



Local Government Professionals Tasmania

Conference 2025

Empowering Tomorrow's Leaders Today

17-19 September, 2025



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A message from our President

On behalf of Local Government Professionals Tasmania (LG Pro Tas), welcome to our Annual Conference at the paranaple Centre, Devonport.

The highly anticipated conference program promises to empower leadership, innovation, and collaboration for future-ready councils.

Over the next two days, we have an incredible lineup of insightful presentations, engaging workshops, and invaluable networking opportunities that are sure to leave you feeling energised and inspired.

This year's theme, "Empowering Tomorrow's Leaders Today," focuses on what skills today's leaders will need to lead an ever-changing workforce: from the use of AI, to the importance of psychological safety, to leading in an increasingly complex political environment, and to lessons learned from decades of experience in Local Government.

Through events like this, LG Pro Tas continues to uphold its commitment to supporting the growth and success of professionals working across the sector, shaping the future landscape of local government.

This conference is not just about learning from experts but also about connecting with peers, sharing experiences, and forging new professional relationships. Embrace the chance to expand your network, exchange ideas, and build lasting connections that could lead to exciting collaborations and opportunities in the future.

We will also be celebrating the success of the Waratah-Wynyard Management Challenge Team, who recently took out the Australasian Title.

With an array of thought-provoking sessions, including captivating presentations by Stephen Yarwood, Simon Thiesson, Brendon Gale, and many others, you are in for a treat.

The Commonwealth Bank Gala Dinner & Awards Ceremony on Thursday evening promises a fantastic opportunity to network and celebrate the achievements of the amazing professionals working in local government.

Sponsors are essential in making events such as this possible. We thank all our sponsors for their continued generous support, particularly our Platinum sponsors, JLT and Commonwealth Bank, whose support makes conferences like this a reality.

The 2025 Annual Conference promises to be a fantastic opportunity to grow personally and professionally. Let's embrace the spirit of curiosity, collaboration, and camaraderie over the next two days together.

Let's seize every chance to learn, connect, be inspired and make this conference an unforgettable event!

Kristen Desmond
President

Local Government Professionals Tasmania

Key Themes

Empowering Tomorrow's Leaders Today

This year's program is all about empowering leadership and innovation within local government, particularly in today's continually evolving world. The theme of *Empowering Tomorrow's Leaders Today*, guides us through our curated program of keynote and session speakers, creating discussions around a variety of timely topics around AI, the necessity for psychological safety within workspaces, and the importance of understanding a complex political environment. And, as the age-old adage suggests, we'll go back to go forward, taking lessons from decades of experience to inform the ways we can approach the future with wisdom and openness.

Agenda

Wednesday 17 September Island State Brewing

6pm - 8.30pm

Sponsored by InsightGIS

Welcome Event

Welcome Address by Kristen Desmond



EMPOWERING COUNCILS IN NAVIGATING THEIR EVOLVING RISK PROFILES

To learn more contact:

Carli Geard 0418 285 415

Andrew Ralph 0437 122 151

Thursday 18 September paranaple Convention Centre

8am - 8.30am	Doors open & registration
8.45am - 9am	Welcome & housekeeping
9am - 10.30am Sponsored by JLT	Keynote Speaker – Stephen Yarwood Tomorrow's local government leaders: augmenting with AI
10.30am - 11am Sponsored by Edge Legal	Morning tea
11am - 11.45am	Network Session Speed networking with trade booths
11.45am - 12.15pm Sponsored by LG Solutions	Speaker Session – Allan Watkinson Leading through strengths in local government
12.15pm - 1pm	Lunch
1pm - 2pm Sponsored by Simmons Wolfhagen	Keynote Speaker – Brendon Gale How a successful team can benefit local communities
2pm - 2.30pm Sponsored by Dobson Mitchell Allport	Speaker Session – Craig Green Managing risk including reputational and career risks
2.30pm - 3pm Sponsored by RARE	Afternoon tea
3pm - 3.45pm Sponsored by JLT	Speaker Session – Linda Manaena Psychological safety: the leadership power move
3.45pm - 4.30pm Sponsored by ReadyTech	Speaker Session – Jeffrey Griffith Intelligent local government: the rise of the autonomous council
6pm Sponsored by MAV Insurance	Pre-dinner drinks
7pm - 10.30pm Dinner entertainment sponsored by Page Seager	Commonwealth Bank Gala Dinner

