

Board Members

Your Board until the conclusion of the 2024 AGM is:



Kate O'Neill, City of Mitcham

President



Paul Sutton, City of Charles Sturt

Board Member



Mark Withers, City of Port Adelaide Enfield

Board Member



Thuyen Vi-Alternetti, Rural City of Murray Bridge

Board Member



Debra Larwood, District Council of Kimba

Board Member



Kristie Johnson, City of Charles Sturt

Board Member



Stacey Bateson, Alexandrina Council

Board Member



Rudi Deco, City of Salisbury

Board Member



Sam Johnson OAM, District Council of Mount Remarkable

Board Member



Melissa Kretschmer, Port August City Council

Board Member

President

Kate O'Neill

General Manager, Organisational & Community Development, City of Mitcham

Length of Service in Local Government: 21 years

Reason for nominating:

After 21 years of experience in various roles within Councils in South Australia and New South Wales, starting as a Business Analyst and currently the General Manager Organisation and Community Development at the City of Mitcham, along with a recent 2-year tenure as an Executive Board Member for LG Professionals SA, I believe I am well-suited to significantly contribute to the strategic direction and decision-making that shapes and influence the professionalism, profile and direction as President for LG Professionals SA.

My passion for coaching and mentoring emerging leaders is driven by my commitment to advancing workplace diversity and inclusion, attracting, and retaining exceptional talent within Local Government, and achieving outcomes that enhance the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of our communities. I am excited about the opportunity to continue to give back to the sector that has provided so many opportunities.



Board Member

Paul Sutton

Chief Executive Officer, City of Charles Sturt

Length of service in Local Government: 27 years

I work collaboratively with the Elected Council and executive team to provide strategic leadership for the City. I thrive by creating a passionate and ambitious, achievement-oriented environment where our community is central, and our staff's development and fulfillment is stretched.

I am an authentic leader and pride myself on having an energetic, flexible, and proactive style. I have developed a highly constructive culture to achieve positive business impact, this is primarily felt through customer excellence, flexibility, and a solution orientation. I have a passion for collaboration and working together across the local government sector to create a better South Australia.

Being a Board Member of LG Professionals SA further supports this contribution.

I am a past President of LG Professionals SA and current Board Member of CAWRA, a joint council subsidiary doing its part to further recycling and the circular economy in SA. I am also a past Governing Council member and the Company Secretary of IPAA (Institute of Public Administration Australia SA) where I was a Board Member for 8 years.

I was awarded a fellowship of IPAA in 2016, a Graduate of the AICD and I have an MBA from the University of Adelaide and with qualifications in Business and Engineering from the University of South Australia.



Board Member

Mark Withers

Chief Executive Officer, City of Port Adelaide Enfield

Length of service in Local Government: 39 years

Reason for nominating:

Throughout my many years' experience in local government I have been fundamentally committed to delivering public good. During my career I have maintained an enthusiastic commitment to my own professional development and believe my broad sector knowledge can benefit others to progress professionally to achieve their career goals. I have worked in 9 different SA Councils and held CEO positions at Port Adelaide Enfield, Charles Sturt, and Unley Councils.

I am a past National President of LG Professionals Australia and a current Board Member of the Environmental Protection Authority SA and CAWRA. I believe to be successful in your working life you must share knowledge, encourage growth in people and take opportunities to lead whenever they present themselves. This is my ongoing commitment as a member of the LG Professionals SA Board.



Board Member

Thuyen Vi-Alternetti

**General Manager Infrastructure and Environment,
Rural City of Murray Bridge**

Length of service in Local Government: 11 years

Reason for nominating:

I am extremely passionate about local government, motivating and empowering our people and bringing diversity to the table. Working in local government has given me the opportunity to meet many intelligent, motivating, and inspiring leaders who have challenged and supported me to grow and further my career in the sector - this I will forever be grateful for.

I am an alumni of the Emerging Leaders Program (2016), and in my second term as a board member at LG Professionals SA. The last two years have given me a great opportunity to further understand, influence, advocate and represent the many professionals who work in our sector. I still have a lot more to give and achieve for our sector.



