

Minister for Infrastructure
Minister for Local Government

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Mr Mark Shelton MP
Member for Lyons

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Dear Mr Shelton

On 16 October 2024 in the House you asked the former Minister for Local Government the following question on behalf of your constituents:

My constituents of Lyons have mentioned concerns to me in relation to behaviour of some of their elected local government representatives, where they feel it does not align with community expectations. Can the Minister please provide me with an update on what the government is doing to lift behavioural standards amongst local councillors?

Thank you for this important question, and I apologise for the delay in providing this response.

The Tasmanian Liberal Government is committed to raising the standard of behaviour in Local Government and ensuring the Code of Conduct process is contemporary and fit for purpose.

Amendments to the *Local Government Act 1993* relating to the Code of Conduct passed the Parliament in 2023 and are now in place, including a requirement for mandatory dispute resolution policies and the improvement of initial assessment of Code of Conduct complaints. We see this as key to ensuring a speedy resolution to many areas of poor behaviour and allowing a faster processing of more serious breaches of the Code of Conduct.

As former mayors, we know the challenges a council can face when dealing with poor councillor behaviour. We also have a deep appreciation for the role of a councillor, and the need for councils to operate with a balance of harmony and healthy debate. To support this, councils now have the tools they need to manage minor issues 'in-house' without having to resort to the Code of Conduct process.

Lifting standards of professionalism and conduct is front and centre in our Local Government Priority Reform Program 2024-26 to ensure communities have confidence their councils are delivering for them where it matters.

Yours sincerely

Hon Kerry Vincent MLC
Minister for Local Government