

Learning and Development Strategy Framework

Vision

To strengthen governance and increase trust, accountability and integrity of the sector.

Mission

The Local Government Sector is committed to championing governance through education, advocacy and engagement with elected members, local authority members, officers and the broader community.

The Local Government and Regional Development Unit of the Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet (CM&C), as the sector regulator, has a role in prevention, guidance and building governance capability.

Context

The Local Government sector in the NT is a young and developing sector that faces a number of challenges including vast areas, limited infrastructure, small populations and lack of economies of scale. Its strengths include diversity, cultural grounding and a strong sense of community.

Skill levels, experience and access to resources and support vary significantly across councils. It is difficult to recruit and retain people, locals in small communities often perform multiple roles, training and learning opportunities might not be readily accessible. In order to build the sector it is important that the sector develops its own, attracts representatives, harnesses the commitment and knowledge of local people, and develops a reputation that attracts the skills needed to deliver on a complex and evolving mandate.

Stakeholders

Primary audience

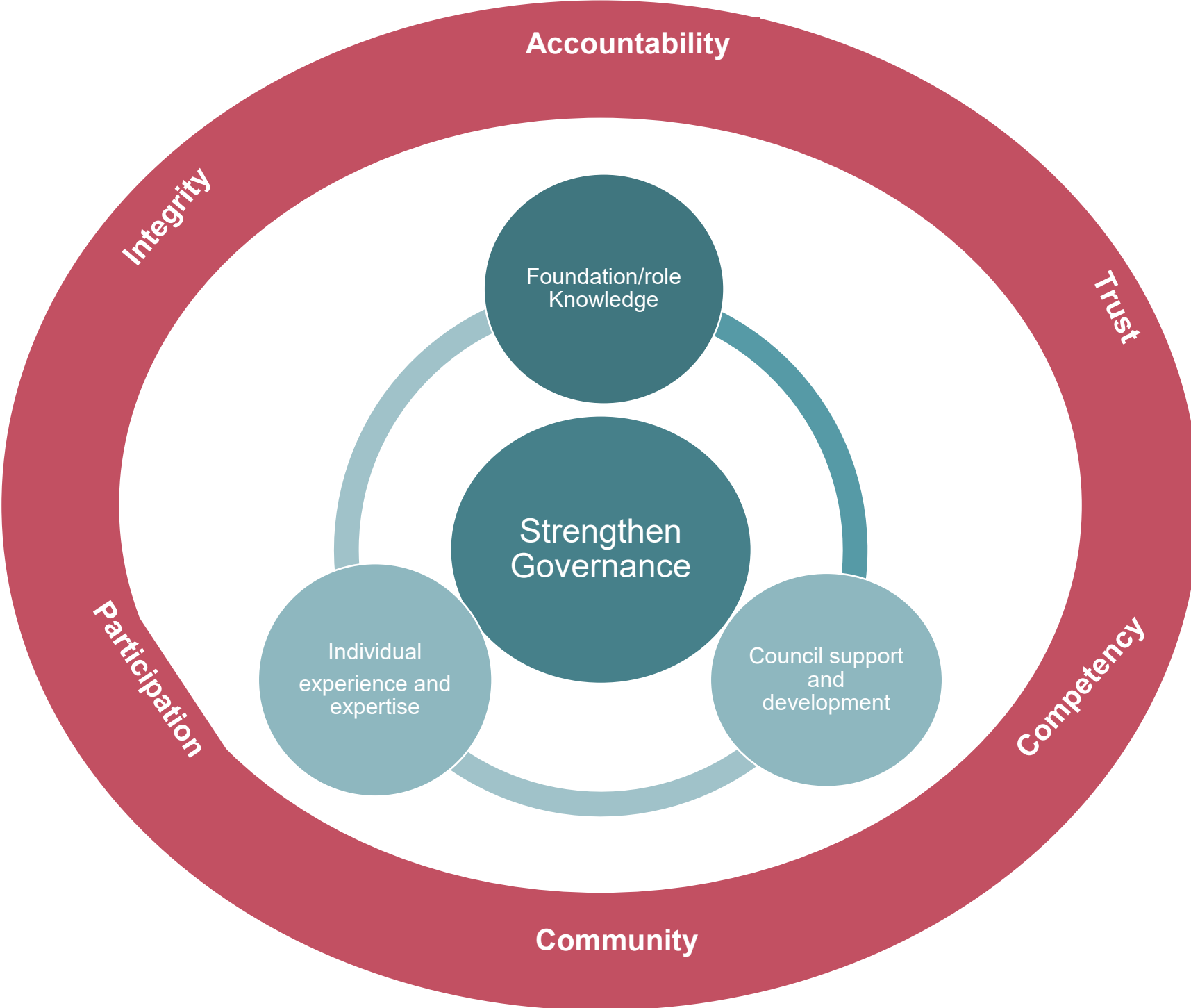
- Elected Members/Councils – The strategy will focus on developing essential training modules as a foundation for furthering the skills and capability of elected members and their collective work as a council. It will promote continuous learning through support, information provision and the development of governance networks and pathways.

