approaches;
- One is through counts obtained in statistical geography; the other through a mixed-methods approach that assesses quantitative and qualitative change in a portfolio of five stocks: produced capital, natural capital, human capital, social capital and institutional capital;
- Reasons for moving to mixed-methods when tracking progress towards sustainability are identified, including how global-local connectivity can be enhanced through adapting the World Bank's practice to estimate wealth at local and other sub-national levels of governance;
- A novel experiment based on secondary data in the public record measures and visualises the institutional capital associated with multi-level governance of the Wonboyn Lake Estuary in New South Wales;
- The method designed to achieve results combines free, downloadable sources, with the aim of encouraging councils and their communities to also learn-by-doing.

Effective communications within and through multiple levels of governance is seen as essential if guiding social-ecological systems towards sustainability is to succeed. Statistical geography, or integrated assessments that combine qualitative and quantitative measures, provide the main opportunities for a common language in multi-level sustainability governance. Attempts at widespread adoption of sustainability metrics based on statistical geography have failed in the past. Two examples from Australia are provided as examples. Even so, Australia and New Zealand continue along that path with other members of the international community. Reporting in 2010, an independent commission on measuring economic and social progress recommends governments shift to integrated assessments. The World Bank's practice of tracking change in a jurisdiction's total wealth through estimates of its natural, produced, human, social and institutional capital seems to hold the greatest promise for a common language in multi-level governance. A 2006 collaborative study involving the author demonstrated that integrated assessments of a local community's natural, produced and human capital stocks is feasible.

The study reported here demonstrates that it also feasible to measure institutional capital at local community level. It does by content analysis of some one hundred and twenty documents relevant to environmental risk governance of the Wonboyn Lake estuary and catchment in New South Wales. Method combines an international framework for risk governance with a social network analysis tool. Results challenge the notion that multi-level governance operates as a strict hierarchy. They do so, for example, by showing a high degree of connectedness between the Wonboyn Lake's Estuary Management Committee and the multi-national institution of peer-reviewed scientific literature. The feasibility of quantifying social capital at the local community is a relatively insignificant task for future research. The R&D priority should be to consider how the engineering practice of scoring condition of public works can be extended to other capital stocks in the World Bank's portfolio.



39. Local Government and Landfill Futures

Stuart White, Dana Cordell, Jade Herriman, Dustin Moore, Anna Gero and Leah Mason, *UTS Institute for Sustainable Futures*

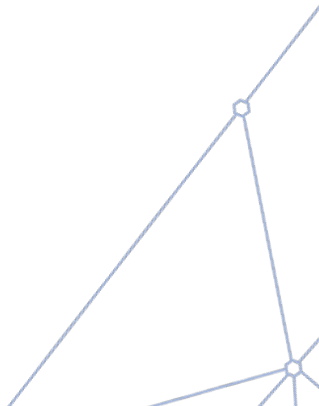
The Co-operative Research Centre for Contamination Assessment and Remediation of the Environment (CRC CARE) is a collaborative research and development body providing cutting edge technologies and knowledge in assessing, preventing and remediating contamination of soil, water and air. This paper reports on the preliminary findings of the Landfill Futures project being carried out by the Institute for Sustainable Futures (ISF) funded by CRC CARE.

Historically in Australia, disposal to landfill has been the dominant means for managing waste, however today there are a large range of measures in use that can be classified as disposal, recovery, reuse or avoidance measures. This project takes a purposefully broad perspective on managing waste and resources, in line with international best practice. That is, the system boundary includes the whole production and consumption value chain, rather than just post-consumption waste.

The aim of this research was to undertake a detailed analysis of the role of landfills in Australia in relation to other waste mitigation approaches. The research uses issues identification, a situation analysis, a review of existing literature, policy mapping and participatory stakeholder engagement methods. Strategic analysis of these outcomes will yield a suite of potential policy options, which will be peer reviewed in a policy forum. This research seeks to provide support for improved decision making at the many levels of government who each have jurisdictions over waste. The project will also deliver potential policy options related to decision making processes themselves.

Intervention points can occur at all stages of the production and consumption chain. Further, this project takes a futures perspective (i.e. by asking *how do we want to manage resources in, say 30 years?*), while acknowledging the inertia of the past and challenges associated with the current context (such as sunk costs associated with existing landfill infrastructure). Finally, the project considers the current and future roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders.

Local government is a key stakeholder and policy actor in the area of waste management, and this paper focuses on the implications for local government end users.



STREAM 3 Measuring Governance

40. Demographics and Local Government

Lisa Conolly, *Australia Bureau of Statistics*

What is known about this subject?

- Information about ABS published regional data is available via the ABS web site. Please refer to the National Regional Profile, which can be located at <http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au>;
- This ABS web product includes information "About the Data", and the ABS provides explanatory notes which outline the quality of the data and any limitations with the data.

What does the paper add?

- The presentation for the Local Government Researchers Forum will provide some advice about access and analysis of ABS regional data, and will discuss data gaps and data development work being undertaken or considered by ABS. This paper provides an account of the elected executives model of municipal leadership;
- The presentation will provide a series of slides with embedded notes, rather than a research paper.


