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5 April 2023

Attention: Merit-based recruitment in councils discussion paper  
Office of Local Government  
Department of Premier and Cabinet  
GPO Box 123  
**HOBART TAS 7001**

Email: [lgconsultation@dpac.tas.gov.au](mailto:lgconsultation@dpac.tas.gov.au)

Dear Sir/Madam

**COMMENTS ON MERIT-BASED RECRUITMENT IN COUNCILS DISCUSSION PAPER**

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comment on the Merit-based recruitment in councils discussion paper, dated March 2023.

The Council is supportive of any actions to require the adoption of policies to require that:

- Council employees are appointed and promoted based on merit;
- There is a reasonable opportunity for members of the community to apply for employment in local government;
- Recruitment decisions are documented and recorded; and
- The Council promotes fairness and equity in employment, including access to employment opportunities.

The City of Launceston's Enterprise Agreement and the policies and procedures that support its implementation, such as the Recruitment and Selection Policy, are already based on such principles.

The Council's Enterprise Agreement also requires that full-time, part-time and casual Employees must participate in structured performance feedback and remuneration review meetings (reviews) at least once per year. Information that results from performance feedback is then required to be utilised when determining if an employee is to be recommended for a remuneration increase.

Further to this, it has always been the practice of the City of Launceston to undertake a public recruitment and selection process for a vacancy in the role of Chief Executive Officer/General Manager (CEO). The Council's processes have always been:

- open and competitive;
- based on an assessment against a detailed role description, including selection criteria;
- informed by the recommendations of a selection panel, comprising a majority of councillors and supported by persons appropriately qualified in contemporary human resources practices; and
- documented comprehensively, including the evaluation of candidates against the criteria in the role description.

Once appointed, the performance of the Council's CEO is assessed annually through a process which is based on clear and measurable goals agreed between the CEO and the council, guided and/or conducted by persons appropriately qualified in contemporary human resources practices. The performance review then guides the Council's consideration of any remuneration increases and is fully documented and recorded in a closed council meeting each year.

In respect to your specific questions:

**Whether the proposition balances appropriately the merit principle with the principle of equitable access to employment and promotion;**

Yes, it is the view of the Council that it would.

**Whether the degree of operational separation, namely that the requirements be embedded and operationalised through council policy, practices and procedures, is appropriate;**

Yes, if the requirements are legislated it would be appropriate that they be operationalised through council policy, practices and procedures. There could be model documents prepared to assist Councils, noting that it would be important for any guiding documents to consider how they support existing Enterprise Agreements.

**Whether the proposition adequately focuses the legislative intent on systemic standards, rather than individual employment decisions.**

The proposition does suitably focus the intent on systematic standards and the creation of an overarching framework which would still leave the individual employment decisions with the Councils.

Yours sincerely

  
**Michael Stretton**  
**Chief Executive Officer**