Friday 19 September paranaple Convention Centre

8.55am - 9am	Welcome from Nick Kelly
9am - 9.30am	AGM With guest appearance from 'Gutteridge Guardians' (Waratah-Wynyard) - Council Winners of the Australasian Management Challenge
9.30am - 10.30am Sponsored by Commonwealth Bank	Panel & Workshop with Tony McMullen, Karen Hampton and Michael Stretton Leadership that lasts – managing into the future
10.30am - 11am	Morning tea
11am - 12pm Sponsored by Commonwealth Bank	Keynote Speaker – Simon Thiessen Inspiring leaders and teams to be authentic
12pm - 1pm	Lunch & Prize Draw

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Master of Ceremonies



Kim Millar

Kim Millar is the weekday News Anchor for 7 Tasmania Nightly News – the state's most watched television news bulletin. Kim has decades of experience as a journalist, producer and presenter covering local, national and international news. She is also a communications specialist producing written and branded content. She provides media training to clients for dealing with the media, interview skills, crisis management, media strategies and media release preparation.



Nick Kelly

Nick Kelly is a journalist and sports presenter for 7 Tasmania. Nick has been involved in covering some of Australia's biggest news events over the last decade. Switching focus to sport is something of a dream come true for Nick, who says there aren't many roles in which watching footy is part of your job description.

Nick has both a journalism and a law degree, but it's the former that has taken him around Australia and the Pacific.

Keynote Speakers



Stephen Yarwood

Stephen is a renowned Futurist, highly respected Urbanist and the Former Lord Mayor of Adelaide. His passion extends beyond envisioning the future; he educates, motivates and empowers people to shape it. During his time as Lord Mayor, his emphasis on collaboration with the private sector and State Government delivered many outcomes and saw Adelaide recognised internationally as an innovative destination by Lonely Planet, National Geographic and The New York Times.



Brendon Gale

Brendon is the CEO of Tasmania Football Club, bringing a wealth of experience and leadership from across the Australian football landscape. Brendon previously served as CEO of Richmond Football Club for over a decade, where he was instrumental in driving the club's cultural and commercial resurgence. Brendon now leads the foundation and development of Tasmania's inaugural AFL club – focused on building a bold, inclusive, and sustainable future for football in the state.



Simon Thiessen

In 1993, Simon founded The Real Learning Experience where he has been shaping the working climate and bottom-line performance in organisations as CEO. He works with clients to build cultures in which people produce sustained exceptional results, work closely with the organisation's values, and enjoy coming to work – and bringing their best self with them! Simon delivers these results through a combination of learning workshops, strategic consulting and coaching.

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Session Speakers



Allan Watkinson

Allan, Managing Consultant, is based in Gallup's office in Sydney, Australia. As an expert in organisational development, talent management and leadership, Allan brings a wealth of corporate management and consulting knowledge and experience to Gallup clients. Allan consults with business leaders to improve employee performance by increasing engagement, improving employee selection and succession planning, and developing leaders. He also conducts senior executive coaching engagements to improve leadership performance.



Craig Green

Craig is Counsel at Dobson Mitchell Allport and acts predominantly for employers in a wide range of industries, including the education, transport, aged care and disability sector. Craig is a leading practitioner in relation to Tasmanian State Service matters and has been involved in a number of significant cases. He regularly presents seminars and training to clients on significant workplace relations issues, the benefit of the legal profession and HR practitioners.



Linda Manaena

As Co-CEO of LeaderLab Global, Linda partners with leaders and industries throughout Australasia to build inclusive, high-trust environments where people can think clearly, speak up, and thrive. With 20+ years in senior and executive leadership roles across corporate, government, and GBEs, Linda brings a strategic lens grounded in Positive Psychology and Wellbeing. Her work equips leaders and teams to lead with clarity and courage, creating the conditions for accountability and meaningful connection.



Jeffrey Griffith

Jeffrey is an accomplished executive with more than 25 years of executive leadership experience across local government and large-scale enterprise environments. As Deputy CEO of Devonport City Council since 2018, Jeff has led transformational change across the organisation, resulting in substantial operational improvements that have significantly enhanced service delivery, risk management, and community engagement. His role has spanned leadership of finance, infrastructure, works, development services, community services and convention and arts.

