



## *Hit the ground running*

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### **Webinar 1 – Roles and responsibilities**

The Hon Wendy Tuckerman MP, Minister for Local Government

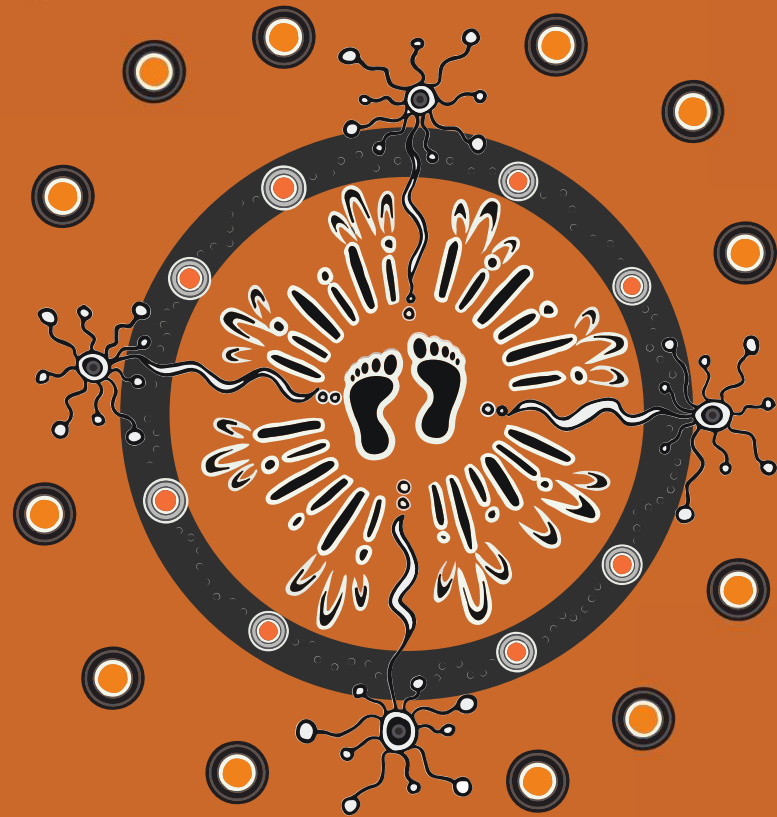
Melanie Hawyes, Group Deputy Secretary Crown Lands and Local Government

Ally Dench, Executive Director, Local Government

John Davies, Manager Council Governance

# Welcome

Acknowledgement of Country



# Housekeeping

- Cameras on, microphones muted
- Time for questions after presentations
- Post questions in Team chat, or raise hand during question time
- Closed captions available
  - click on the 3 dots at the top of your screen
  - bring up the drop down list of options
  - click on ‘Turn on live captions’
- If the sound or video is breaking up
  - exit the webinar and re-join
  - turn off video
- Presentation is being recorded

