

Context

The new Local Government Act 2020 requires councils to take an integrated approach to strategic planning and reporting. Local Government Victoria is responsible for managing and overseeing the implementation phase of the Act. As the Act is a principles based Act, LGV is seeking not to be prescriptive in 'telling' councils how to implement the strategic planning sections of the Act but rather to work with councils and 'codesign' those supports identified as being needed by councils to implement the provisions of the Act.

'Supports' in this context covers a range of elements such as guidance materials, training courses, community of practice. There is no set limit to this range of items. Once identified, some elements may best be provided by Local Government Victoria, other elements may be tasks for peak bodies or groups of councils working together.

The strategic planning principles in the Act require Councils to "take an integrated approach to planning, monitoring and performance reporting". How this is done is up to individual councils. As this is a key element of the Act, LGV has commissioned a discussion paper that sets out a draft integrated strategic planning and reporting framework (referred to as 'the framework' in this engagement plan). Even though some councils have had an integrated framework in place for some years, for others this will be new, and it will be a key support needed by these councils. The purpose of the codesign is to consider and improve the draft framework as one of the key supports along with identifying all other supports needed by councils. The intent is to add value and build on the current planning approaches and expertise of councils, not to replace the work of councils.

This high-level engagement (codesign) plan provides the outline of how the engagement with the local government sector will be undertaken to identify and codesign the supports needed by councils to implement the strategic planning sections of the Act.

Level of Influence

The level of influence being offered by LGV is

COLLABORATE

(on the International Association of Public Participation spectrum).

Remit

The strategic planning principles contained in the Local Government Act 2020 require councils to adopt an integrated approach to planning, monitoring and performance reporting. LGV has developed a draft integrated strategic planning and reporting framework for consideration by councils.

How do we make strategic planning and reporting more integrated so that it works better for councils and their communities?



Further engagement questions

1. What improvements could be made to the draft framework to make it work better as a reference document for councils to use and tailor to their needs?
2. What 'support' is needed by councils to enable them to implement the framework and what is most important?

Project Outputs

A framework that can be tailored by individual councils to suit their own needs

'Supports' (guidance, community of practice, training etc) ready for council use

Codesign Outputs

Codesign Outputs - Round 1 (Mixed small groups):

- A description of the ideal outcome: What would integrated planning look like?
- A list of ideas on how to improve integrated planning in practice, based on council's experience
- A list of ideas for improving the framework to make it work better as a reference document for councils to use and tailor to their needs
- A list of prioritised 'supports' that councils need to achieve more integrated planning

Codesign Outputs - Round 2 (Mixed larger groups, one per prioritised topic):

- Design principles and key ideas for each of the prioritised topics to be used by various stakeholders (LGV, councils, peak bodies) to develop the 'supports'

Engagement Scope

This codesign process sits within a broader setting of how councils will choose to implement the provisions of the Act. It is a principles based Act and in this context the provisions and the principles of the Act are non-negotiable. The approach to how councils implement the principles and requirements of the Act, including how they develop an integrated framework for planning (their own or the one developed as part of this project) is up to each individual council. The principle of integration is non-negotiable, it is the approach and framework that is negotiable. It is also up to each council, their level of take up - a basic standard or more innovative or better practice approaches.

The following scoping relates only to the codesign process and not to the wider implementation of the Act.



Participants can influence:

1. The contents of an integrated strategic planning and reporting framework
2. The types of support to be provided by LGV to enable them to implement an integrated strategic planning and reporting framework
3. The priorities for the support to be provided by LGV
4. The content for specific elements of the support being provided
5. A culture of learning and sharing across the sector particularly in relation to the practice of integrated planning



