

Local Government Capability Framework

Reference Group discussion
paper

2 May 2017



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Project overview

LGNSW is undertaking a project to develop a capability framework for local government. The framework will define the core knowledge, skills and abilities expected of elected members and all local government employees. This project follows exploratory consultations with the sector in 2016 that generated great interest and enthusiasm.

LGNSW aims to design and produce the framework by July 2017 (phase 1), and develop supporting tools by December 2017 (phase 2). These tools will be designed to help councils apply the framework across a range of functions, including induction and professional development for elected members.

In phase 1, a small project team will develop design options to test with the Project Reference Group, and then develop the detailed design in consultation with council representatives through design workshops and online forums.

The proposed approach to phase 2 is to establish virtual teams led by LGNSW and comprising interested individuals from councils to develop each tool or resource. Proposed tools and resources include:

- a role description template and role description builder tool
- generic role descriptions for common roles (e.g. General Manager)
- a guide on using the capability framework in recruitment
- a guide and template for capability-based performance management
- a guide on using the capability framework for councillors' development planning
- updates to the Workplace Reform Toolkit with information on how the capability framework supports the reforms.

Outcomes

LGNSW's aim is to develop a framework that will support councils to:

- improve performance and capacity, by planning for the right mix of skills to deliver on business plans and improving individual capability through performance feedback and development
- attract and retain highly capable people by better articulating job requirements including in job ads and providing opportunities for employees to move within and across councils
- reinforce the message that a joint effort is required to achieve outcomes for the community, through a common framework of capabilities for workforce and elected members
- provide broader career options and develop the next generation of local government leaders

- provide a common basis for professional development to build the capability of people in local government.

NSW councils will choose whether to use the framework in the context of their own management strategies. However, the benefits to individual councils and to the sector will increase with large scale adoption of the framework.

Current status

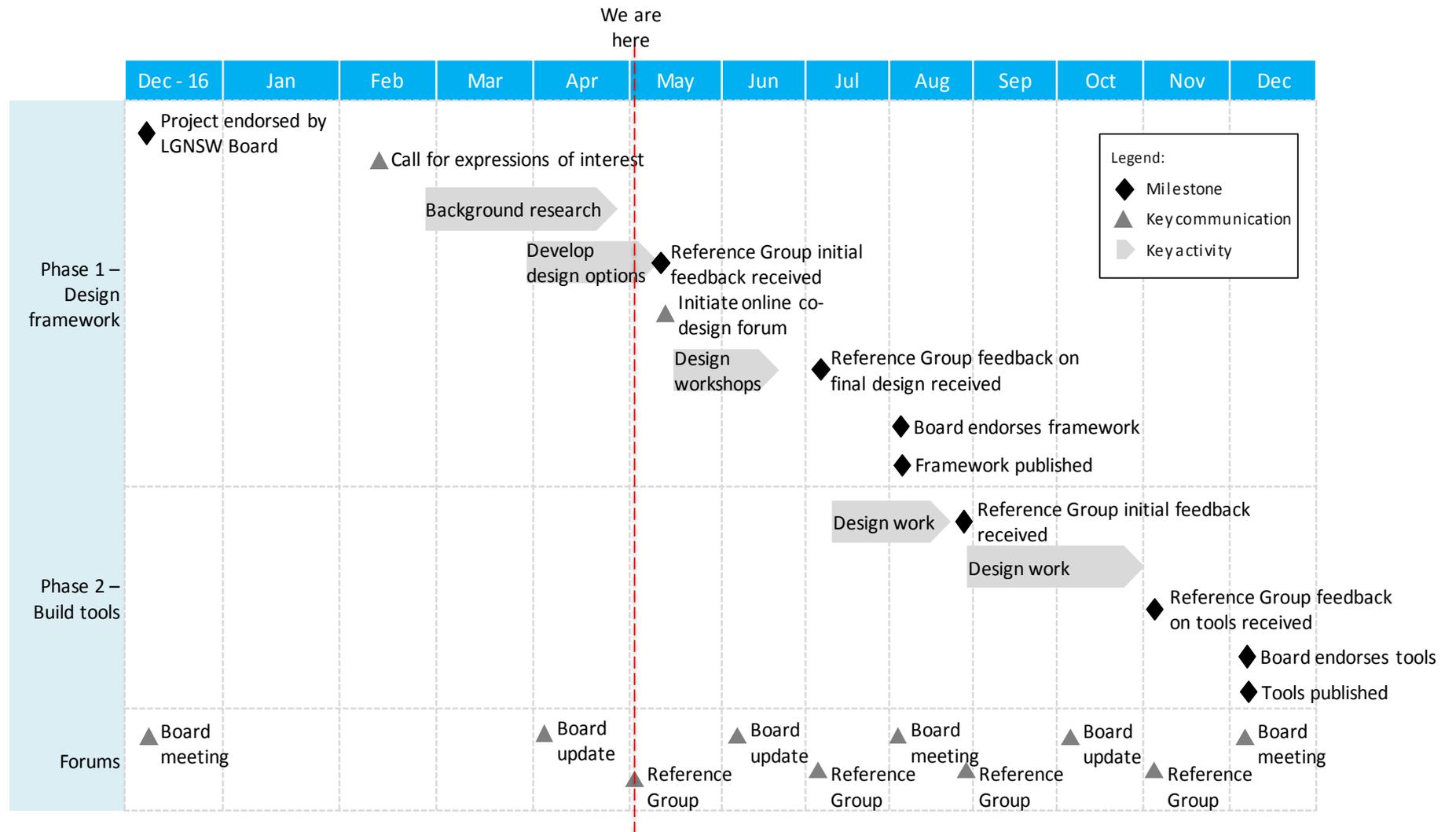
LGNSW appointed a project team following the LGNSW Board's endorsement of the project.