# Roles and Responsibilities



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# Upcoming Webinars

Sat 5 Feb	<p><b>Roles and Responsibilities</b></p> <p>Participants will understand everything councillors need to know to achieve positive community outcomes and understand the context in which councils operate. Participants will understand their council's role in the local community, the different roles of a councillor and how to manage the challenges involved.</p>	Sat 19 March	<p><b>Working together</b></p> <p>Participants will learn how to create a healthy, inclusive and respectful workplace that is fundamental for creating a successful organisation.</p>
Sat 12 Feb	<p><b>Making the most of meetings</b></p> <p>Participants will understand the purpose, process and expectations for council meetings and how to maximise the benefits.</p>	Sat 26 March	<p><b>Metro Strategic Planning</b></p> <p>Participants will receive an introduction and overview and gain an understanding of their responsibilities as a councillor when it comes to strategic planning for metro areas, including the roles of the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, the Greater Sydney Commission and the Western Parkland City Authority.</p>
Sat 19 Feb	<p><b>Integrated Planning and Reporting</b></p> <p>Participants will understand how to engage with their community, set the long-term direction of council and ensure that money and other resources are used effectively. Participants will understand their obligations under Integrated Planning and Reporting, its effectiveness as a planning tool and be updated regarding general strengths and areas for development.</p>	Sat 2 April	<p><b>Local and Regional Strategic Planning</b></p> <p>Participants will receive an introduction and overview and gain an understanding of their responsibilities as a councillor when it comes to local and regional strategic planning.</p>
Sat 26 Feb	<p><b>Internal Audit</b></p> <p>Participants will learn about the new mandatory local government risk management and internal audit framework with particular emphasis on how audit, risk and improvement committees will support councillors to perform their roles as the strategic drivers and decision makers of councils.</p>	Sat 9 April	<p><b>Introduction to Crown land, native title, and Aboriginal land rights</b></p> <p>Participants will receive an introduction to Crown land and council requirements under the Crown Land Management Act 2016 and gain an understanding of the Native Title Act 1993, and Aboriginal land rights under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983.</p>
Sat 5 March	<p><b>The governing body and financial management of councils</b></p> <p>Participants will gain an understanding of their legislative responsibilities in relation to accounting practice, financial management and financial reporting of councils.</p>	<b><u>Easter Saturday</u></b>	
Sat 12 March	<p><b>Appropriate conduct and ethical decision-making</b></p> <p>Participants will understand the Model Code of Conduct and how to protect and enhance their individual and council's credibility and reputation through appropriate conduct.</p>	Sat 23 April	<p><b>Water: Make it your business</b></p> <p>Participants will develop a greater understanding of their additional responsibilities when councils provide essential water services. Using case studies and interviews the seminar will illustrate a range of water issues that councillors will encounter when making decisions about drinking water, recycled water and sewage.</p>
		Sat 30 April	<p><b>Ongoing Professional Development</b></p> <p>Participants will learn what it takes to be successful in the role, as well as understand what their individual training and support requirements are and how they can undertake further professional development during their term as a councillor.</p>



# Session Overview

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Local Government in NSW

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Guiding Principles

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Understanding What Councils do

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Understanding Roles in Local Government

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Balancing Roles and Responsibilities

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Building Good Working Relationships



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# Menti Survey

*Who has had previous experience as a councillor  
and who is new to the role of a councillor?*

