

## Innovations in Local Government

### SUNBURY OUT OF HUME CITY COUNCIL

June 2014

## 1 2014 Best Practice in Local Government Annual Conference, Sydney

As part of the review process the Panel was represented at the *Best Practice in Local Government Conference* held in Sydney held on 21 and 22 May 2014.

It was the 7th National Conference of local government organisational and development and performance improvement.

The conference provided local government professionals with valuable knowledge, extensive networking opportunities with representatives of leading councils, and inspiration on how to improve the performance of their own organisations through the lens of “*innovation*”.

The following information in relation to innovation was obtained through the network of people attending the conference.

## 2 Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government

- The Innovation in Local Government Defining the Challenge, Making the Change Report released in May 2012 refers to innovation in local government as “*new ideas that work*”, improve the lives of people in communities, and that make things easier for us”. From a sample of CEOs, it highlights the achievement of the “*vision of localism as requiring a mixture of traditional qualities of local government leadership with new methods of engagement*”.

The Report identifies future local governance needs to deliver innovative and effective citizen centred services, safeguard public sector legitimacy and community values, create a clear strategic vision for the community, win the trust of local citizens, manage complex processes of change, build strong working relationships with citizens, solve critical governance issues from climate change to the representation of women, be equal partners in governance, lead with personal and professional integrity and set the agenda of local government reform. (*Refer Bibliography at Appendix I*)

- The Innovation, Ingenuity and Initiative - The adoption and application of new ideas in the Australian Local Government Report released in September 2012 highlights that innovation is a successful adoption and application of new ideas. It is the foundation of the market economy where firms compete to attract new customers and retain existing ones, and sustain their operations by producing at a lower cost than their competitors. In this context, innovation relates to the introduction of new products, processes, and ways of doing business.
- The Report also highlights innovation can also relate to the way organisations communicate and engage with people and customers, acquiring materials, recruit and contract staff, undertake manufacture and deliver products and services to end users, and execute marketing

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and promotion plans. It can extend across the whole value chain. (*Refer Bibliography at Appendix I*)

### 3 Local Government Managers Association NSW (LGMA NSW) - Management Excellence Awards 2007 (*Refer Bibliography at Appendix I*)

The LGMA NSW recognises the use of superior management and leadership skills to achieve outstanding benefits of the organisation and/or for the community. The Awards demonstrate excellence as it applies to corporate process improvements and/or community projects and initiatives. The Awards included:

- ☐ Leadership and Management Awards given to four metropolitan councils, three rural Councils.
- ☐ Emerging Leader Awards to eight Councils.
- ☐ Partnerships for Growth Awards given to eight Councils.
- ☐ Excellence in Environmental Leadership and Sustainability Awards given to 20 Councils.
- ☐ Excellence in Asset Management Awards given to six Councils.
- ☐ Leadership Excellence in Community Services Awards given to 11 Councils.
- ☐ Leadership Excellence in Age- friendly Communities Awards given to four Councils.
- ☐ Special Project Initiative Awards given to 18 Councils.
- ☐ Excellence in Workforce Management Awards given to five Councils.

### 4 Local Government Professionals Vic (LGPro) – 2014 Innovation Awards

The following information on the 2014 LGPro Innovation Awards was obtained from contact with the CEO and from the website (<http://lgpro.com/awards/awards-for-excellence> ).

Awards were made in a number of categories to the following Councils:

- ☐ Knox City Council - Innovative Management Initiative: Injury Management Project Team, Injury Management Project.
- ☐ Casey City Council - Service Delivery Initiative: , Casey Local Laws, Leading Family Violence Intervention.

- ☐ Maroondah Council - Special Projects Initiative: A mobile accessible restroom.
- ☐ Melton City Council, Western Victoria Consulting Children Working Group, Yarra City Council (Joint Winners) - Community Partnerships Initiative: Joint Winners Melton City Council, Western Victoria Consulting Children Working Group, Engaging children in decision making guide AND Yarra City Council, Yarra Leisure Services, Yarra Leisure Community Memberships Program.
- ☐ Swan Hill Rural City Council - Community Assets and Infrastructure \$1.5 million and under: George Lay Park Council Team, George Lay Park Redevelopment.
- ☐ Mitchell Shire Council - Community Assets and Infrastructure over \$1.5 million: Vietnam Veterans Commemorative Walk.
- ☐ Swan Hill Rural City Council - Sustainability Initiative: Youth Leading the Mallee Team, Youth Leading the Mallee.
- ☐ Darebin City Council - Organisational Diversity: Community Planning & Customer Service Department, Organisational Diversity.
- ☐ Swan Hill Rural City Council - Young Achiever: Erin Raggatt.

## 5 Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)

In support of innovation, the Municipal Association of Victoria has highlighted the key challenges for local government and canvassed the two options of “business as usual” or “create a new business model”.

The key challenges highlighted by the municipal Association of Victoria include tighter public-sector funding in the future, pressure on councils to retain their identity and independence, \$2.3 billion unfunded community infrastructure gap, 67% of councils that have an accurate underlying operating deficit over the last four years, and in many councils, managers are struggling to find the time and resources to do their duties.

The “business as usual” approach where councils are incrementally year by year doing more with less is evidenced by the shaping of costs, continuing to build vendor what driven systems, purchasing price not necessarily strategic advantage, and ad hoc collaboration.

The MAV focus on creating a “new business model” is when local government increases collaboration between councils to deliver more integrated shared services, better integrates with Federal and State cloud technology systems, enables skills sharing and transfer ability, and use “cloud technology “as a contestable shared platform with optimum flexibility.