

To:

30 August 2019

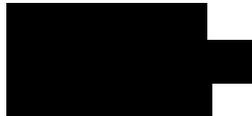
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Attention Ilise Bourke  
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## **Submission to Local Government Review 2019 (Reform Directions Paper – Phase Two)**

From:

Bob Holderness-Roddam



I agree with most of the proposals, which are largely in line with my initial submission to State 1. However, I would like to make the following comments:

1. I am concerned regarding the **proposal to no longer require councils to advertise through public notices sections in newspapers**. There are still many people who do not use their computers for that kind of online work. For example, my wife refuses to accept official items, such as accounts from utilities, by email. She wants hard copies.

Even though I was an early adopter of personal computers, I still rely on the public notices in the *Mercury* for this kind of information. Even the tenders section is important, as an indicator of proposed works.

2. **Reform direction 4, Consolidating related local government legislation:**

Presumably this would also include the *Dog Control Act 2000*.

3. **Reform direction 7, Simplify election process for mayors and deputies:**

I do not support option 7B, as this would likely reduce the number of candidates for mayor if these individuals did not want to risk the loss of their council seat.

I have to confess I keep changing my mind regarding the options of popularly elected mayor versus election by the elected members. My initial submission favoured popular election, but upon reflection I think this sets up a council for conflict; as demonstrated with recent events at both the Huon Valley and Glenorchy councils. Having said that, I urge the implementation of improved **oversight to ensure that malfeasance is detected and dealt with as soon as possible. Option 7D supported.**

I would also like to emphasise my earlier comment regarding the need for mayoral candidates to serve at least one term as councillor before nominating for mayor. In support I offer the example of the late Michael Kent, Mayor for Glamorgan-Spring Bay. Kent came from a corporate background, where he was used to issuing orders to employees. He admitted in public that he had little idea of the role of mayor when elected as such. I suspect this could be said of others from the corporate sector and former officers in the armed services; though, of course, not all!

4. **14 Declaration of gifts to candidates during election periods:**

I would like to see this go further. All gifts, at any period of a member's service should be declared if it could be regarded as potentially influencing that member's decisions.

5. **17 Community engagement strategies:**

I totally support this proposal, having been involved as both an elected member (New Norfolk) and also as a community member (Glenorchy). However, there are times when community groups may wield considerable influence. Recent examples include dog walkers at Kingborough and at Sorell. These groups demanded the right to walk their dogs in locations used by wildlife, including endangered species. Provision needs to be made to allow for expert advice from, for example, *Birdlife Tasmania*. Please note, this is not a group of 'twitchers' (aka feathered train spotters), but includes many highly regarded scientists in its leadership and wider membership.

6. **Ref 18 Removing prescriptive consultation requirements:**

As mentioned earlier in this submission, I would like to see public notices in the newspapers retained, and the option for individuals to request postal communications.

7. **Ref. 28 Transfer of Rating methods:**

Ideally, I would like to see a common rating method used by all councils, in order to enable a clear comparison between rates.

8. **Ref. 29 Economic Regulator to oversee council's rates:**

Whilst I support such oversight, as a possible early warning indication of a council's financial difficulties, I am aware that a participant at the Tuesday 27 August session at the Hobart Town Hall insisted that rate increases should be capped at cost of living increases. Clearly this would have made it well-nigh impossible for the recently elected Glenorchy Council to take the urgently needed steps to rectify their parlous budget situation, resulting from the previous council's malfeasance. Councils must have flexibility in the ratings area.

9. **Ref. 49 By-laws:**

There needs to be a requirement that councils review their by-laws **before they expire**. I say this because on at least two occasions the former Glenorchy council was unable to act on reports I made about activities in a local reserve because the relevant by-law had been allowed to lapse.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'BR', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Bob Holderness-Roddam