Go to [www.menti.com](https://www.menti.com) and use the code  
**1478 7604**



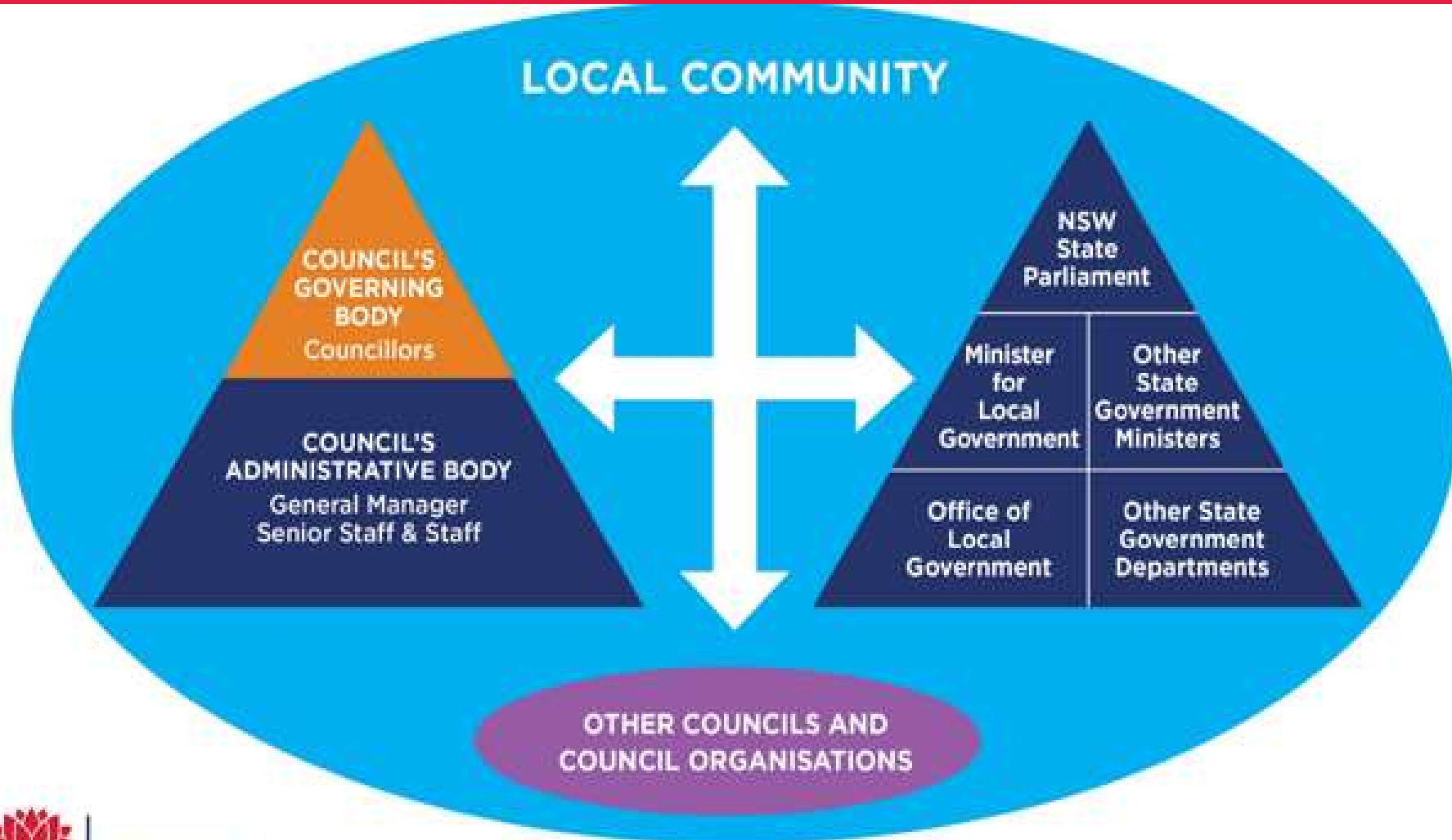
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# Local Government in NSW





# Local Government in NSW





# MENTI DISCUSSION

**For new councillors:**

What are three important things you know your council does to deliver outcomes for the community?

Go to [www.menti.com](http://www.menti.com) and use the code

**1478 7604**



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# MENTI DISCUSSION

**For returning councillors:**

What are three important things your council does which may surprise some community members?

Go to [www.menti.com](http://www.menti.com) and use the code

**1478 7604**



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# Guiding Principles





# Achieving outcomes through civic leadership



Important Role

Decisions impact community

Understand roles and responsibilities

Understand how council operates

Dysfunction occurs when roles and responsibilities are not understood



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# Guiding principles

Strong effective representation, leadership, planning and decision-making

Provide best value for community

Use integrated planning and reporting to meet community needs and achieve outcomes and continuous improvement

Work with other councils and NSW Government to achieve community outcomes

Manage land and assets to affordably meet current and future community need

Work with others to secure services to meet community need

Act fairly, ethically and without bias in the interests of the community

Be a responsible employer

Understanding  
what councils do





# Functions under Local Government Act

Services

- eg waste, community services

Regulation

- eg development approvals

Enforcement

- eg prosecute offences

Revenue

- eg rates, charges, investments

Administration

- eg staff employment, financial reports

Ancillary

- eg compulsory land acquisition



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# FUNCTIONS UNDER OTHER ACTS

