

VLGA

Strategic
Plan

2023-2027

Your Councillor Support Network

Challenges to Good Governance

This strategic plan aims to address some of the current challenges to good governance.

Specifically;

- Insufficient support for individual councillors to work effectively with challenges and conflictual situations
- Inadequate support for councils and councillors to address conflict and differences early and respectfully
- Inconsistent understanding, awareness & application of governance standards for local government that are reflective of the Act, regulation and good practice
- Little understanding within the community/'voters' of the role of local government and the responsibilities of councillors
- Structural barriers that inhibit or present challenges to local government in providing good governance

Strategic Directions - 2023 to 2027

The VLGA will pursue four strategic objectives as part of the organisation's 2023-2027 Strategic Plan.

1 Strengthen professional development for councillors

Build councillor expertise and capability

- a) Inform and educate candidates on the role of council and good governance
- b) Support councils to ensure new councillors understand and perform in their role
- c) Meet the continuing professional development needs of councillors and mayors
- d) Define and inform councillor professional development standards and accredited training
- e) Offer flexible and confidential professional support options for councillors

2 Enhance practice and thought leadership on good governance

Shape and share good governance strategy and practice

- a) Provide councillors with regular opportunities to share experience, expertise and learning
- b) Produce evidence-based, good practice-informed resources on issues relevant to the councils, councillors, and good governance
- c) Engage in research and other initiatives to build a contemporary body of knowledge on good governance in local government
- d) Lead and promote the translation of good governance practice into policy and standards
- e) Lead advocacy initiatives focussed on systemic and structural change to enable and enhance good local governance

3 Partner for Impact

Work in coalition to educate and inform

- a) Identify and engage in learning and knowledge building partnerships
- b) Partner to provide councillors with accredited training
- c) Engage with sector and technical experts to provide mediation and mentoring services
- d) Codesign and co-deliver selected and targeted professional development program mapped across the duration of the councillor term
- e) Educate communities about good local governance, responsibilities of elected representatives and voters' role as electors

4 Strengthen and extend the value of the VLGA

Support councils, councillors and communities address the challenges to good governance

- a) Refine message and strengthen the brand of the VLGA
- b) Increase the VLGA's reach to, and engagement with, councils, councillors and other interested parties
- c) Diversify and grow income to ensure the VLGA's sustainability
- d) Self-invest in, and grow, the organisational capability and capacity

VLGA Goals

- 1 Develop and sell funding proposition to government on the VLGA role in supporting councils to change culture, improve conduct, and deliver on good local governance
- 2 Develop and implement the leading candidate development program for the 2024 Victorian local government elections
- 3 Establish and deliver by 2024, advice, helpline and early intervention services for elected officials and executives working in local government
- 4 Preserve and grow the Victorian council membership base
- 5 By 2025 VLGA codevelop & commence delivery of nationally recognised capability development programs for elected representatives
- 6 Evolve VLGA into a national councillor support network by 2027
- 7 Scope a national fee for service, profit for purpose business arm

Principles Underpinning our Work

Evidence based approach - Our actions and decisions are backed by either internal or external research, and are tested through practical application and continual learning

People focused - Decisions are made to maximise value for VLGA members and the communities they serve

We will evaluate our progress by measuring:

- ✓ The extent to which elected representatives are trusted as the third tier of government (community-led) in their communities
- ✓ The promotion of the VLGA as a valuable and trusted resource for new and emerging elected representatives in local government using the 'net promoter score'.
- ✓ The contribution of the VLGA in presenting regular and meaningful insights to public discussions and decisions around local government policy and practice.