The ABS has a role to support local research and planning activity with relevant data, by providing access to regional or small area data in core national data sets. Lisa Conolly is Director of Rural and Regional Statistics at the ABS, and will talk about the role of ABS in supporting research and data analysis. Lisa will provide information about the current data available from the ABS at 'region' scale (for Local Government Areas and other regions), and how this information may be accessed and used.

The presentation will focus on two common questions:

- How are regional populations changing?
- What do we know about regional economies and how they are changing?

In addressing each question, Lisa will explore the use of ABS data with case study examples, and will outline some of the measurement concepts and issues. There are also some significant data gaps at region scale which will be highlighted. Lisa believes that local governments may be able to supplement this information using their own administrative records and local research, and ABS has a role in providing advice on methods for doing so.

In assessing regional population change the key questions centre around what population characteristics are most critical to understand and over what time frame. How fast does the population change? Population growth or decline can be tracked annually using population estimates by age and sex at region scale, with census data providing richer information on population characteristics every five years. A local government area with a relatively stable population size can still experience population change due to internal migration and this also drives a need for change in services. The ABS provides some information on internal migration, and is currently assessing methods for production of regular annual estimates.



In assessing regional economies, there are many more complex definitional issues that come in to play. Lisa will briefly discuss the concept of an "economic region" and how this may be defined. Lisa will briefly highlight what ABS data might be used to provide an indication of the economic activity occurring in a region, and will discuss the data gaps in this area.

Lisa will also provide a brief overview of plans for future ABS developments in regional data and dissemination, including information about Census 2011 output, and the move to a new geography, the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS).

4.1. Measuring Liveability: The Contribution of a Census of Land Use and Employment

Austin Ley, *Manager, City Research, City of Melbourne*; George Konstantinidis, *Property Research Team Leader, City of Melbourne*; Cate Owen, *Senior Policy Officer (Research), City of Adelaide*; Christine Kilmartin, *Manager, Sustainability Analysis, Victorian Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD)*; Mahdi Allahmoradi, *Senior Spatial Scientist, DPCD*; Serryn Eagleson *Ph.D, joint research appointment, City of Melbourne and DPCD*

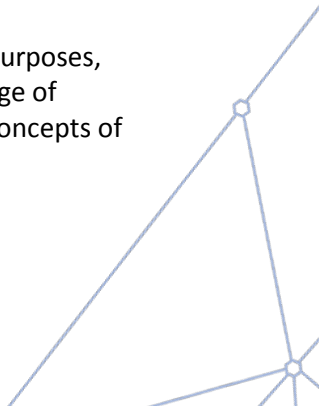
Summary

- Informed decisions in local government are based on evidence and aim to meet its economic, social and environmental needs;
- Conducting a regular Land Use and Employment Census (CLUE) provides valuable long term information about a city's workforce and the needs of the community;
- The 'snapshot in time' and time series aspects of Land Use and Employment Censuses allows research on how land use and economic activities fit together in a broader sense;
- Making the data accessible via the web and within GIS systems means that the data can be integrated with other data streams and can be used to identify industry and employment clusters and identify the potential demand for future business and council services.

For several decades, Melbourne and Adelaide Local Governments have collected regular data about land use and employment for managing growth in their central business districts. Recognising the value of that time series knowledge for their overall planning, they have more recently expanded that collection throughout their municipalities. Sydney has also done something similar, as has New Zealand. The State Government in Victoria is now testing the use of such a collection for its own strategic planning across its key metropolitan and regional planning areas.

The Census of Land Use and Employment (CLUE), collects information on the way land is being used (or not used) plus the way in which built form changes both its structure and its use, and offers a more detailed count of employment occurring at each address. It allows a regular source of information about the changing nature of businesses - private, government and community - operating in an area and can fill in the gaps between ABS Population Census years while utilising ABS standard measures such as ANZSIC to enable comparison. Such information can be used for service planning, emergency management and researching business cluster models, as well as for an assessment of infrastructure upgrades.

The CLUE approach provides cost efficiencies by utilising data already collected for other purposes, retaining common data items across collections and enabling better integration with a range of other datasets that can link directly or indirectly to property. It is able to cross-relate the concepts of property developed differently by institutions and legislatures.



This information can be mapped in various ways (using GIS) to assist the understanding of spatial dynamics at address, street, block or other area level. In addition, the collection of data floor-by-floor lends itself to true 3D representation, as this presentation will illustrate.

CLUE data can be applied almost universally across local government responsibilities, from business to retail, tourism, open space, urban design, strategic planning, neighbourhood renewal, transport and visitation. Its historical nature allows assessments of economic change, such as the impact of the GFC. At least one jurisdiction has fed their data into a regional model to estimate local economic product.

The ability to integrate with other small area collections means that it can also contribute to assessments of energy and water consumption, future infrastructure requirements and other factors that together make up a picture of local liveability. In addition, Victoria will be testing the ability of VicCLUE to integrate with the non-urban Victorian Land Use Information System (derived from satellite imagery, valuations data and ground truthing) to provide a more comprehensive picture for regional and rural areas.

