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Hon. Nic Street MP  
Minister for Local Government  
GPO Box 123  
Hobart TAS 7001

**By Email:** [Minister.Street@dpac.tas.gov.au](mailto:Minister.Street@dpac.tas.gov.au)

Dear Minister,

## **Local Government Code of Conduct – Consultation on Draft Regulations and Order**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the draft amendments to the Local Government (General) Regulations 2015 and the new draft Local Government Code of Conduct Order.

Overall, Council is supportive of the proposed changes. These amendments do require additional administrative action on the part of the Elected Members and Council Officers. However, it is evident that there are benefits to be gained from consistency in the dispute resolution process and the Code of Conduct across councils. Although the changes are minor, they will streamline and modernise the Code of Conduct Framework which will be of great benefit.

### **Changes to the General Regulations**

Consistency in the processes and principles relating to dispute resolution across Tasmanian councils is key. It is appreciated that the prescribed requirements are broad enough to enable councils to have a level of autonomy over the creation and adoption of policies.

Suitability, accessibility, equitability and transparency are appropriately outlined as the overarching principles for dispute resolution policies. In terms of accessibility, it would

be valuable to include that this applies in terms of ensuring the processes are clear and written in a manner that is easy to comprehend and understand.

Annual reporting requirements will create additional administrative burden. However, the benefits of tracking this information, especially directly following the amendments, will be valuable to demonstrate whether the changes are having the desired impact while simultaneously guiding any future revisions.

### **Replacement Ministerial Order**

The automatic application of the statewide Code of Conduct will improve efficiency. It is understandable that each council having slightly different Codes could cause difficulties during the investigation process and that issue will be mitigated by having a consistent approach across all councils. The addition of the 'prohibited conduct' section, and amendments to reflect gender neutral language, are also supported changes.

It is understood that the current priority is to implement the recommended changes to the Code, and that a substantive review will not be undertaken at this time. Council looks forward to being able to provide comment regarding proposed changes to the Code in the future.

Once again, Council would like to thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the draft amendments to the Local Government (General) Regulations 2015 and the new draft Local Government Code of Conduct Order.

Yours sincerely,



Tony McMullen  
**General Manager**