The project is led by Sarah Artist, Senior Manager Innovation & Capacity for LGNSW, working with Jo Grisard (Principal of Grisard Consulting) as technical lead and two HR consultants with experience in organisational development and talent management across a range of state and local government organisations, consultancies and not-for-profits.

To prepare for the design process, the project team completed some background research on the workforce profiles of a sample of councils across NSW, a sample of position descriptions and the capability frameworks currently used by some councils in NSW. The team has developed some initial design options for discussion with the Project Reference Group at its first meeting on 2 May 2017.

Project milestones

LGNSW aims to design a local government capability framework by July 2017 (phase 1), and develop supporting tools by the end of 2017 (phase 2).



Consultation approach

There must be significant input and involvement from councils if the framework is to reflect local government needs and, ultimately, be accepted and adopted by councils. The proposed consultation approach recognises the importance of having mayors, councillors and general managers engaged and driving implementation together with HR professionals, and of including the many 'voices' who have expressed an interest in participating.

In February 2017 LGNSW issued invitations for councils to participate in developing the capability framework and associated tools. Over 80 responses were received, with 14 indicating an interest in a secondment to the project team, 63 wishing to participate in a working group or forum, and 66 wishing to comment on draft versions of the framework or supporting tools.

A number of Sydney and regional workshops will be conducted to maximise input from a wide range of councils. An online co-design forum will also be set up on the Mindhive platform to facilitate input and feedback from a broad range of stakeholders. Mindhive is an online collaboration space designed for collaborative policy development and co-design.

Invitations to participate in particular forums or working groups will be issued closer to the time. Further information on the consultation approach is outlined on the following pages.

Principles of communication

Project communications will help councils to understand both the benefits and the challenges of implementing a capability framework, and the range of supports available. The project team will seek to:

- communicate regularly with key contacts across the sector using existing communication channels, wherever possible
- work with the LGNSW Capacity Building Committee and Project Reference Group to involve mayors, councillors and general managers in the project
- involve those who have expressed an interest in participating in the initiative through a series of design workshops and through Mindhive, an online co-design forum
- equip local government HR and governance leads with the key messages to communicate effectively with employees and elected members in their council
- inform and support HR professionals and make interactive tools and resources easily accessible on the LGNSW website to help them manage the implementation effort locally.

Communication channels

A range of communication channels will be used to reach key stakeholders, depending on their needs and nature of involvement (summarised below).