The rollout of the CLUE collection across a wider range of local governments in Victoria has also opened up the need for a way to allow people in local and state government with different planning and service provision responsibilities to access the data easily and make sense of it for their own area of operation. The system that has been designed is helping expand the understanding of small area spatial dynamics, and will be demonstrated.

The paper will also explore tentative next steps to enhancing access to, and use of, the broader range of data available but not systematically integrated into easily findable and interpretable data repositories.



DEBATE Researchers are from Venus, local government is from Mars: politics, not evidence, shapes policy

FOR **Greg Hoffman**

Greg has had a long and distinguished career with Local Government. With over 40 years dedicated to Local Government he has worked for three Councils including the position of CEO of Darwin City Council. He was the Executive Director of LGAQ for 10 years, the Local Government Commissioner for Queensland for 5 years, and for the last 13 years he has been the Director of Policy and Representation at the LGAQ.

Greg holds two Degrees - a Bachelor of Business with majors in Accounting and Management and a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in Community Studies and Media Relations. He is a Certified Practising Accountant and a Fellow of the Local Government Managers Association.

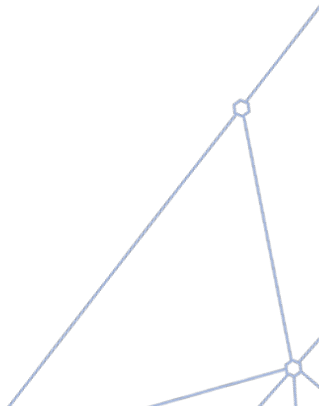
In 1994 Greg was awarded a Public Service Medal in the Australia Day Honors List for outstanding service to Local Government and in 2002 received a Centenary of Federation Medal.

Greg is a member of the Research Advisory Committee for ACELG.

John Martin

John has a strong interest in the institutions and processes that create sustainable communities. His initial training in ecology and natural resource management, sociology and a PhD in public policy provides a multidisciplinary view on sustainable development.

John has worked across Australia for the Federal, state and local governments and in the Asia Pacific and Africa on a range of assignments for the World Bank, the ADB, AusAID and the UNDP. His current research and consulting interests include local and regional governance, agriculture and rural change, and the impact of climate change on regional Australia.



AGAINST**Lawrence Pratchett**

Professor Pratchett is the new Dean of Business and Government. Before taking up his present position he was Professor of Local Democracy and Head of the Department of Public Policy at De Montfort University in the United Kingdom and prior to that Director and co-founder of the Local Governance Research Unit. Professor Pratchett's PhD won the Political Studies Association Walter Bagehot Prize for the best dissertation in public administration in the UK. He has published widely, in journals which in Australia would be regarded as A and A*. He has attracted significant research income, including approximately \$560,000 in the last 3 years as Principal Investigator. His earlier major grants include \$300,000 for a project on "barriers to local e-democracy", from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and \$250,000 from the Economic and Social Research Council for a project on political participation. His appointment will add momentum to the renewal of our scholarship in public administration, and comes at an opportune time following our leading role in securing funding for the Australian Centre.

Melissa Gibbs

Assistant Director of ACELG and with more than 15 years experience in local government, Melissa Gibbs combines rare practical experience with a strong policy development and research capability.

Melissa spent most of her time in local government working with multi-disciplinary teams of local government professionals and elected councillors, using creative and innovative techniques to negotiate and secure common agreements and outcomes. She led and managed numerous programs to address the multiple challenges facing local government - from financial sustainability to local government's role in global challenges such as climate change.

Since May 2007, Melissa has been providing consulting services to local government in NSW, Queensland and Victoria in a range of specialist activities, including staff and team development, workshop facilitation and design, organisation and program reviews, development of community strategic plans, research and policy development.



BIOGRAPHIES

John Abbott is a practicing planner in South East Queensland (SEQ). He has worked on every metropolitan regional plan prepared for SEQ since 1990. He teaches planning theory and metropolitan planning at the University of Queensland.

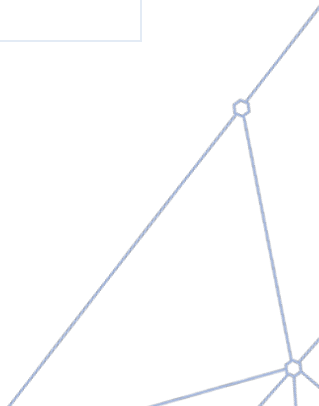
Sarah Artist is Assistant Director for the UTS Centre for Local Government, where she has responsibility for the management of the Centre's operations as well as initiating and managing research, graduate and professional development programs, consultancy and international activities. She has almost 20 years experience in Local Government in a range of professional, academic and consulting roles.

Chris Aulich is a Professor in Public Administration at the University of Canberra. He maintains an active research profile having now co-edited four books involving members of the ANZSIG Institute for Governance and its predecessor research centres at the University of Canberra. The most recent is *The Rudd Government*, the tenth volume in the Australian Commonwealth Administration series which has mapped each of Australia's governments since 1983. Chris has also published widely in both Australian and international books and journals. He has researched in a range of public sector areas and currently is working the broad areas of privatisation, integrity agencies and local government.