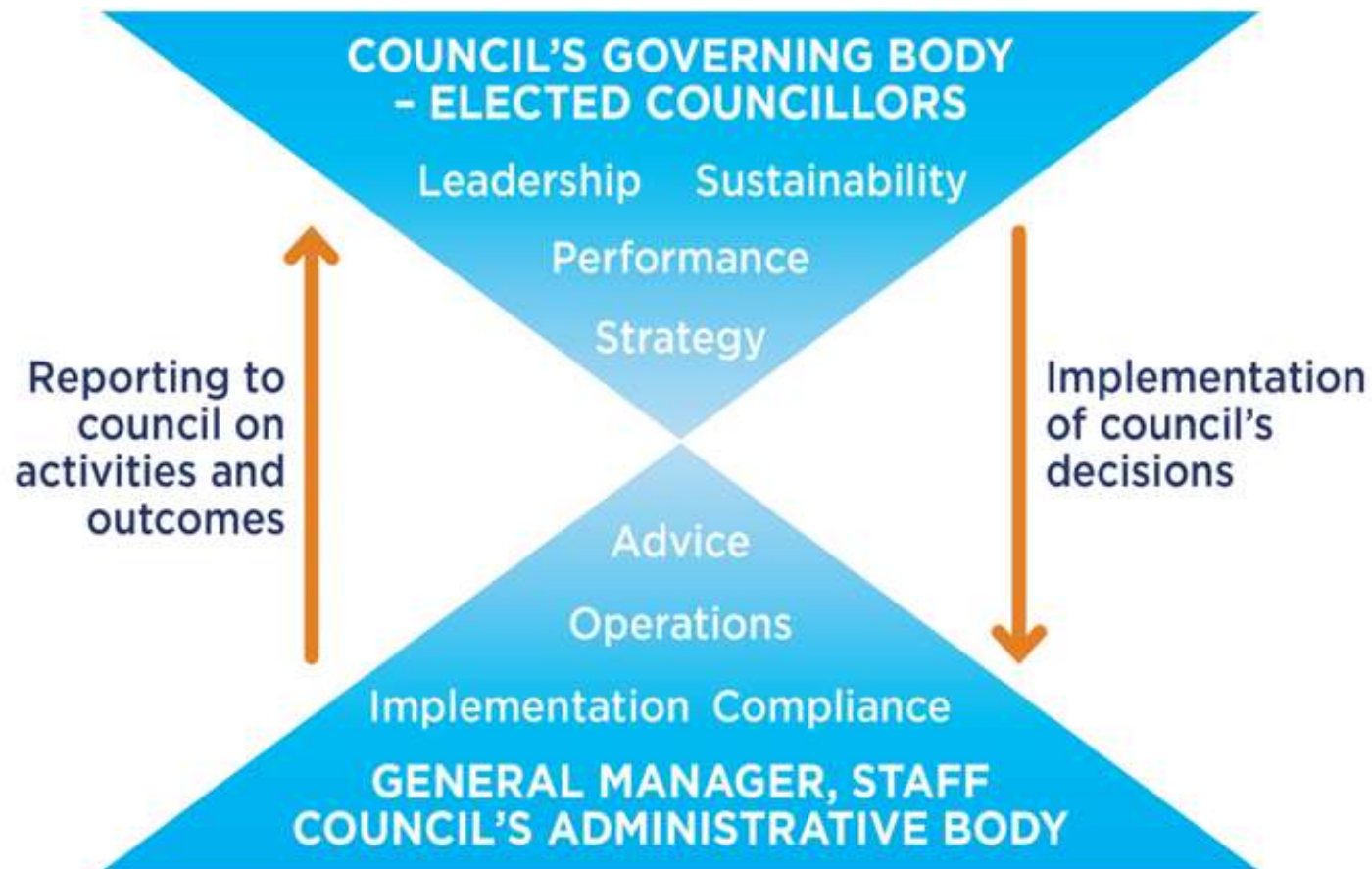
- Safety of children around swimming pools  
→ *Swimming Pools Act 1992*
- Environmental planning and development assessment  
→ *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*
- Control of cats and dogs  
→ *Companion Animals Act 1998*
- Local roads management  
→ *Roads Act 1993*



# Understanding Roles in Local Government



# Council Structure and Key Relationships





# Menti Question



What is your  
role as a  
councillor?

