

From: [Rachel Summers](#)
To: [Consultation, LG](#)
Subject: Submission - Targeted Amendments to the Local Government Act 1993
Date: Friday, 21 March 2025 2:29:44 PM

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Hi,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission regarding the targeted amendments to the Local Government Act 1993 outlined in the December 2024 Discussion Paper. The following comments are my personal opinion and not that of Flinders Council, who will be providing a submission separately.

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Kind regards,

Rachel Summers

My feedback on specific points is as follows:

Strategic Priority 1: Lifting standards of professionalism, conduct, and integrity

2. Introducing serious councillor misconduct provisions There are too many instances of unacceptable behaviour by councillors, including bullying and harassment directed towards council staff, community members, and fellow councillors. Such misconduct often arises from individuals pursuing personal agendas or seeking to disrupt council operations intentionally. Stronger and clearer misconduct provisions are essential to mitigate the negative impacts of councillors acting in bad faith, protecting both council functionality and community trust.

4. Introducing temporary advisors for councils The introduction of temporary advisors is a positive step to assist councils experiencing governance difficulties. To maximise their effectiveness, it is crucial that the advisors' roles, responsibilities, and powers are clearly defined, including explicit clarification regarding reporting structures and accountability mechanisms.

6. Mandating council learning and development obligations Councillors, unlike corporate board members, are elected without specific prerequisite qualifications or experience. Mandating initial education will ensure that all councillors begin their roles equipped with essential knowledge in finance, strategic planning, governance, and risk management. All councillors, irrespective of their prior experience, should undertake compulsory baseline training at the commencement of any legislative

changes.

From personal experience, I have observed longstanding councillors lacking fundamental understandings, such as the scope of their involvement in enterprise agreements or the confidentiality expectations during closed council sessions.

Moreover, there should be ongoing mandatory professional development throughout the council term, complemented by optional, specialised training opportunities. Training programs must be practical, engaging, and manageable, avoiding overly burdensome time commitments. Completion (or non-completion) of mandated training, as well as other council-funded professional development, should be transparently reported within council annual reports.

Strategic Priority 2: Driving a high-performing, transparent, and accountable sector

11. Mandating internal audit for councils While internal audits are beneficial in principle, mandatory audits impose significant financial and administrative burdens on smaller councils already operating at capacity. Current external audit expenses are substantial, approximately \$40,000 annually for some councils. Additional responsibilities imposed by state government without corresponding funding amplify these pressures. It is advisable for the state government to extend its initiative to reduce bureaucratic requirements to local government operations, supporting rather than constraining council functionality.

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