Lorraine Bates is a member of the Social and Behavioural Sciences Group in CSIRO Ecosystem Sciences. Lorraine is a Human /Regional geographer with research interests in collective action problems and the social dimensions of environmental management. She is currently leading the regional case study component of the CAF project on Adaptive Behaviours in Australian Society. This work is assessing the impact of organisational interactions and institutional context on the development of adaptive capacity and implementation of climate adaptation practices in regional Australia.

Erica Bell is Deputy Director at the University Department of Rural Health where she is also acting director of the Primary Healthcare Evaluation and Development (PHCRED) program. Prior to her employment in 2004 in rural health she was a policy research manager in the Queensland government leading a diverse multidisciplinary research team. Since becoming an academic she has produced 70 publications: 5 scholarly books, including a 2009 sole-authored book with Oxford University Press; 4 edited volumes as lead editor; 24 peer-reviewed journal papers; 3 book chapters. These have been in complex community health areas of interest to local government: adaptation to climate change, adolescent substance abuse, youth crime prevention, domestic violence and the social determinants of child health, healthy ageing and falls prevention, chronic disease, health services design, development and quality assurance.

Christine Cheyne is Associate Professor Resource & Environmental Planning Programme School of People, Environment and Planning Massey University. Her current and recent research includes:

- Attitudes and behaviour in relation to public transport in non-metropolitan New Zealand
 - Impacts of rapid property price changes on small coastal settlements led by Professor Claire Freeman, Director of Planning at the University of Otago
 - Involvement in a University of Auckland led team that is a partner in the RECON project (Reconstructing Democracy in Europe) that aims to identify strategies through which democracy can be strengthened and propose measures for rectifying institutional and constitutional defects in different policy areas
 - New Zealanders' knowledge about, and interaction with, local government
 - Cross-national comparative research involving New Zealand and eight European countries (2002-04) entitled 'Participation, Leadership and Urban Sustainability' funded by the European Commission as part of Framework Programme.
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Lisa Conolly is currently Director of Rural and Regional Statistics for the Australian Bureau of Statistics, based in the Adelaide office of the ABS, and recently participated on a management team for the collection of the 2011 Census in South Australia. Lisa has been with the ABS for 10 years, and has also worked with culture and migrant statistics. Prior to this, Lisa worked for 10 years in local government, at the City of Salisbury in South Australia in a number of roles: first as Community Planner; then as Geographic Information System Coordinator and finally as Customer Service Manager. Lisa has an Executive Masters degree in Public Administration from the Australian and New Zealand School of Government, and an Honours degree in Psychology from Macquarie University, Sydney.

Angelo D'Costa is a Senior Policy Officer, Local Government Victoria at the Victorian Department of Planning and Community Development. A qualified environmental engineer, Angelo has worked in urban planning, infrastructure planning and property development for the private sector, as well as state and local government.

Alison Dalziel is an economist with over 20 years' experience in central and local government in a variety of technical and senior management roles. Her background includes strategy and policy, corporate planning, economic development and regional development. Alison can be contacted at dalziel@strategy-performance.com.

Raymond de Silva is the Social Sustainability Coordinator at the City of Melville in Western Australia. His background is in International Governance, Sustainable Development and the Social Sciences. The emphasis of his work is on the consideration and adoption of the social dimension of sustainability within the City of Melville's governance strategies and operations. Ray has developed the City's Stakeholder Relationships Framework in 2011 and is also the Project Manager for the first Revision of the City's Strategic Community Plan. Alongside safeguarding more traditional principles of social sustainability-such as social justice and community cohesion, future projects include more recent developments in the field such as the redesign of Community Wellbeing measures, social impact assessment, social risk and social return on Investment.

Serryn Eagleson (Department of Planning and Community Development, Victorian Government.) has over ten years teaching and research experience in local government and academic research. Serryn has a PhD in Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and the design of administrative boundaries. Serryn is currently working for the Victorian Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) and is senior fellow position at the University of Melbourne.

Mark Evans is the Director of the Australia and New Zealand School of Government Institute for Governance (ANZSOG). Before taking up this role Mark was Professor of Government, Head of the Department of Politics and Provost of Halifax College at the University of York in the United Kingdom. He played an international role in supporting better administrative practices in public administration in developed and developing contexts. Mark has a range of research interests including evaluating critical issues in Australian governance. The research theme that binds all of these areas together is his interest in public sector institution-building and processes of governance. His recent books include; Constitution-making and the Labour Party (2005); Post-war Reconstruction and Policy Transfer (2009); New Directions in the Study of Policy Transfer (2009) and Understanding Competition States (2009). He is also the editor of the international journal Policy Studies and has supervised 16 PhD theses to a successful conclusion.

Jennifer Fredericks has six years experience in Local Government, having worked in events management and community safety. Currently working as a Community Safety Planner for Logan City Council, Jennifer is passionate about Council's role in creating vibrant and liveable communities. Being involved in the Propeller Program has provided Jennifer with broad experience in the role of Local Government across Queensland.

