

17 November 2025

Department of Premier and Cabinet

Local Government Division
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Submission – Exposure Draft LG Amendment Bill

Sorell Council welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the above matter.

While it is pleasing to see the reform measures progressing, we would rather a more comprehensive process that addressed most if not all of the recommendations made in the Future of Local Government final report. A staged implementation approach similar to that now proposed for the targeted amendments could have set out a 3-5 year pathway for all the recommended reforms, better demonstrated respect for the process and leveraged the considerable resources invested by councils and communities around the state.

On the whole the legislative reforms are necessary and welcome. Sorell Council already has a comprehensive community engagement strategy and internal audit program. We are particularly supportive of the learning and development improvements, role statement and charter, strategic planning and reporting, community engagement, workforce planning and internal audit. We strongly support improving consistency in data collection and reporting methodologies. This is particularly relevant if rates notices are to include transparent, coherent and consistent rate strategy advice that ties rate revenue to services and functions.

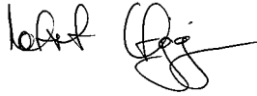
As we provided in an earlier submission, it is again noted that most of the above carry the potential for additional resourcing and cost, particularly for smaller councils.

The matter of temporary advisors for Councils seems to be a potentially heavy handed intervention or duplication, that would be achieved in any case given effective application of the other reforms along with existing powers. A council with serious breaches or systemic issues will either be addressing them through their own governance, strategic planning, audit panel advice and internal audit processes, or would deservedly warrant formal intervention under existing rules. Or is the temporary advisor meant to be a coach or guide? In that case the description and terms need to more clearly capture the role and intended outcomes.

The staged introduction seems sensible, though we would rather see 6 month rather than 12 month windows for learning and development etc.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Discussion Paper. Sorell Council remains committed to working collaboratively with the Tasmanian Government and the local government sector to achieve meaningful reforms that strengthen councils and benefit communities across the State.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robert Higgins', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robert Higgins
Chief Executive Officer

