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**Local Government Legislation Review  
Glamorgan Spring Bay Council's Submission**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission on the Review of Tasmania's Local Government Legislation Framework (the Review).

The views and opinions expressed in this submission are representative of Glamorgan Spring Bay Council and have been formed through reading the Reform Directions Paper – Phase Two, completing the on-line survey, attending information sessions provided by the Local Government Division and based on dedicated Council workshop discussions.

As recommended, this submission does not provide comment on each Direction but provides responses to those that the Council feels strongly about and wants to take a clear position on.

As requested, the following submission is organized around the Direction Paper headings.

**Part B: Elections**

- *Deputy Mayor Election 'around the table'* – Council strongly believes it is always best in terms of a democratic system, for the community to have the opportunity to elect not just Councillors but to have a vote on who takes up the roles of both Mayor and Deputy Mayor rather than an 'around the table' vote by Council.
- *Candidate nomination fee* – Council believes that the nomination fee is potentially not high enough to achieve the desired outcome. The example in the Directions Paper is \$100 for Councillor and \$250 for Mayor.

## **Part C: Community Engagement**

- General consensus from Council is that this Direction is proposing some very important and much needed positive changes. There were no specific concerns with this Direction but the importance for a Council to confirm and clarify clearly what it will and won't engage on as a Council was noted.

## **Part D: Ethics and Standards**

- *Mandatory training and the "core capability" requirements for elected members.*
  - The general consensus is that training for Councillors should be mandatory and ongoing throughout the Council term.
  - There is some concern around the term "core capability" with the suggestion that this should be changed to "professional development". It is believed "core capability" implies there may be a pass or fail scenario for elected members.
  - Council suggests that there should be a structured program of training and professional development for Councillors with a level of mandatory training that is recorded and reported on (e.g. via Council's Annual Report).
  - This could be done on a training points system, where there are a minimum number of points that Councillors must achieve in a year, on an ongoing basis throughout a Councillor's term in office.
  - It was agreed that this training may be broader than just Planning and Local Government training but other relevant training to the role of elected member.
  - This could of course include online training as a method of delivery to improve and facilitate accessibility, particularly for regional Councils.

## **Part D: Transparency and Flexibility in Budget Management**

- Council is fully supportive of *independent rates oversight* and use of an external Economic Regulator to provide full transparency on this.
- Council is fully supportive of a more transparent and consistent approach to the *setting of fees and charges*. There is a strong belief that this should be done on a true cost recovery basis across all Councils.

## **Part D: Council Decision-making**

- Council supports the idea of Council's *Audit Panel* taking on an internal audit function for specific projects, as required but it was noted that internally budget would need to be allocated for this given Audit Panel's have paid independent members.
- The power of the Minister to remove an individual Councillor is seen as a 'game changer' in order to remove a 'bad egg' quickly.

## **Part E: Collaboration**

- Council is very much in support of the development of *model by-laws* for Councils, whereby Councils can pick and choose based on needs without the lengthy development process and legal costs of developing and reviewing a by-law.
- Council is not in support of the proposed *Regional Council* model, whereby there would be one General Manager for a group of Councils, essentially meaning that all Councils participating in the regional model would need to deliver and operate in a similar manner for efficiencies of scale.
- Council is supportive of each Council maintaining full autonomy but exploring more effective and efficient *shared services* models.

## **Part F: Local Government Board**

- Council is in support of set functions for the Local Government Board and strongly believes that the function of the Local Government Board to review any proposed amalgamations should remain with the Board rather than putting in place other checks and balances.
- Council believes that the review of Councillor allowances every eight (8) years is potentially too long a time period and that this should be every election cycle at the 4 year mark. This is believed to be particularly important for regional Councils where travel for Councillors is much greater and puts greater burdens on time and costs.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to provide a submission and please don't hesitate to contact me should you require clarification on any of the comments outlined in this paper.

Yours sincerely,



**Councillor Debbie Wisby**  
**Mayor**