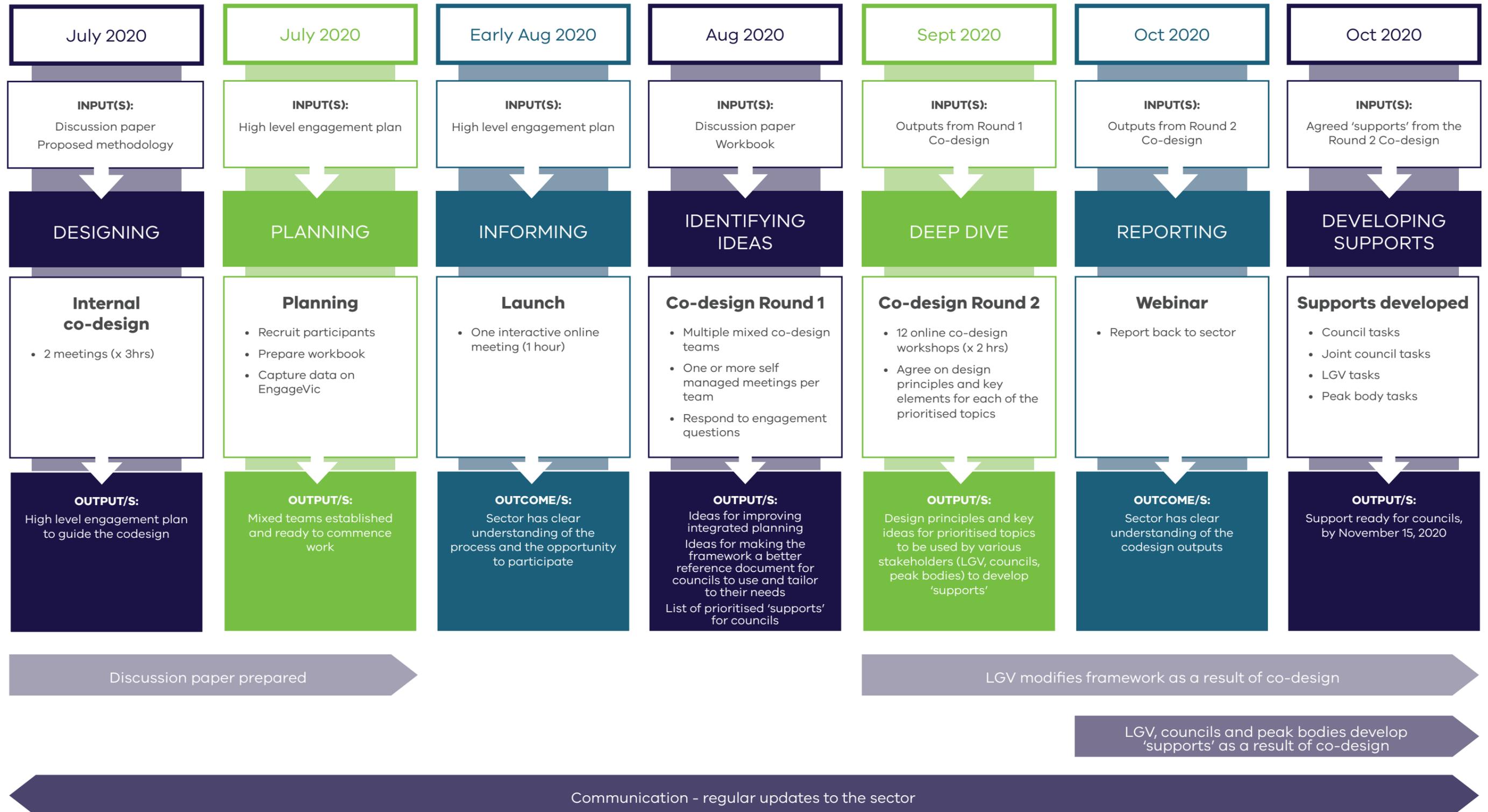
Participants can't influence:

1. The provisions and principles of the Act including the requirement to deliver nine key plans and timeframes set by the Act
2. Any elements that LGV chooses to mandate e.g regulations, minimum standards, Ministerial Guidelines
3. Set standards eg accounting standards