Secondary Audience

- Local Authority members – Local Authority members are an integral link to the community and promote the integrity of local government. Support for their role will develop in response to the current Local Authority Review and through a further tranche of courses tailored to local authority members.
- Council officers – The learning and development strategy is intended to support the work of councils and promote a greater understanding of the role of elected councils and the roles and responsibilities of the council as a group of elected members, the operational roles within council and the interaction between these roles.

Key objectives

- Map principles and key pillars in a learning and development strategy.
- Identify the broad framework of elements across the sector that will strengthen governance.
- Articulate the role of CM&C in supporting and building governance capability.
- Provide a resource for local government councils to adapt in developing tailored learning and development plans for their elected members.



| | Foundation /role knowledge | Council Support and Development | Individual experience and expertise |
|-------------------------------|---|---|---|
| | (Understanding of role, information and advice and baseline courses for elected members) | (In role support within and for council and to enhance team coherence) | (Import of individual skills and experience, respect and acknowledge diversity and unique contributions, committing to continuous learning) |
| Delivering and ongoing | Establish governance framework - New <i>Local Government Act</i> and Regulations introduced | Set expectations and provide support and guidance – Chair and CEO | Identify and build on skills and knowledge |
| | Develop courses for compulsory professional development under the Act. | Use committees to develop skill and specialisation | Raise cross-cultural awareness and provide formal training and opportunities. |
| | Provide continuous access through online portal | Share and apply best practice within each council. | |
| | Provide supporting materials for induction | | Draw on networks to improve knowledge |
| | Induction and first meeting organised by each council. | Clarify internal support - Council staff (governance officers, internal training and information provision) | Maintain relationships with key organisations providing governance training and support. |
| | Provide an introduction to the sector through the LGANT Symposium. | | |
| Developing | Deliver compulsory course materials face to face in an appropriate way | Review role and outcomes in response to community engagement/feedback. | Understand roles, duties and behaviours as a council member |
| | | Expand core training to Local Authority members | Register training needs and identify priorities |
| | | Strengthen networks to tap into best practice and new thinking | Seek further governance training and consolidation - ICAC/AICD/ORIC/ Governance Institute |
| | | Develop advocacy and representation through strong connections to community and environmental scanning. | Conduct audit of skills and experience |
| | | Benchmark other sector approaches and draw on learnings | Experience and skills developed through the course of the term |
| | Adapt and improve modules after initial phase and feedback. | Refresh and review suite of learning opportunities. | Work across sector to co-design learning and development pathways. |
| | | Identify leadership training and development opportunities | Resource processes to identify, develop and support leaders |
| | | | Promote leadership in sector, best practice, innovation |
| Aspiring | Undertake compulsory courses – all elected members | Collaborate and share skills and knowledge (within and across councils) | Establish clearing house of training and development opportunities |
| | | Mentor and pair up councillors with other councillors for support/establish mentor program | |
| | | Plan for succession/encourage increased participation and nominations | Introduce accredited courses |
| | Expand training - Candidate training (future?) | Evaluate improved governance outcomes | |

Learning and Development Overarching Framework

The framework recognises key pillars in supporting and developing governance capability and the elements that will support these, acknowledging that CM&C, LGANT, councils and other stakeholders all contribute and cooperate in delivering the elements.