Anna Gero is a Research Consultant at the Institute for Sustainable Futures. Anna joined the Institute in May 2011, and began leading a project investigating successful and innovative community engagement techniques with a local government in Sydney's western suburbs. Other projects Anna has worked on at ISF have focused on a range of sustainability issues, including the future of waste management, water and sanitation and

climate change adaptation challenges, both locally and internationally.

Ruth Goldsmith has worked in planning roles at Penrith Council since 1990, and has been in Local Government for over 25 years. Before that, she spent several years overseas, working in a range of business areas. She has a Degree in Applied Science (Environmental Planning) and a Masters in Dispute Resolution. As Group Manager Leadership, Ruth is responsible for developing a vision for the City's future together with the City's communities, and then preparing the strategies and actions to help make it happen. Her teams coordinate the 'big picture' planning for sustainability, transport, employment, economic development, heritage, biodiversity, and the City's rural, residential and new urban areas.

Alex Gooding has extensive experience in research on social, environmental, transport, governance and growth management issues and has worked for over 25 years in the local government, state government and the community sectors. In 2008 Mr Gooding established Gooding Davies Consultancy Pty Ltd, which specialises in independent research, advocacy, strategic planning and policy development. He was also a member of the Sydney Morning Herald's Christie Inquiry into Public Transport and recently became an ACELG Associate. He has been involved in several ACELG research projects including the Consolidation in Local Government report. Mr Gooding's presentation is based on his latest ACELG research project, a comparative analysis of Regional Organisations of Councils in NSW and Western Australia. Alex can be contacted by email alex@goodingdavies.com.au or on his website www.goodingdavies.com.au.

Bligh Grant is Research Lecturer in Local Government Studies and Deputy Director of the UNE Centre for Local Government, a position he has held since 2008. Formerly an Associate Lecturer in Political Economy at University of Southern Queensland Toowoomba, and has held several research-only positions at UNE across a variety of disciplines. He publishes principally in Australian politics, political economy and local government studies.

Patrick Harris is a research fellow at the Centre for Health Equity Training Research and Development, UNSW. He is an international leader in building capacity to undertake health impact assessment and has published widely on his work in HIA and influencing planning to incorporate health and wellbeing.

Jade Herriman has a background in environmental biology and social science, and experience in options analysis, program design and review, policy development, and participatory processes. Prior to working at ISF she worked in Local Government in environmental management and organisational change for sustainability. At ISF she has worked with numerous local government organisations, assisting them in community engagement, environmental education, sustainability planning and sustainability indicators, including WSROC, SSROC, City of Sydney, Gosford, Kogarah, Hornsby, Hawkesbury, and Hunter's Hill Councils. Jade is particularly interested in community scale responses to sustainability challenges, and social and organisational processes as they relate to decision making and change for sustainability.

Anne Howard is a Research Fellow with the Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government. She also works with the innovation management and policy research firm, Howard Partners. Anne is a Global Affiliate of the CIPR in London, a Member of the PRIA in Australia, and is completing a Masters in Information and Internet Communication at the University of Canberra. Anne has a particular interest in organisational innovation, communication and program design. Her current research is focused on the use of social media by local government with a monograph due for release in 2012.

Richie Howitt is Professor of Human Geography at Macquarie University and has been appointed as Director of the Macquarie-Ryde Futures Project from 2012. He has previously worked on community development, social justice and sustainability issues in Indigenous communities across Australia in natural resource management, infrastructure development and Native title negotiations.

Austin Ley (Manager, City Research, City of Melbourne) is an economist with a master's in urban planning and over twenty five years experience in strategic planning, economic and market research in both the public and private sectors. He joined the City of Melbourne in 1995 to establish the Research Branch which today is a team of 12 staff. One of the key projects conducted by this team is the Census of Land Use and Employment

(CLUE) which provides an authoritative evidence base for planning both within the City of Melbourne and beyond.

Michael Limerick is a barrister and consultant specialising in indigenous governance and policy. He held a range of legal, policy and management positions in the Queensland Government from 1994 to 2007. Since completing his PhD on Indigenous local government performance, he has been focusing on policy research, evaluation and community governance and development in indigenous and regional communities.

John Martin has a strong interest in the institutions and processes that create sustainable communities. His initial training in ecology and natural resource management, sociology and a PhD in public policy provides a multidisciplinary view on sustainable development. John has worked across Australia for the Federal, state and local governments and in the Asia Pacific and Africa on a range of assignments for the World Bank, the ADB, AusAID and the UNDP. His current research and consulting interests include local and regional governance, agriculture and rural change, and the impact of climate change on regional Australia.

Peter McKinlay has worked as a specialist researcher and consultant on strategic public policy for the past 25 years, increasingly concentrating on local government. He is Executive Director of McKinlay Douglas Ltd, director of the Local Government Centre at AUT University, an associate of the Centre for Local Government at UTS and an alternate member of the board of the Commonwealth Local Government Forum where he is closely involved with raising the profile of its Research Advisory Group.

