Media Release

The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP
Minister for Local Government
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs
Minister for Industrial Relations

VICTORIA
State Government

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CITIZENS' JURY TO DECIDE ON FUTURE COUNCIL FOR GEELONG

The Andrews Labor Government will create a Citizens' Jury to recommend the best future design of the City of Greater Geelong.

The Council was dismissed earlier this year after a Commission of Inquiry found it was dysfunctional, unable to provide long-term vision for the city and riddled with internal conflict and a culture of bullying.

The Labor Government will work with the Geelong community to design a governance structure prior to the return of an elected council, set for October 2017.

The Citizens' Jury will be asked to consider:

- how the Mayor is elected
- if a Deputy Mayor is needed and how they are elected
- the number of councillors
- representative structures (e.g. whether the municipality is unsubdivided or divided into wards and if they are multi-member wards)

The independent group *newDemocracy Foundation* will select the Jury and oversee the process, bringing together a representative but random sample of 100 citizens.

This will strike a balance between experts and the views of the community in recommending a future representative structure for the council.

The process will include giving all members of the Geelong community the opportunity to have their say so that the Jury is fully informed about community views when it deliberates.

The Jury will produce a report with recommendations for the Government to consider. The recommendations will be public and the Minister will report back to the jury in person once government has considered their ideas.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Local Government Natalie Hutchins:

"The Andrews Labor Government wants to know what the people of Geelong think is best for their future council and to help design it."

"The last Council failed to deliver good governance – and a Citizens' Jury will help ensure that does not happen again."