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The Hon. Nic Street MP
Minister for Local Government
Office of Local Government
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cc: lq.consultation@dpac.tas.gov.au

Dear Minister

SUBMISSION TO CODE OF CONDUCT FRAMEWORK AMENDMENTS

I write to you in response to your recent letter, informing the Council of the release of draft amendments to the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2015* and a new draft *Local Government Code of Conduct Order* and inviting submissions in response to the Government's consultation package.

The draft amendments were circulated to Councillors and discussed at a recent Council workshop.

On behalf of the Council, I can advise that Central Coast are broadly supportive of the draft amendments' intent, and recognise the need for change following public concern over recent years when the limitations of the existing Code of Conduct Framework were exposed.

The amended Framework and Statutory Rules provide greater clarity and statewide consistency in understanding what is deemed acceptable, and unacceptable, behaviour for councillors.

However, I noted strong concerns around the table that the amendments were overly prescriptive and appeared punitive in nature. Whilst Councillors recognised the need to set clear standards of behaviour, supported by measures to effect accountability, there was a perception that the bad behaviour of the few has resulted in amendments that unnecessarily impose on the vast majority of councillors – who are dedicated and diligent representatives of their respective communities.

While recognising the need for stronger accountability of councillor actions, Central Coast's experience is that a greater collaborative framework is established through a values led process.

Central Coast has recently adopted a Culture Development Plan, which established a set of core organisational values – COAST.


- Customer Focus
- Open Communication
- Accountability
- Safety
- Together – One Team

These values are used to help align the behaviours of staff and Councillors with our target culture, and provide a practical and effective tool in establishing standards of behaviour and holding each other to account.

Such an approach to the Code of Conduct amendments could provide a less prescriptive, but nonetheless effectual framework, based on the shared values of all Tasmanians.

I trust that this submission provides practical feedback to the draft amendments and commend your work to date.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Cheryl Fuller". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cr Cheryl Fuller
MAYOR