



This document summarises the key messages from the first LoGoNet meeting held on 2nd November 2016.

## 1 WHY DO WE NEED A NETWORK?

### 1.1 The state of the sector

- Local government is important but forgotten
- The sector is under great stress. People in the industry increasingly felt like the "deer in the headlights" at a time of great change
- Local government is losing the argument in relation to issues such as metropolitan governance but it is hard to find a place to discuss this amid all the change
- Need for a stronger focus on fresh thinking and innovation.

### 1.2 The need for practical research

- The need for more research in the sector that involves both academics and practitioners
- Need increased opportunities to learn from each other and to tap into insights of practitioners elsewhere in Australia and overseas. Structured exchange of information around key issues can save millions.

### 1.3 Better coordination of existing networks

- There are lots of things happening already but these efforts are often fragmented and therefore delivering results only to a limited extent.

### 1.4 Influence government policy agendas

- More can and should be done to draw together the knowledge and expertise across local government in order to lead policy development.

## 2 WHAT SHOULD THIS NETWORK LOOK LIKE?

### 2.1 A "network of networks"

- A group of organisations working together
- Follow the example of the LG Professionals' "Resource Hub" and other networks, e.g., the NSW peri-urban network.

### 2.2 An effective national multi-sectoral community of interest

- We need to develop a community of interest in local government, but not one that only involves people in local government
- Build a network of people from different areas of local governance to provide content and expertise.

### 2.3 A thought leadership model

- Be a thought leadership network whose members prepare short issues papers as basis for conversations and policy development.

## 3 WHAT SHOULD THIS NETWORK DO?

### 3.1 Provide a platform for sharing information and ideas

- Reduce the isolation of local government practitioners
- Link and integrate existing local government networks and organisations



- Provide a space to discuss major issues, especially those in which the sector is currently marginalised
- Provide the ability to log into a network that can develop policy agendas in conversations with government
- Provide and share innovative approaches which have practical benefits: what we can do, what ideas can we borrow?

### **3.2 Promote benefits of and provide a platform for practical research**

- Bring together local government practitioners and academic researchers
- Support/undertake practice-led research and act as a clearing house for this material, including research undertaken by other parties
- Present a loud, principled voice to key decision-makers on the benefits of supporting research - as well as a quieter voice in the ear of practitioners.

### **3.3 Influence decision-making**

- Promote the value and importance of local government, especially to decision-makers
- Tap into the key issues people are talking about and have a role in the national conversation
- Influence decision-making by developing a number of position papers on specific issues which could be rolled out systematically
- Ensure strategic planning and policy development are informed by research linked to practical outcomes on the ground.

### **3.4 Engage with the private sector**

- Include a range of private sector organisations as members and key partners.

## **4 WHAT FACTORS WILL AFFECT THE FORMATION OF A NEW NETWORK?**

- There is a real appetite to do new things and to think differently
- A lot is happening already, and there is the potential to build on existing structures and networks
- The network does not have to be very complicated, at least initially
- Eventually however we will need people on the ground to provide practical support, specifically people with the technical skills to service the network
- Consequently the network will need financial resources from grants or other sources
- We also need to learn from the examples of other successful and unsuccessful networks.

## **5 WHAT ARE THE KEY STEPS IN ESTABLISHING THE LOGONET NETWORK?**

- Distribute meeting outcomes and an invitation to participate to attendees and those on the apologies list
- Invite new participants including interstate members to increase the size of the steering committee
- Follow-up contacts from the meeting, including those from the private sector
- Investigate the options to hold LoGoNet meetings interstate as well as a second meeting in NSW
- Establish a website, email address and social media presence (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter etc)
- Investigate options for virtual network meetings
- Define in more detail the scope of LoGoNet's activities over the next 12 months.