Board Member

Debra Larwood

Chief Executive Officer, District Council of Kimba

Length of service in Local Government: 16.5 years

Reason for nominating:

I have worked in Local Government for over 16.5 years at Kimba Council, six as CEO, served on several boards and am a current member of the LGA CEO Advisory Committee and LG Professionals SA Board. I am a passionate advocate for the sector with a strong belief in what we can achieve collaboratively.

As an alumni of the Executive Leaders Program and a participant in the Regional Women's Mentoring Program and other LG Professionals SA initiatives, I'm committed to the importance of ongoing professional development and would like to use my experiences to help build capacity within local government through LG Professionals SA. As CEO of a small regional council, I bring a different perspective to the Board and provide a depth of geographical diversity with an opportunity to expand my networks and work closely with a dedicated group of professionals to challenge myself and the sector as a whole.



Board Member

Kristie Johnson

**Manager, Media Marketing and Communications,
City of Charles Sturt**

Length of service in Local Government: 13 years

Reason for nominating:

I was appointed to the LG Professionals SA Board in 2020 as a skill-based appointment. In my term, I helped shape our strategic direction, ensuring we offer opportunities for employees across field and administrative roles to develop their skills. I also contributed to the launch of a successful partnership between LG Professionals SA and the LGA to further enhance opportunities for local government people to attend training and development in their fields.

I am passionate about considering regional and metro issues into LG Professional SA's planning, as well as increasing the participation of field employees with targeted opportunities that suit their needs and establishing a Local Government Graduate Program to link emerging professionals with a career in local government.



Board Member

Stacey Bateson

General Manager, Community, Alexandrina Council

Length of Service in Local Government: 18 years

Reason for nominating:

I love to give back and contribute to an organisation that is striving to make a difference in our sector, who is innovative and invested in raising the capabilities of our collective teams.

Being a Board Member is an incredible opportunity to leverage my knowledge and experience, to create meaningful outcomes for those who strive to further develop their potential and career in local government. To also have a positive influence on the amazing programs I have been honoured to be a part of, is so exciting.

I have worked in local government for 18 years in Leadership of Commercial Business, IT, Customer, Marketing, Media, and now learning Community Development and Economic Growth. I believe my diverse experience and inclusive leadership style is valuable, and being a Board Member is a wonderful opportunity to gain new strategic insights and networks, and to instil these into our sector and community.



Board Member

Rudi Deco

Divisional Manager Governance, City of Salisbury

Length of Service in Local Government: 17 years

Reason for nominating:

I strongly believe that being invested in lifelong learning and interacting with people through meaningful connections are key elements to growing professionally and personally. As a nurturing leader with an endorsed track record in all things Governance for metropolitan and regional councils, I am passionate about delivering optimal community value and service excellence.

In a world of growing complexity, people are the driving force behind our local government's successes, and together, we can achieve so much more. I see tremendous opportunity to strengthen the connection between regional and metropolitan councils and deliver contemporary learning and development opportunities to support our local government sector.



Board Member

Sam Johnson OAM

Chief Executive Officer, District Council of Mount Remarkable

Length of Service in Local Government: 16 years

Reason for nominating:

Local government makes for a great career. It's diverse, challenging, and rewarding. Maintaining our many talented people and attracting the next generation of LG professionals will require us to think about the future.

With a diverse career across local government and commercial banking, I bring energy, thinking, and leadership that will seem 'out of the box' to some. It's not to be different but to ensure we flourish. To flourish in a way that engages and empowers our people.

My career principle is influencing with integrity. It is important that we embrace change in a way that is centred around a vibrant and prosperous future for the people we serve.

Together, we can strengthen this sector, continue the great work that's been put in place, and ensure local government remains a proud career choice.



Board Member

Melissa Kretschmer

Director City Services, Port Augusta City Council

Length of Service in Local Government: 13 years

Reason for nominating:

I have been a member of the LG Professionals SA Women's Committee for the past year and would value the opportunity to take the next step and be a part of this Board to work with a group of like-minded individuals passionate about Local Government.

I want to be able to share my skills and experiences as I have worked for both Metro and Regional Councils over the past 13 years, having responsibility for a range of Council corporate, community and regulatory functions.

LG Professionals SA has played an important role in my career development, including the Graduate Certificate in Business Administration this year. I am passionate about the impact LG Professionals SA can play in the development of the Local Government sector, and I would like to continue to build on the fantastic program offerings and promote the benefits within the sector.