| Policy Pillars | Short term (within 2 years) | Medium term - 4 years | Long term - 8 years | Destination |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| Promote democratic involvement and candidacy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote elections. Legislative amendments to support maximum participation. Your voice, your community ongoing education campaign to promote participation. | Your voice, your community | Training for prospective candidates | Improved community engagement with local government and increases in electoral participation and nominations. |
| Establish governance framework and guidance. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Local Government Act and Regulations introduced. Templates and guidelines developed | Review legislative/regulatory framework and communicate approach. | | Clarity of operating parameters and more efficient and effective functioning. Management of risk and expectations. |
| Provide induction and baseline capability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource LGANT symposium. Provide induction materials and first meeting guidance. Develop Courses for Compulsory Professional Development under the Act. Deliver or support the delivery of course materials face to face to each council in an appropriate way. Ensure all Members complete Mandatory training. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapt and improve modules after initial phase and feedback. Expand core training to Local Authority members. | Evaluate improved governance outcomes. Refresh and review suite of learning opportunities. | Improved governance and decision making resulting in better community outcomes. |
| Ensure continued support and review | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide continuous access to professional development materials through online portal. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support through LG Questions and LG Law. Feedback on reporting and compliance issues. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular newsletters and updates. | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build capacity, resilience and responsiveness of sector. Develop high standards and best practice. |
| Increase access to ongoing professional development and skill acquisition | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> With LGANT and councils, develop sector specific and technical knowledge and encourage exchanges. Establish links to other governance training and development - ICAC/AICD/ORIC/ Governance Institute. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build on foundation training to articulate into further learning. Promote leadership in sector, best practice, innovation, challenges, employer of choice. Develop leadership resources and identify leadership training and development opportunities. | Establish clearing house of training and development opportunities. | Enhance reputation and effectiveness of sector, increase individual satisfaction and commitment, strengthen individual contributions. |

CM&C Learning and Development Strategy

CM&C regulates the sector through prevention, support, and intervention. The regulatory approach needs to incorporate both capability and compliance. CM&C is committed to improving governance capability through a commitment to delivering the following elements.

| | Foundation development | Council Support and Development | Individual/Capacity Development |
|------------------------|---|---|---|
| delivering and ongoing | Establish governance framework - New <i>Local Government Act</i> and Regulations introduced | Support through LG Questions and LG Law | Produce resources and information to support continuous learning. |
| | Develop Courses for Compulsory Professional Development under the Act. | Advise through advice line | Work with councils and LGANT to Identify and build on skills and knowledge in the sector. |
| | Deliver or support the delivery of course materials face to face to each council in an appropriate way. | Resource through the provision of grants | |
| | Provide continuous access through online portal – to go live in September and will be maintained for the whole of this 4 year term. | Feedback on reporting and compliance issues | Establish links to other governance training and development - ICAC/AICD/ORIC/ Governance Institute |
| | Provide support and resources for induction activities delivered by each Council | Produce regular newsletters | |
| | Support the LGANT Symposium – introduction to local government. | | |
| Developing | Ensure all Members complete Mandatory training | Expand core training to Local Authority members | With LGANT and councils, develop sector specific and technical knowledge and encourage exchanges |
| | Adapt and improve modules after initial phase and feedback | Build on foundation training to articulate into further learning. | Establish clearing house of training and development opportunities |
| | Review regulation and communicate approach | Refresh and review suite of learning opportunities. | Promote leadership in sector, best practice, innovation, challenges, employer of choice) |
| | Develop financial management framework | Evaluate improved governance outcomes | Identify leadership training and development opportunities |
| Aspiring | Expand foundation training to candidates | | Develop leadership resources and identify leadership training and development opportunities |

Council Example Learning and development plan

The table below represents a selection of elements from the broad framework that might form part of an individual council plan. Councils will have different needs, resources and capabilities and therefore planning should reflect and be tailored to their circumstances.

| | Foundation development | Council Support and Development | Individual/Capacity Development |
|--|--|--|--|
| Delivering and ongoing | Deliver induction activities | Provide support to the role of Chairperson (by specific training?) and emphasise the Chair's role in providing support and guidance and setting expectations for the Council | Identify and encourage skills and knowledge development of individual elected members. |
| | Deliver elected member training face to face utilising mandatory training modules in conjunction with CM&C | Use committees to develop skill and specialisation Clarify internal support - Council staff and programs (governance officers, internal training and information provision) . | Raise cross-cultural awareness and provide formal training and opportunities for building knowledge. |
| Developing | Support online completion of mandatory training modules | Share and apply best practice within each council. | Council members to build reputation and knowledge through the development of their networks. |
| | | Engage with other councils to support skill share | |
| | Provide feedback re continuing development of modules | Mentor and pair up councillors with other councillors for support | Extend training and learning opportunities available to staff to to councillors where appropriate. |
| | | Audit skills and experience of members to help identify needs and development. | Develop advocacy and representation through strong connections to community. |
| Identify and encourage take up of relevant development opportunities | | | |
| Aspiring | | Training and learning delivered and co-designed with sector | Establish a training and development register for councillors. |
| | | | Develop leadership resources and identify leadership training and development opportunities. |
| | | Develop a mentoring/leadership shadow program for Councillors | Plan succession and encourage participation/nominations |
| | | | Seek 360 feedback on effectiveness of representation and advocacy through community forums. |