Panel & Workshop

Leadership that lasts – managing into the future

We're delighted to welcome Tony McMullen, Karen Hampton and Michael Stretton, who'll join host Nick Kelly to discuss and explore how local government leaders can stay effective and relevant into the future.

This panel will be a timely and enriching conversation. This is not one to miss.



Tony McMullen

Tony was GM/CEO at Glenorchy City Council for 8 years to June 2025 as part of a thirty-year career in local government. He holds Master of Town Planning and Bachelor of Economics degrees from the University of Tasmania, a Graduate Certificate in Management from Curtin University and is also a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Tony is a Registered Planner of the Planning Institute of Australia.



Karen Hampton

Karen recently retired following a combined total of 33 years in Local Government. Over the years, she held a range of roles at Kentish Council, Cradle Coast Authority, and most recently, Devonport City Council. During her 15 years at Devonport, Karen served as Governance Coordinator for 7 years before transitioning to the role of Community Services Manager, a position she held for the final 8 years of her tenure.



Michael Stretton

Michael began his career in local government with Sorell Council in 1995. With a keen interest in development and planning, Michael has worked at several councils, including Glenorchy, Central Coast, Waratah-Wynyard, and CEO of City of Launceston. Michael commenced as CEO at the City of Hobart in 2024 and has been working closely with staff and Elected Members to ensure the organisation is best placed to deliver on the vision for the City.

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About Local Government Professionals



Operating since 1936, Local Government Professionals Tasmania (LG Pro Tas) is the state's strongest network of professionals working in local government.

Local Government Professionals expands across Australia, where each state division acts independently while upholding collaborative efforts under our united federation.

LG Pro Tas serves and supports all 29 councils of Tasmania. Our interconnected network allows us to grow together as a state. Our Board is made up of multiple members from varied councils, giving strength to our mission through diverse perspectives of Tasmania.

LG Pro Tas is your member association and leading voice for Local Government Professionals providing leadership, quality professional development and representation in the pursuit of excellence right here in Tasmania. Our members are a community of professionals aspiring to shape the sector and make a difference in their local government career.

We are committed to ensuring that our members are supported by sector specific professional development to help them in their work and to progress their career, develop strong networks with sector leaders and that our member interests are represented by a credible and independent voice and ensure that our members are an integral part of the bigger picture.

About our Membership Program

Our membership provides beneficiaries access to high-quality professional development opportunities through training, events, networking, and communication between fellow members and corporate members.

A membership with LG Pro Tas builds upon your professional development, whether you're new to or a long-standing member of the local government community.

We support our members through:

- **Representation & Advocacy** to ensure your voice is heard with an independent and credible voice on issues of importance to our members.
- **High quality professional development** to progress your career in Local Government through a range of programs specifically designed to develop our emerging leaders.

- **Networking & Peer support** to share best practice and collaborate across the sector.
- **Awards & Recognition** by raising the profile of our members and rewarding their contribution to Local Government.

We value all our corporate partner members, whose support allow us to provide valuable information and increase accessibility to our events. With these funds, we continually strive to enhance local government management, uphold ethical standards, and shine a spotlight on the innovators in our community.

We encourage you to talk with the representatives of our wonderful sponsors at the sponsor booths.

[Click here to learn more!](#)

Sustainability Commitment Statement

This year, sustainability has had a significant impact on how we operate our Annual Conference. We wanted to ensure that all our marketing materials and collateral had purpose and value, to us and you.

This year, we created lanyards with the sole purpose of re-usability, so they don't go to waste. Please return your lanyard so it can continue to be used by attendees for years to come.

Attendees will receive Local Government Professionals-branded laptop covers – something we could all make use of in our professional lives.

Our catering team is committed to ensuring no food goes to waste, any leftover food will be donated to Gran's Van, a charity that provides food to those in need.

Thank you to our host city and venue

We'd like to thank the paranapple Convention Centre and the Devonport City Council for their valued and ongoing support.



Event Sponsors

Thank you to all of our generous sponsors who have helped make this event possible. We appreciate your support of Local Government Professional Tasmania.

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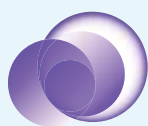


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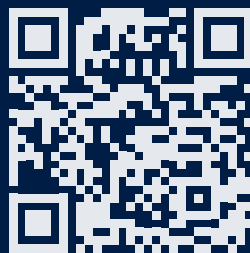


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Notes Page

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