

Our ref: Local Government Reforms
Enquiries Glenorchy City Council
Direct phone: (03) 6216 6800
Email: gccmail@gcc.tas.gov.au

3/11/2025

Office of Local Government
Department of Premier and Cabinet
PO Box 123
Hobart TAS 7000

By email: lg.consultation@dpac.tas.gov.au

Dear Director,

SUBMISSION ON REFORMS TO COUNCILLOR NUMBERS AND ALLOWANCES

Glenorchy City Council welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the Discussion Paper: Reforms to Councillor Numbers and Allowances. Council acknowledges the Government's commitment to ensuring a fair, transparent, and sustainable framework for councillor numbers and remuneration, and we strongly support the intent of these reforms.

Following consideration at its meeting of 27 October 2025, Council unanimously resolved to make the following submission (a copy of the report is attached).

1. Recognition of Councils as Boards of Governance

Council supports elected members being regarded as equivalent to directors of a company board. Councillors exercise fiduciary oversight, make strategic decisions, and carry significant legal responsibilities for an organisation with multimillion-dollar budgets, large workforces, and extensive infrastructure portfolios. Allowances should therefore be treated as director fees for governance work, reinforcing the seriousness of the role and attracting skilled and diverse candidates.

2. Alignment of Allowances

Glenorchy City Council advocates that the four Greater Hobart Councils (Hobart, Clarence, Glenorchy and Kingborough) be aligned within a single allowance band. These councils together constitute Tasmania's capital city region and share common governance characteristics, including large populations, high-value infrastructure, complex service delivery, and strategic planning responsibilities within the metropolitan context.

Glenorchy City Councillors believe they are being unfairly disadvantaged by being placed in Allowance Band 1.2 because of the criteria used. The average development applications could change drastically in the near future with a new structure plan that is being proposed

for approval. Council is also undertaking a body of work to open up urban housing densification along the Norther Suburbs Transit Corridor. These projects will also change the population, demographics, sealed road lenth and infrastructure requirements. Also, Glenorchy has the highest population of people with disability and large multicultural communities, which must be considered in the provision of infrastructure and service delivery. These are not mentioned in the criteria used.

The workloads, statutory obligations, and accountability requirements of councillors across these four municipalities are effectively equivalent. Differentiating their allowances would undermine the principle of “equal pay for equal work” and create inequities between councillors performing identical governance functions within the same metropolitan region.

Allowance parity across the Greater Hobart Councils would:

- Provide consistency and transparency in remuneration.
- Ensure fairness across metropolitan councillors with comparable responsibilities.
- Avoid distortions in recruitment, retention, or public perception between councils in the same region.
- Recognise the standing of metropolitan councils as professional governance bodies similar to corporate boards.

On this basis, Council submits that a consistent allowance framework for the Greater Hobart Councils is essential to achieving equity, transparency, and professionalism across Tasmania’s largest and most complex local governments.

3. Superannuation Contributions

Council supports mandatory payment of the 12% superannuation equivalent directly into councillors nominated superannuation funds. This would:

- align councillor remuneration with national employment standards,
- remove misconceptions that councillors do not receive superannuation, and
- ensure councillors who devote significant time to civic duties are not disadvantaged in retirement savings.

4. Taxation Arrangements

Council supports councillor allowances being subject to Pay As You Go (PAYG) taxation. This will provide clarity, reduce compliance risks, and ensure councillors are treated consistently with other officeholders such as company directors.

5. Quorum Guidance

Council supports the introduction of quorum management provisions in the Local Government Act. Smaller councils with five councillors are particularly vulnerable to quorum challenges arising from illness, absences, or conflicts of interest. Statutory guidance, similar to that in the Victorian Local Government Act 2020, would provide certainty and ensure continuity of governance.

6. Embedding Methodology in Legislation

Council strongly supports embedding the methodology for determining councillor numbers and allowances into legislation. The current ad-hoc review system lacks consistency and transparency. Legislative certainty will ensure:

- regular reviews occur at fixed intervals,
- a consistent formula is applied across all councils, and
- politicisation or delay of future reviews is avoided.

This will provide fairness for councillors, clarity for communities, and stability for the sector.

Glenorchy City Council commends the Government for initiating this reform process. We believe the reforms, if adopted as outlined above, will deliver a modern, equitable, and sustainable framework for councillor numbers and allowances, strengthen local governance, and support the recruitment and retention of capable elected representatives.

Council appreciates the opportunity to contribute to this important review and looks forward to the Government's consideration of our submission.

Yours sincerely,



Emilio Reale
Chief Executive Officer