Thomas Michel has studied in the fields of economics and humanities, and has a special interest in history, politics and languages. He holds undergraduate degrees from Macquarie University, a Masters of Economics (Social Sciences) from University of Sydney, a Postgraduate Certificate in Evaluation and Assessment from University of Melbourne and a Graduate Certificate in Management from Chifley Business School. He has also spent time studying in Berlin, Germany and Sana'a, Yemen. He has lived in the Northern Territory for six years, where he worked for the Northern Territory Government's Treasury and Department of Local Government. In 2009 he commenced a PhD at Charles Darwin University, on the topic of the sustainability of the Northern Territory's local government sector. In 2010 he took up the position of finance manager with Roper Gulf Shire.

Dustin Moore joined the Institute in 2010 as an environmental planner under the Institute's graduate program. Prior to this, Dustin contributed to the investigation of water quality issues for the Cradle Coast Regional Planning Initiative in Tasmania, and volunteered as a Sustainable Agriculture Extension Agent in rural Panama working in conjunction with community members and agency partners focusing on sustainable uses and development of available natural resources, concentrating most efforts within small coffee farms.

Robyn Morris is currently a Research Consultant to postgraduate students in the Faculty of Business and Law and is involved in a number of collaborative research projects on rural-remote and Indigenous local government in ECU's capacity as the WA Program Partner of ACELG. She has 18 years' consulting experience in the private and public sectors, with a particular focus on the local government sector in Western Australia. Robyn was a founding member of the WA Bunbury Wellington Economic Alliance, a regional alliance of local government, business and industry. Robyn is currently a member of the Research Advisory Committee of ACELG and is a member of the implementation committee for ACELG's National Strategy for Building the Capacity of Rural-remote and Indigenous Local Government.

Alan Morton has more than 30 years' experience consulting to local government in Queensland and elsewhere in Australia. His work has covered policy research and analysis, finance and rating, organisation structures, planning and regional development.

John Neish was appointed General Manager of the City of Ryde in 2010. His career has spanned the private, not for profit and local government sectors. His experience in local government administration was gained both in Australia and the UK where, as Head of Performance in the UK Audit Commission, he analysed the causes of local government effectiveness.

Dick Osborn held positions at Griffith University's School of Australian Environmental Studies and CSIRO's Division of Land and Water Resources through 1975-83. He then moved into intergovernmental relations as Senior Policy Adviser and Deputy Director with the Australian Local Government Association, gaining first-hand experience on the impacts of federalism transitions put in place during the Fraser, Hawke and Keating ministries. That experience covered all areas of public policy, but with emphasis on environmental and fiscal policies. A final period of paid work followed during 1993-2005, primarily on the design and diffusion of environmental and sustainability accounting innovations in the public and private sectors.

Rosemary Pollock is a Project Officer at Hunter New England Population Health and has 8 years experience in the Health Promotion field. Prior to working in Health Promotion, Rosemary spent 17 years working in Local Government in Community Engagement, Community Development and Communication roles.

Karen Purser is the Program Co-ordinator – Women in Local Government at the Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government, based at UTS. She coordinates the 50:50 Vision - Councils for Gender Equity Program - a national Awards and Accreditation Program designed to assist councils to address issues of gender equity in both senior management and elected councils. Prior to joining ACELG, Karen had worked in local government for nearly 10 years, predominantly in community research and engagement, knowledge management and organisational performance, and developed a number of award winning programs. Karen is an active participant in the Local Government Gov 2.0 movement and is excited about opportunities for collaboration and participative democracy.

Erin Roger is a Policy Officer in the Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation Section within the Office of Environment and Heritage. Erin is involved in a number of projects that sit within the science/policy interface that work towards improving understanding and mitigation of climate change impacts. In 2010 Erin completed a PhD at UNSW in terrestrial ecology investigating the impacts of roads on native fauna.

Colin Russo is Coordinator of Community Consultation, at Gold Coast City Council, Queensland, Australia. For the past 9 years Colin has worked for the Council delivering consultations, authoring consultation and engagement policy and managing a panel of engagement providers. Colin has 20 years community engagement experience overall, including 7 years work within the Queensland Government (EPA and Department of Mines) on community consultation policy and consultations of a legislative and policy nature.

Sandy Semmens is currently Program Manager, Training, Development & Research Scheme at the Local Government Association of SA. Her qualifications include a Bachelor of Library and Information Management from the University of South Australia and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Adelaide. Her research interests include improving the availability and variety of relevant quality training and education offerings for Local Government Councillors and Employees particularly using online delivery options, and assisting Local Government Councils to raise the level and sophistication of the workforce planning and development activities they currently undertake.

Shane Sody had a background in journalism, politics and law before specialising in local government legal policy at the South Australian Office for State/Local Government Relations. He is now Program Manager, Local Government Reform, at the Local Government Association of South Australia.

David Somerville is an independent consultant based in Sydney NSW and running his business Northbridge Management Consulting. He has a varied professional background qualifying and practising for over fifteen years as a registered architect and working within the public sector in the field of project development.

He has experience in office management and spent several years working on regional programmes at the Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils. Currently he is consulting on assignments for the Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government and is participating in international volunteering as an Australian Business Volunteer under the federal government AusAid programme.