	Reference Group meetings	LGNSW Board & committee	Design workshops	Mindhive online forum	Conferences / Seminars	HR and L&D Network forums	Email	LGNSW Weekly newsletter	LGNSW website
LGNSW Board		✓							
Capacity Building Committee		✓							
Project Reference Group	✓			✓					
EOI respondents			✓	✓			✓		
2016 scoping project participants				✓			✓		
Mayors	✓	✓						✓	
Councillors					✓			✓	
GMs and senior management	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓
HR staff					✓	✓			✓
People managers					✓				✓
Employees					✓				✓

Calendar of communications

This communications calendar outlines the timing, channels and key messages for planned communications until the end of June 2017.

Event	Stakeholders	Date	Communication channel	Purpose and messages
1	Scoping project participants	6 April	Email	Inform scoping project participants of progress and the proposed consultation approach, and ask that they update the project team on any local efforts to implement a capability framework since the 2016 consultations
2	EOI respondents	17 April	Email	Inform EOI respondents of progress and the proposed consultation approach and thank them for their interest and willingness to contribute information. Signal that the project team will soon be in touch to invite them to participate in workshops and an online co-design forum, and explore secondment opportunities.
3	LGNSW members	28 April	LGNSW Weekly newsletter	Improve awareness of the project and generate interest across a broad audience; inform readers of progress and the proposed consultation approach; share contact information and invite participation.
4	HR managers	28 April	LGNSW employment law seminar flyer	Improve awareness of the project; inform HR managers of progress and the proposed consultation approach; share contact information and invite participation in workshops and an online co-design forum.
5	Project Reference Group	2 May	Reference Group meeting	Establish role and responsibilities of the Project Reference Group; bring members up to speed on the scope of the project, consultation approach and progress to date; seek input and advice on the high-level design options.
6	Capacity Building Committee	4 May	Capacity Building Committee meeting	Update members on progress to date; seek input and advice on the high-level design options.
7	Female councillors and staff	6 May	ALGWA Conference	Communicate the benefits of a capability framework for personal development and for the local government sector; improve awareness of the project and generate interest across a broad audience.
8	EOI respondents	23 May - TBC	Design workshop – Bathurst – TBC	Bring workshop participants up to speed on the scope of the project, consultation approach and progress to date; seek feedback on the high-level design options; facilitate collaboration on detailed design elements.

9	LGNSW members	26 May	LGNSW Weekly newsletter	Improve awareness of the project and generate interest across a broad audience; inform readers of progress and consultations; share contact information and invite participation.
10	EOI respondents	Late May - TBC	Design workshop 3 - location TBC	Bring workshop participants up to speed on the scope of the project, consultation approach and progress to date; seek feedback on the high-level design options; facilitate collaboration on detailed design elements.
11	LGNSW Board	2 June	Board meeting paper	Provide the Board with an update on progress, early advice from the Project Reference group, and the consultation approach.
12	EOI respondents	8 June - TBC	Design workshop - Sydney	Bring workshop participants up to speed on the scope of the project, consultation approach and progress to date; seek feedback on the high-level design options; facilitate collaboration on detailed design elements.
13	L&D advisors	6 June	L&D network quarterly forum – 90 minute session	Bring participants up to speed on the scope of the project, consultation approach and progress to date; present the high-level design; seek feedback on proposed tools and facilitate discussion on how L&D advisors would use the framework and tools; invite participation in phase 2.
14	HR managers	7 June	HR network quarterly forum – 30 minute session	Bring participants up to speed on the scope of the project, consultation approach and progress to date; present the high-level design; facilitate discussion on how HR managers would use the framework and tools; invite participation in Mindhive forum and in phase 2.
15	EOI respondents	15 June	Design workshop 5 - Wollongong	Bring workshop participants up to speed on the scope of the project, consultation approach and progress to date; seek feedback on the high-level design options; facilitate collaboration on detailed design elements.
16	Governance professionals	28, 29 June	Good Governance Forum	Improve awareness of the project; inform governance managers of progress and consultations; share contact information and invite participation in online co-design forum.
17	LGNSW members	30 June	LGNSW Weekly newsletter	Improve awareness of the project and generate interest across a broad audience; inform readers of the timeframe for publication of the framework and the approach for phase 2; share contact information and invite participation in phase 2.