Strengthening local government in NSW

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Corin Moffat - Manager, Innovation and Development

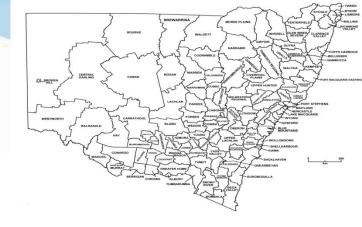


Overview

- Understanding NSW Local Government
- Division of Local Government
- NSW improvement framework
 - Integrated Planning and Reporting
 - Promoting Better Practice
- Future improvements



Understanding NSW Local Government



- Total NSW Population = 7.92 million.
- 152 Local Government areas and 14 County Councils.
- 38 (25%) councils are in Sydney
- 75% of NSW population resides in Greater Metropolitan Sydney



Understanding NSW Local Government



Councils are different and serve unique communities:

- Size 5.7km² (Hunters Hill) to 53,508.6 km² (Central Darling)
- Population 1,261 (Urana) to over 307,000 (Blacktown)
- Density 0.00013km² (Waverley) to 26.58km²/capita (Central Darling)
- Population Growth -1.96% (Bourke) to 3.45% (Auburn)
- Indigenous pop'n 0.11% (Ku-ring-gai) to 59.52% (Brewarrina)
- NESB pop'n 0.8% (Guyra) to 49.7% (Auburn)
- Income \$5.9 m (Urana) to \$457m (Sydney)
- Employees –30 (Urana) to 1,632 (Sydney)



The Division's purpose

Purpose

To strengthen the Local Government sector



Outcome

Successful councils engaging and supporting their communities



Integrated Planning and reporting





Promoting Better Practice

Promoting Better Practice in local government is a *review and improvement* process.

The program aims to improve the performance and sustainability of councils.



Objectives

- 1. To assist in strengthening the local government sector through promoting continuous improvement
- To provide councils with feedback on areas for possible improvement and further development, and assist in developing solutions
- 3. To encourage and facilitate innovation through promotion of better practices
- 4. To foster a cooperative approach to working with councils to promote strong relationships within the sector
- 5. To identify trends and issues arising from reviews to support legislative and policy changes for the local government sector.



What do we mean by better practice?

Better practice

- Beyond or above minimum compliance requirements and good practice indicators.
- Innovative and/or very effective.
- Contributes to continuous improvement within the sector.

In need of improvement or further development

- Does not satisfactorily meet minimum compliance and good practice indicators and may impact negatively on council operations.
- Significant improvement initiatives that are in progress and which need to be continued.



Key steps of a review

Preparing: Council self-assessment

Assessing: Understanding local circumstances

Checking: Reality check / visit to council

Analysing: How can the council improve / develop?

Reporting: Feedback, action plan and monitoring



Performance and efficiency drivers

- Health check of a cross section of procedures, practices and systems
- Improvement feedback provided on councils performance measurement systems (IP&R)
- Action plan guides the required improvements
- DLG provides information, tools and resources
- DLG has targeted initiatives to improve practice in a range of areas.



Current status

- All 152 councils to participate in a review by 2015
- 110 completed reviews
- 11 underway
- 31 councils remaining
- Most county councils will also be reviewed



In retrospect

- 92 PBP reports examined in 2011
- Improvements were identified across a range of areas:
 - 3167 recommendations = average of 21 per council
 - Ranged from 1 to 75 recommendations
- Limited better and noteworthy practice examples
- Self assessment checklist focuses on compliance



Better practices

Better Practice Examples	Number of Councils
Social & community planning	7
Noteworthy Examples	Number of Councils
• DA processes	13
Complaints handling	10
Social & community planning	10



Areas to improve

Areas for Further Development	Number of Councils
 Risk Management 	66
 Internal Audit 	65
 Asset Management 	64
 Financial Management 	63
 Strategic Planning 	61
 Workforce planning 	59
 Enforcement 	53





STRONG COMMUNITIES THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS

EFFICIENT AND
EFFECTIVE SERVICE
DELIVERY

QUALITY GOVERNANCE FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

APPROPRIATE STRUCTURES

STRONG RELATIONSHIPS

- Facilitate greater resource sharing and cooperation between councils.
- Establish Local Government as an employer of choice.
- 3 Encourage and facilitate innovation.
- 4 Enable a range of operating frameworks to be utilised to achieve efficient service delivery.
- 5 Incorporate into the proposed Local Government Act review the recommendations and findings from relevant Destination 2036 actions.
- 6 Ensure the legislation provides flexibility and reduces red tape.
- 7 Ensure strong and effective local governance.

- 8 Review the revenue system to ensure greater flexibility and self reliance.
- 9 Develop strategies that maximise opportunities to secure funding from other levels of government.
- 10 Establish a range of funding models to enable the long term maintenance, replacement and creation of different classes of assets.

- 1 Develop a number of different structural models for local government.
- 12 Encourage and facilitate voluntary amalgamations and boundary alterations
- 3 More clearly define the functions, roles and responsibilities of Local and State Government.
- 44 Align State and Local Government planning frameworks.
- 15 Negotiate a new Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA).
- 16 Recognise Local Government as a legitimate and important sphere of government.

Future improvements

- More effective identification and sharing of better practice
- Sector-led improvement
- Capacity building opportunities
- Opportunities for peer involvement
- Performance Measurement Framework



THANK YOU