Amanda Spalding has over 20 years' experience in Executive Management in State and Local Government in England and Australia, including being CEO of two not for profit companies. She is now the CEO of Darrell Hair Associates Management Consultants and can be contacted at amandaspalding@bigpond.com.

Hazel Storey has specialised in sustainability since 2002, having worked on local, regional, state and federal government programs. She has also served as Sustainability Manager for Local Government Managers Australia (NSW). Hazel is passionate about collaboration, and actively shares her knowledge, skills and insights in leading and supporting organisational and individual learning, and change for sustainability.

From designing and facilitating tailored and creative government programs and projects to evaluating and reporting, connect with Director Hazel Storey at www.storeyagency.com.au.

Ian Tiley was first mayor of the amalgamated Clarence Valley Council from 2005 to 2008 and continues as a councillor with 48 years local government experience. A Retired Fellow of Local Government Managers Australia, he recently completed the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy through UNE Armidale and will graduate in March 2012. His doctoral thesis topic was "Australian Local Government Council Amalgamations – The Case Study of Clarence Valley Council NSW". Ian is an Adjunct Research Fellow at University of New England, Armidale, and an Executive Committee member of the UNE Centre for Local Government, Chairperson of Regional Development Australia Northern Rivers Board and a Member of the North Coast TAFE Institute Council.

Leighton Vivian is a Senior Policy Analyst, Local Government Victoria at the Victorian Department of Planning and Community Development. He has previously worked in regulatory policy in primary industries and as a consultant in overseas development assistance, primarily in Papua New Guinea. He holds a PhD in political economy from La Trobe University where he has also lectured in politics and international relations.

Rob Weymouth is the sustainability facilitator at the Western Australian Local Government Association where he works to help his organisation and its Members on their journey toward sustainability. He has worked in local government for the last 4 years and previous to that the private and academic research and development sectors. Rob has postgraduate degrees in Engineering from the University of Western Australia, and Sustainability from Curtin University and is currently a PhD candidate at the Curtin University Sustainability Policy Institute in Fremantle.

Phil Willis is a qualified Civil and Local Government Engineer with experience as both an engineer and manager in local government. He has worked in metropolitan and regional councils including Blue Mountains and Canada Bay City. He has a Masters of Local Government Management and is completing a PhD on the impacts of local government reform on councillors. Phil is a Fellow of both the Institution of Engineers Australia, and the Institute of Public Works Australia.

Heather Zeppel is a Mid Career Research Fellow at the Australian Centre for Sustainable Business and Development, University of Southern Queensland. Her research interests include environmental sustainability and carbon mitigation by local councils and tourism operators.



LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN TRANSITION FORUM 2011 : DAY 1

9.30–9.40am Welcome Professor Attila Brungs, *Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, UTS*

9.40-10.30am *Introduction Local Governance in Transition: an overview* Graham Sansom and Mark Evans; *Local Government as Researcher*; Austin Ley City of Melbourne

10.30-11.00am Morning Tea

Stream 1: Transition Governance, Lvl 6-Large Room

Stream 2: Communities in Transition, Lvl 6-Nurses Room

Stream 3: Environments in Transition, Lvl 6-Small Room

11.00-1.10pm

Transition Governance

A Fresh Look at Municipal Consolidation in Australia
Chris Aulich, University of Canberra

Sustainability and the Social Contract with Australia's Country Towns: Local Governance in Transition? John Martin, LaTrobe University

Divided by a continent – different approaches to local government reform and the prospects for regional organisations of councils in NSW and Western Australia
Alex Gooding Gooding Davies Consultancy Pty Ltd/ACELG Associate

Facilitator: Robyn Morris

Community Engagement

Local Government and Community Engagement in Australia
Jade Herriman, UTS Institute for Sustainable Futures (ISF)

Meeting Challenges through Empowered, Deliberative Participation: A case study of a WA regional local government Rob Weymouth, Western Australian Local Government Association

Evolution of Community Governance: Building on What Works Peter McKinlay, Local Government Centre AUT University NZ

Facilitator: Sarah Artist

Liveability

Health Impact Assessment in a Local Government Context Patrick Harris for Mackay Public Health Unit
Connectivity, Sustainability, Flexibility and Accessibility – Indicators for Liveable Rural and Remote Communities A Liveable Communities Assessment of Gunnedah Shire
Rosemary Pollock, Health Reform Transition Organisation Northern

Developing Liveability Indicators for Local Government
Ruth Goldsmith, Penrith City Council

Facilitator: Stefanie Pillora

1.10-2.00pm

Lunch

2.00-3.30pm

Sharing services and Finance in transition

Rating policy – an ad hoc or principled balancing act?
Shane Sody, Local Government Association of South Australia

Regional performance: the leadership difference
Amanda Spalding, Darryl Hair Associates; Alison Dalshiel
Shared Services Model – TBC

Facilitator: Chris Champion

Workforce in Transition

Location as a factor in Gender Equity in Local Government
Karen Purser, ACELG;

Learning in Local Government Sarah Artist and Geraldine O'Connor, UTS Centre for Local Government;
South Australian Local Government Workforce Planning Project Sandy Semmens, Local Government Association of SA