Engagement Objectives

ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVE	MEASURES OF SUCCESS (TARGETS)	METHODS OF MEASUREMENT (EVALUATION)
1 To provide an open, transparent codesign process that builds understanding of integrated planning and an acceptance of the engagement process and outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An engagement plan is developed and made public • Regular communication to the sector • 75% or more of participants surveyed are satisfied that the engagement process was genuine and meaningful • 75% or more of participants surveyed are satisfied with the outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracking of engagement activities offered • Post-process participant surveys
2 To ensure a diverse range of participants from councils, peak bodies and LGV participate in the co-design process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one person from each of the 79 councils are engaged in at least one activity in the co-design process • Regional groupings, networks and peak bodies are used to increase the range of people and councils participating in the process • The codesign groups have representation from different types of councils (metro, regional and rural) and diverse areas / functions of council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracking of participation across councils • Barriers identified and built into risk planning/mitigation approach • Stratification of codesign groups
3 To build on the existing capability, capacity and maturity of council staff and LGV with respect to integrated planning and encourage learning, autonomy and innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process design allows opportunities for councils to share expertise with each other • 75% or more of participants surveyed report that they contributed ideas to the outcome or learnt something new 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process design review • Post-process participant surveys
4 To provide a genuine level of influence over the final framework and 'supports' provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75% or more of participants surveyed are satisfied with the outcome of the process • 75% or more of participants surveyed are satisfied that the engagement process was genuine and meaningful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracking of engagement activities offered • Process design review • Post-process participant surveys
5 To work with the sector to co-design materials that give councils the confidence and independence to deliver the requirements of the Act easily and effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The level of positive feedback from a diverse range of councils on the usability and effectiveness of the framework and supports developed • Increase in the number of councils adopting an integrated planning framework • 80% of councils report that they have used the support provided 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-process council surveys • Monitoring of council uptake of integrated planning

Roadmap



People (who we will engage with and how)

	LAUNCH WEBINAR	CODESIGN ROUND 1	CODESIGN ROUND 2	REPORTING BACK WEBINAR
Council staff – experienced staff from across all relevant interest areas	All	All interested staff invited to join a small mixed team (a mix of interest areas will work together)	At least one representative from each team invited to participate in a specific topic codesign workshop (a mix of interest areas will work together) Additional staff not involved in Round 1 may be invited to participate in Round 2 co-design sessions based on the need for specific expertise in these groups.	All
Councillors	All	All Councillors invited to a Councillor only briefing – to gain information and provide input via survey (in or after session)	To be confirmed	All
CEOs	All	All CEOs invited to a CEOs only briefing – to gain information and provide input via survey (in or after session)	All CEOs invited to a CEOs only briefing – to gain information and provide input	All
Professional bodies (council staff members)	All	Involved as per council staff members above	Involved as per council staff members above	All
Peak bodies (executive staff)	All	Each person invited to join one small mixed team along with the council staff	To be confirmed	All
LGV staff	All	Each staff member invited to join one small mixed team along with the council staff –guiding conversations but not steering	To be confirmed	All
Sector partners (consultants)	All	All sector partners invited to a briefing - to gain information and provide input via survey (in or after session)	To be confirmed	All
Local government interest groups (ratepayer associations)	All	All interest groups invited to a briefing - to gain information and provide input via survey	To be confirmed	All
State Government (DHHS, DELWP etc)	All		To be confirmed	All

Promise

Local Government Victoria promises to:

- Listen to what participants say
- Document and record all inputs
- Report back on what we have heard
- Base the final version of *the integrated strategic planning and reporting framework and the associated support needed by councils to implement an integrated approach* on the outcomes of the codesign process to the greatest extent possible
- Where we can't incorporate a recommendation from the codesign process we will clearly explain why
- Provide transparent, progress updates during codesign process

Potential engagement risks

RISK IDENTIFIED

ACTIONS TO MITIGATE RISK

Participation targets are not met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a range of ways people can participate • Increase communications to promote the engagement opportunities
An unstructured or confusing process loses trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a clear and agreed roadmap of activities (structured approach) and share this roadmap regularly • If the plan changes, ensure reasons for the changes are clearly communicated
Information is unclear, making it difficult for people to participate meaningfully	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide clear and relevant information as part of every engagement activity • Use simple and plain English
Messages are confused or mixed across the various stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate communications across stakeholders via agreed communications plan • Revise approach where feedback is received
Engagement fatigue from council staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop strong, engaging, visual content that clearly communicates the question being asked of council staff and their influence over the issue • Acknowledge work and engagement that has happened to date and how this is being used as the project moves forward
Council staff don't see the co-design process as relevant because they already have their plans underway or they are busy with other matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide clear and compelling communications about the importance and opportunity of this engagement • Acknowledge existing knowledge and planning processes underway, and how this process builds upon existing work and expertise • Make the process efficient, effective and easy to participate in
Council staff feel their ideas have not been considered or reflected in outcomes, leading to an erosion of trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify and agree scope of project and what people can influence before engaging. Communicate this clearly throughout the process • Publish regular updates about engagement process