

Media Release

The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP

Minister for Local Government

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

Minister for Industrial Relations



Friday, 10 June, 2016

BIG IDEAS FOR FUTURE OF VICTORIAN COUNCILS RELEASED

The Andrews Labor Government is inviting Victorians to have their say on proposed reforms to the *Local Government Act 1989*, aimed at creating more efficient and collaborative local councils.

Minister for Local Government Natalie Hutchins today released a Directions Paper as part of the review, which proposes far-reaching changes to the Act, including:

- Extending mayoral terms to two years, strengthening their powers and providing the option of direct election
- Making council electoral structures, the number of councillors and wards more consistent
- Putting communities at the centre of shaping council plans by requiring councils to undertake deliberative community engagement (for example, citizens juries)
- Remove the requirement for non-resident property owners to be voters
- Making voting rules consistent and providing the option for electronic voting for Council elections in 2020
- Giving stronger powers to the Minister for Local Government to deal with individual councillors who compromise council governance
- Improving transparency of CEO pay, recruitment, conditions and performance
- Creating a single consistent land valuation system for levying rates

During the past year, the Government has held 10 community consultation forums across Victoria. We also released the Act Review Discussion Paper, which received more than 300 submissions.

There will now be a new round of consultation on the reforms proposed in the Directions Paper.

The Review will look at every element of the current Local Government Act, including the objectives, roles and functions of councils, the powers required by councils to achieve these objectives, and how council operations can be streamlined and modernised.

To have your say on the future of Local Government in Victoria, visit: www.yourcouncilyourcommunity.vic.gov.au

Quotes attributable to Minister for Local Government Natalie Hutchins

"This is about reforming local government so councils can serve their communities more effectively and efficiently."

"With the release of the Directions Paper today, the Andrews Labor Government is inviting a new round of consultation on a range of exciting and different ideas to improve local communities statewide."