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**From:** Cr Dean Winter [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, 30 September 2019 10:31 PM  
**To:** Local Government Legislation Review (DPaC)  
**Subject:** Local Government Legislation Review submission

Dear Mr Tay

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION REVIEW SUBMISSION**

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the Local Government Legislation Review. I would like to commend you and the Division on the way in which it has engaged the sector throughout the process and the directions paper released. While I do not agree with all the paper's contents, it is clear it has been thoroughly considered and is well researched.

My Council will be making its own submission as a result of a resolution of Council. This submission is a personal one and not intended to represent the views of my Council. In addition, the submission is not a comprehensive assessment of the merits of the proposals within the directions paper but aims to simply highlight some of the most important points from my personal perspective.

### **The Role of Local Government**

The Directions paper – while comprehensive – appears silent on one of the key questions I think faces Local Government: what is its role?

Recent years have seen local governments moving in an out of areas like aged care, childcare, general practice medicine and even developing an information and communications technology business. While the idea of 'roads, rates and rubbish' is still appealing to many, for others getting sucked into accepting cost shifting from other levels of government is a reality of appeasing local communities.

My proposal is that the Local Government Act provides for the development and implementation of a Charter of Government Responsibility. The Charter would set out Local Government's roles and responsibilities and work particularly collaboratively with the State Government to ensure duplication of services between levels of government is minimised.

My perception is that local government is undertaking some roles outside of the traditional 'roads, rates and rubbish' model particularly well, and ought to be supported to continue and expand those roles. For example, preventative health and youth services are tackled particularly well at the local level by working with local clubs and organisations. The State may be better served divesting itself of any ongoing involvement in these areas and funding local government to expand its work.

Conversely, the local governments might seek to remove itself from some of those non-core functions like aged-care, childcare and primary health which are better provided by the state or the private sector.

### **Reform 8, Make alternative voting methods available**

I support *Reform 8, Make alternative voting methods available*. Electronic voting has been dismissed in Australia in the past because of the potential for voter fraud and other technical risks associated with the approach.

You will receive submissions which raise examples of poor outcomes from electronic voting. However, like any risks, these can be mitigated and there are proven formats to conduct online voting without major issues. A jurisdiction I have been looking at is Ontario, Canada.

97 Ontario municipalities used internet/telephone voting in 2014, and 194 (out of 440) used the method in 2018.

No online voting provider in Canada has ever had a penetration into their system that resulted in a contravened election. In 2018, a bandwidth issue caused some elections to be extended for 24 hours but did not impact the outcome.

Relevant information can be found at the below links. I would encourage the Review to consider the advantages of these kind of approaches in making voting more accessible, potentially less costly and delivering election outcomes sooner. Some useful attached links are:

- [Voter information](#)
- [Voter guide](#)
- [How eVoting is taking over municipal elections](#)

The comparatively significant risk of fraud in our current postal voting system must be considered. Our system is open to fraud by virtue of a mass number of ballot papers being distributed and left in unsecured letterboxes.

Any candidate doorknocking or letterboxing towards the end of the 2018 polling period would have seen easily identified ballot envelopes still sitting in letterboxes. A candidate could collect these ballot papers, complete and submit them. There are no safeguards against this since signatures on letters are not checked. Given they had been sitting in letterboxes for weeks already, it is also unlikely they would have been missed or ever followed up by the resident looking for their ballot paper.

If risks associated with online voting are assessed, it should be done so against the risks with the existing postal voting system.

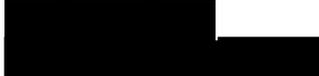
### **Reform 10: Introduce caretaker provisions**

I support Reform 10: Caretaker provisions. Caretaker provisions are an integral part of Australian democratic institutions seemingly everywhere but Tasmanian Local Government.

Substantive decisions like appointment of general managers, sale of land or entering into agreements should be forbidden during caretaker periods. There are a large number of obvious reasons for this and it needs to be enshrined in the Act.

Yours sincerely

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Kingborough Council



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