

# Review of Know Your Council & LGPRF 2014-15 Reporting Period

## Feedback Report

The initial year of the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework has seen the successful upload of every Victorian council's performance data on to the Know Your Council website.

The work put in by all councils throughout the data collection and submission process has seen a successful launch of the Know Your Council website by the Minister for Local Government in November 2015.

A survey of all councils was conducted from December 2015 – February 2016 to canvass views from councils on future improvements to the process, reporting materials, indicators, portal and website. LGV received an overwhelming number of responses to the survey, and together with an audit of the questions received throughout the submission process, have analysed future areas of improvement and further consideration.

LGV has already begun to implement a number of improvements to make reporting easier for councils. LGV will continue making updates to the framework and resulting processes, and work with councils and the sector to build on the aims of Know Your Council.

### Media

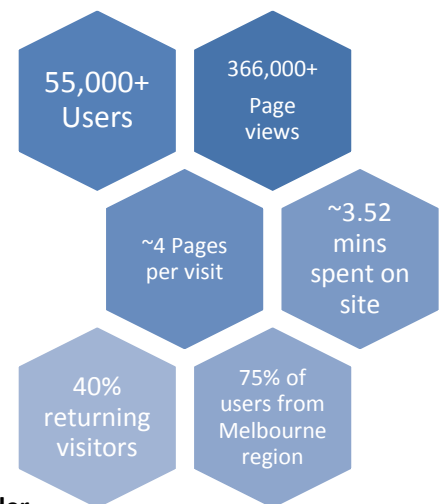
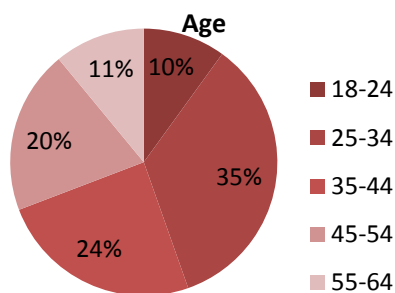
LGV has analysed a range of sources, including feedback from the sector and the public, and print, online and social media. The overall assessment of feedback LGV received has been positive and constructive.

The various media and site analytics have also provided an indication of the services areas that are of interest to the public and also to elected officials and councils.

### Google Analytics - As at 31 May 2016

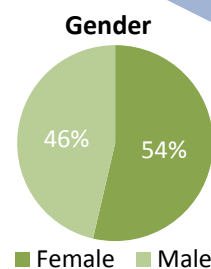
#### Top 5 most viewed councils:

- City of Melbourne
- City of Casey
- City of Boroondara
- City of Wyndham
- City of Monash



#### Users most commonly seek to:

- Find their council
- Compare their council
- Understand how the local government sector operates via the Guide to Councils
- View summary reports of their council's profile
- Understand what the website is about

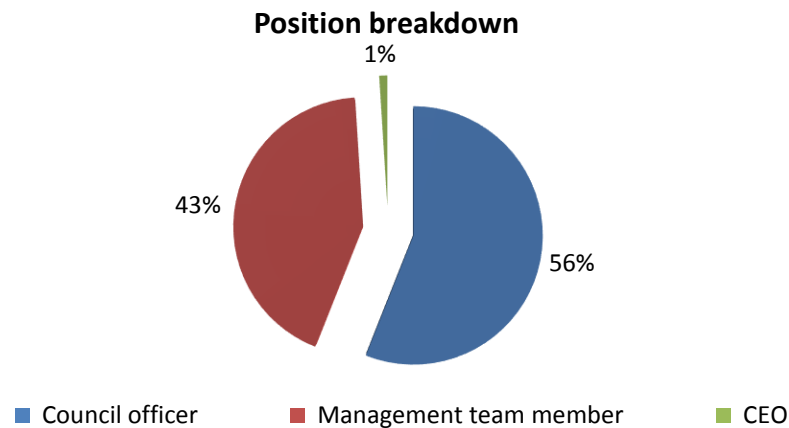


# Feedback Report

## Survey

The survey sought information on how the website, indicators, resources and portal could be improved and better utilised, as well as levels of satisfaction with the website and its usability.

It had 104 valid responses from 55 councils, with the position breakdown displayed here.



Feedback was sought on a range of topics, with a number of themes emerging, as listed below.

## Reporting Process

Making the data collection and submission process more efficient through the following improvements.

- Access to data comparisons  
LGV has made the full data set available to councils on the council portal. Comparisons can also be made on the site once data has been approved by each council.
- Improve indicator definitions and measures  
This is an element that will continue to improve and be developed over time as the sector becomes more familiar with Know Your Council
- Review the reporting timeline  
LGV has issued a new timeline for this year which will better align with councils' audit and annual report timelines
- Consistent advice from LGV and auditors  
LGV has met with VAGO to ensure consistency in the approach by both organisations
- Improve the reporting template  
Updates have been made to the template to address feedback received and resolve previous issues
- Provide updates on the performance of the Know Your Council website  
LGV will provide usage statistics and analytics to councils following the upcoming reporting period
- Improve the data collection process and bring reporting online  
LGV has improved the data collection process through updates to the template and workbook and are looking at the potential of bringing reporting online

# Feedback Report

- Reduce reporting burden and duplication by accessing data provided to other government departments and reducing the amount of internal reporting

LGV has ongoing plans to work with the sector and other government departments to further develop the Framework and Know Your Council website

## Webinars

The use of Webinars has been a popular method to communicate technical and process changes to council staff.