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code **1478 7604**



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# Role of a Councillor

## The Act prescribes:

- a **collective role** of the governing bodies of councils, and
- an **individual role** of councillors as members of the governing body



# Role of Governing Body

Direct and control council affairs in consultation with GM

Provide effective civic leadership

Ensure financial sustainability of the council

Ensure compliance with statutory principles

Develop and endorse IP&R

Ensure optimal allocation of council's resources

Monitor service delivery and performance of the council

Support regulatory functions





# Cont...

Appoint GM  
and monitor  
performance

Determine  
senior staff  
positions in  
organisation  
structure

Consult  
community  
stakeholders  
and keep them  
informed

Ensure the  
council acts  
honestly,  
efficiently and  
appropriately



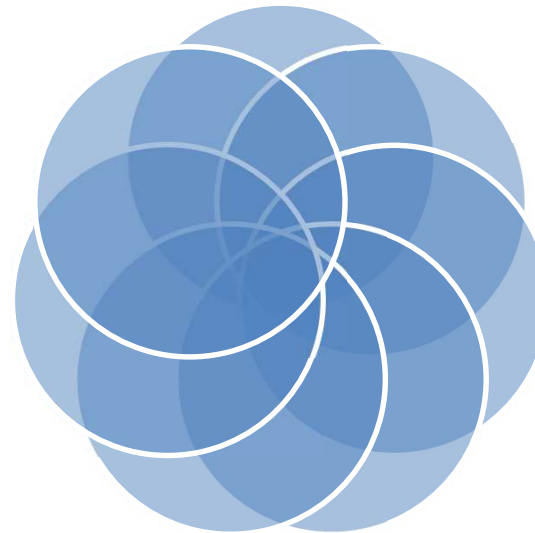
# Role of Individual Councillors

Be an active contributing member of governing body

Acquire and maintain skills necessary to perform role

Uphold and accurately represent policies and decisions of governing body

Facilitate communication between community and governing body



Make considered and well informed decisions

Participate in integrated planning and reporting (IP&R) development

Represent collective interests of the community



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# Understanding your Role

***“The real challenge as a councillor is to try to stay just at the right height in your helicopter – high enough to look at the big picture and not be bogged down in the details but low enough so that you don’t lose touch with what people need.”***

Mathew Dickerson  
Mayor of Dubbo City Council



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# Role of Mayor

Leader and council spokesperson

Advances community cohesion

Makes urgent policy decisions between council meetings

Chairs council meetings

Ensures consistent delivery of strategic plans

Promotes stakeholder partnerships and community engagement

Performs civic and ceremonial functions

Represents council on regional organisations and intergovernmental forums

Key connection between council and general manager



# Role of General Manager

Manages day-to-day operations

Implements council's decisions

Advises and supports IP&R development, delivery and community consultation

Provides councillors with adequate information and support

Appoints, directs and dismisses staff

Implements workforce strategy

Performs any other functions delegated by governing body





# General Manager Performance

## **Appointment contract**

Appointed by councillors, under standard contract

Performance agreement should reflect:

- delivery program targets
- mutual understanding of expectations

## **Monitoring and review**

Performance reviewed against pre-determined criteria

Mayor leads review process in consultation with councillors

Many councils engage external facilitators to assist with review process



## Balancing Roles and Responsibilities





# Menti Question - Scenario

You have been elected to a council which needs to increase revenue in order to fund the commitments made in the Community Strategic Plan

**1. What challenges might you face as a councillor in this situation?**

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# Menti Question - Scenario

You have been elected to a council which needs to increase revenue in order to fund the commitments made in the Community Strategic Plan

## 2. How can you deal with the challenges?

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# Responses

## What challenges might you face as a councillor in this situation?

- Being elected by a small number in the community but required to represent interests of all
- Effectively communicating a council decision you don't agree with
- Making unpopular decisions in best interests of whole community

## How can you deal with the challenges?

- Communicate clearly with residents the reasons for the decisions
- Ensure effective community consultation processes are in place before decisions are made
- Regular communication to community on council matters
- Follow proper process – have good community strategic plan in place



Building Good  
Working  
Relationships





# Menti Question

**What does a good working relationship  
between a councillor and general manager look  
like?**

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# Indicators of a good working relationship





# Summary

## Be an effective leader of your local community by:

- setting vision and direction for your community without getting involved in day to day council operations
- balancing advocacy role with teamwork with other councillors to make decisions benefitting whole community
- balancing short and long term community needs and interests
- fostering and maintaining positive internal and external relationships



# Questions