Facilitator: John Ravlic

Climate Change & Transition Governance

Climate change governance by local councils Heather Zeppel University of South Queensland;

Strategic planning for collaborative practice: the potential for inter-organisational cooperation to overcome constraints to climate adaptation Lorraine Bates, CSIRO;

Foreseeing and managing the health risks of climate change: a translational pilot project for local government
Erica Bell, University of Tasmania

Facilitator: Marianne di Giallonardo

3.30-4.00pm

Afternoon Tea

4.00-5.00pm

Local/State Reform Governance

Collaborative Governance and Metropolitan Planning in South East Queensland John Abbott, John Abbott Planning

Collaborative reform process between state and local government: the Victorian Councils Reforming Business Program Leighton Vivian, Department of Planning and Community Development Victoria

Facilitator: Geraldine O'Connor

Cultures of Transition

Building the capacity for local government innovation Mark Evans, University of Canberra

Current perceptions and trends of Local Government as an employer of choice Jennifer Frederick, Logan City Council

Facilitator: Sandy Semmens

Environments in Transition

Delivering improved climate change projections to NSW Councils Erin Rogers, NSW Office of Environment and Heritage

Visualising the complex web of a locality's environmental risk governance Dick Osborn PhD Researcher, Australian National University

Facilitator: Rolf Gerritson

5.00-6.00pm

Transition Themes - Mark Evans to facilitate

6.00-7.00pm

Cocktails

LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN TRANSITION FORUM 2011 : DAY 2

	Stream 1 Transition Governance, <i>Aerial Function Centre, Jones Room</i>	Stream 2 Communities in Transition, <i>Nurses Education Room</i>	Stream 3 Environments in Transition, <i>Lvl 6-Large Room</i>
8.30-10.00am	<p>Rural, Remote, Indigenous Local Government <i>Local government service delivery to remote Indigenous communities: funding and service delivery model design</i> Michael Limerick and Robyn Morris, Edith Cowan University</p> <p><i>Roles and expectations of rural-remote and indigenous councils</i> Alan Morton, Morton Consulting Services</p> <p><i>Who Defines 'Sustainability'? Perspectives on the recent transition from Community Councils to Regional Shires in the Northern Territory</i> Thomas Michel, Roper Gulf Shire Council</p> <p>Facilitator: Melissa Gibbs</p>	<p><i>The UK Transition Network and Community Governance: A discussion paper for Australian Local Government</i> Hazel Storey, Story Agency</p> <p><i>Being included @ Melville: Developing Stakeholder relationships</i> Raymond de Silva, City of Melville Council;</p> <p><i>Beyond the (local) ballot box: Strengthening democracy and building community from the grass roots</i> Graeme Gibson, Real Options</p> <p>Facilitator: John Martin</p>	<p>Liveability <i>Citizen Participation and Murray Darling Basin Futures – Better Practice Design</i> Mark Evans, University of Canberra</p> <p><i>Impacts of the Local Government Reform Process</i> Philip Willis, UTS ISF</p> <p><i>Local Government and Landfill Futures</i> Jade Herriman UTS ISF</p> <p>Facilitator: Su-Fei Tan</p>
10.00-10.30am	Morning Tea		
10.30-12.00pm	<p>Leadership in Transition <i>Local political leadership in transition: lessons from the new Auckland Council</i> Christine Cheyne Massey, University NZ</p> <p><i>Leadership in Australian Local Government Reform: Institutional and Ethical Approaches</i> Bligh Grant, University of New England</p> <p><i>Political Management Leadership in Australian Local Government</i> John Martin, Latrobe University/Chris Aulich, UC</p> <p>Facilitator: Sophi Bruce</p>	<p>Communicating in Transition <i>Local Government and the National Broadband: How the Sector is Preparing to Capture the Benefits</i> Ian Tiley, University of New England</p> <p><i>Engaging City Futures: Social Media Success Factors</i> Colin Russo, Gold Coast City Council</p> <p><i>From Extension to Engagement – Application and Use of Social Media to Enhance Local Government Performance</i> Anne Howard, University of Canberra</p> <p>Facilitator: Paul Bateson</p>	<p>Measuring Governance <i>Demographics and local Government</i> Lisa Conolly Australian Bureau of Statistics</p> <p><i>Measuring Liveability: the contribution of a Census of Land Use and Employment</i> Christine Kilmartin Department of Planning and Community Development Victoria</p> <p><i>Responding to the challenges of collaboration: developing an innovative research partnership between local government and global university</i> Richie Howitt Macquarie University</p> <p>Facilitator: Mervyn Carter</p>
12.00-12.30pm	Reflection		
12.30-1.20pm	Lunch		
1.20-2.10pm	<p>Research Debate Chair: Erica Bell FOR: John Martin and Greg Hoffman AGAINST: Melissa Gibbs and Lawrence Pratchett Aerial Function Centre Jones Room</p>	<p>'Researchers are from Venus, local government is from Mars: politics, not evidence, shapes policy'</p>	
2.10-3.00pm	<p>Research Futures and wrap up Graham Sansom and Mark Evans</p>	<p>What is the future of local government research? How do we encourage practitioner involvement?</p>	