Webinars have been largely well received, particularly by rural councils who would otherwise have to travel to access workshops, and those often unable to make scheduled times who would otherwise miss out on valuable information. 68 users attended the first webinar on 'How to Upload Data', and of those surveyed 82 per cent found them useful.

## Data Review and Feedback

A data review process was undertaken by LGV after councils submitted their data. Final feedback was then provided to councils, and the Performance Reporting and Analysis Support Team worked with council staff to provide assistance to those who required it.

Some respondents were unaware that feedback had been provided to their council, which has highlighted to LGV that a different communication approach was needed. LGV has since expanded the email database to include other council officers involved in the data collection and reporting process. Feedback received was deemed by 82 per cent of respondents to be either useful or somewhat useful.

LGV made a range of improvements to the template for the 2015-16 reporting period, which we hope will reduce the amount of feedback required between councils and LGV. A new timeline has also been issued to better align with councils' audit processes and to produce their Annual Reports.

## Submission Process Challenges

LGV received feedback on a number of challenges that councils experienced with the process.

- Consistency of data collected and definitions of indicators

Updates to the guidance materials and template will continue to improve indicator definitions

- Data collection requirements, internal processes and reporting burden

As the LGPRF continues into the future, council and LGV processes will become more streamlined

- Auditing requirements

LGV has met with VAGO to ensure a more consistent approach by both organisations

- Navigating the submission process

LGV has provided a number of resources, such as guides, webinars and step-by-step sheets to assist councils, which are available on the council portal

- Material Variations

LGV has provided detailed guidance through a number of channels for councils around this matter



# Feedback Report

## Indicators

Councils have made suggestions on a number of indicators which will be considered by LGV, in consultation with the sector, the steering committee and other government departments. These include changes to existing indicators and indicators to be considered for potential addition to the framework in the future.

The general feedback from the survey indicated most councils were happy with the number and type of indicators, but made some helpful suggestions as to how they could be improved. A number of councils and members of the public have made suggestions for indicators they would like to see in the future.

## Council portal

The council portal is the council interface of the Know Your Council website. This is where councils upload their data. It allows councils to view recent updates, compare any other council's results (the public-facing site only allows comparisons of 'like' councils), and to download guides, webinars, materials and templates. It also allows primary users to add other users and create permissions.

More than half of respondents ranked the council portal 4 out of 5 for look and feel and user friendliness.

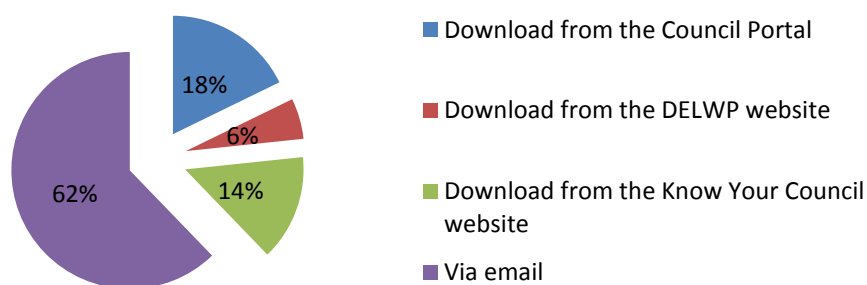
Other feedback on the portal's improvements has largely been addressed, such as making the full data set available on the council portal. Much of the feedback around the portal was positive, with respondents saying *"the portal is clear, simple, and not overloaded, making it easy to use"*.

## Template, indicator workbook and accompanying materials

The survey asked a number of questions regarding the guidance materials made available, and how we can improve them. When asked how they found these materials, councils generally gave a 3 out of 5 rating.

It also appeared that the majority of council staff preferred to receive materials via email than any other method.

### What is the best way for you to receive the template?



A number of suggestions were made regarding improvements to these materials which have been reviewed and taken on board where possible.

## Know Your Council (public facing) website

Respondents gave positive feedback about the public facing website with an average of 65 per cent satisfaction with the site. Analysis of public response to the website has so far been very positive and a number of suggestions have been made such as creating an app, adding new indicators and replication of the site in other jurisdictions.

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## Other Feedback

Feedback was also received on other topics, which LGV is working to address. This includes promptly responding to queries, introducing an information box on the website to explain how indicators are calculated and changes from year to year, and working with Infoxchange to ensure the Service Seeker information is up to date.

“I think it’s a great step forward and hope that it gets a lot of positive feedback for all involved. I look forward to the evolution of it!”

“I think that the LGPRF Team at LGV is doing a great job. As we progress, this whole process will become easier and more efficient“

“Given it is year one of the program I believe it went reasonably well”

