

Reform	Response	Comments
Theme 1. Earlier Intervention, effective regulation and stronger penalties		
A new oversight Inspector for local government will be appointed to handle complaints, manage investigations, and coordinate the proactive resolution of significant problems identified within local governments. The Inspector will have the authority to receive complaints about local government CEOs.	57% supportive 43% neutral	Several Council Members queried the qualifications and experience the Inspector, Monitors and members of the Conduct Panel will be required to have. Further information was requested by a Council Member on how the new processes will work.
Specialist independent Monitors appointed by the Inspector will visit and work with local governments to fix problems, to provide for faster resolution where problems are identified.	57% supportive 29% neutral 14% not supportive	As above.
Stronger penalties will be imposed by a new Conduct Panel. This will include short-term disqualification or withholding of allowances for elected members who have been found to be in breach of the Local Government Act or Regulations.	100% supportive	As above.
Elected members who do not complete mandatory training within a certain time will not be eligible for any allowances or sitting fees. They will also be liable for other penalties.	86% supportive 14% not supportive	One Council Member remarked that training should remain mandatory but not be penalised for failing to complete the training within the prescribed time.
Mayors and Presidents will have consistent powers to eject anyone who disrupts a council meeting, with appropriate checks and balances by the Local Government Inspector, to prevent the misuse of these powers. This reform will also be supported by mandatory audio or video recording of council meetings.	57% supportive 14% neutral 29% not supportive	One Councillor observed that red card ejections may be subject to personality differences between the Mayor and the person being ejected and cautioned that the effect of this reform may cause resentment towards Councils.
Theme 2. Reducing red tape, increasing consistency and simplicity		
The procedures for all council meetings, including for public question time, will be standardised across the State. This is proposed to improve consistency and make engaging with council decisions simpler and easier.	100% supportive	
Reforms will introduce standard approvals for key local government regulations and approvals, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • alfresco and outdoor dining • minor small business signage rules • community events 	72% supportive 14% neutral 14% not supportive	One Council Member noted that each locality has different circumstances and each needs different regulations and approvals.
Local laws will be streamlined to create greater consistency and reduce the complexity of regulation, particularly for rules about installing minor signage for small business, and the planning of community events. There will be new, simple model local laws that local governments can easily adopt.	71% supportive 29% not supportive	As above.
Legislation will specifically enable and encourage local governments to share resources, including CEOs and senior employees. For instance, it will be easier for two or three local governments to hire one shared CEO.	86% supportive 14% not supportive	A Council Member opined that resource sharing between local governments is suitable for plant and equipment but not for staff who should concentrate on one local government only so that it gets the full benefit of their expertise.
Reforms to standardise and simplify the approval of crossovers (the part of driveways connecting to the road) for residential developments on local roads as part of the Phase 2 Planning and Local Government Reforms,	43% supportive 29% neutral 28% not supportive	A Council Member queried whether the crossover reforms will make allowances for heritage areas.

announced jointly by the Minister for Planning and the Minister for Local Government, will be implemented.		
Theme 3. Greater transparency and accountability		
Large local governments will be required to livestream meetings, and post recordings online. Smaller local governments will be required to record and publish audio recordings.	86% supportive 14% neutral	
Clear rules will define the types of decisions that can be made by councils in confidential meetings, and recordings of those decisions will be required to be stored as permanent records.	86% supportive 14% neutral	
There will be new state-wide standards for reporting of important local government transactions through online registers.	71% supportive 29% neutral	
The Key Performance Indicators (KPI) used to measure the performance of the CEO will be made publicly available, and the results will also be reported. The CEO will also have the right to publish comments to provide context to the results.	43% supportive 29% neutral 28% not supportive	A comment was made in support of the CEO's KPIs being made public but not the results of the performance review as the Councillor believes this would put too much pressure on both the CEO and Councillors conducting the review.
To provide consistent transparency of decision-making across all local governments, all votes cast by all councillors for all decisions on council will be required to be reported in council minutes.	86% supportive 14% neutral	The Town of Claremont already records Council Member votes in its Council and Committee minutes.
Theme 4. Stronger local democracy and community engagement		
All electors in large local governments will be able to vote directly for the mayor or president, giving ratepayers more power to choose the leadership of their council.	100% supportive	The Mayor of the Town is elected by popular vote.
It is proposed that local government elected members will be elected by preferential voting, which is the same as State and Federal elections.	100% not supportive	Three Council Members provided feedback on this proposed reform as detailed below: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Preferential voting will lead to factions, block voting, and perceptions of lack of independence. Many of us choose Local Government so that we are an independent voice and that we are not aligned to backers or political parties. It has been stated that we are trying to encourage women and younger people, the combination of preferential voting and eliminating wards in smaller councils, will make it very expensive to campaign as an independent and will be counterproductive to this aim of increased diversity." 2. "I don't support preferential voting as it may encourage potential candidates to form alliances for voting preferences. This could encourage local government to become politicised, and for voting blocks on Council to be formed, taking away the independence of Councillors. The cost to local government of counting the votes would also increase." 3. "Preferential voting is unnecessary as voters already have choice and control over who they elect. Preferential voting will not change this and will complicate the process."
To increase consistency, the number of elected members on any council will be set based upon the population within that local government. The	57% supportive 43% not supportive	This proposed reform would mean that the number of Council Members would be reduced by one to a total of nine.

<p>Local Government Panel Report recommended a number of elected members as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • population of up to 5000 — 5 councillors (including the president) • population of between 5000 and 75,000 — 5 to 9 councillors (including the mayor/president) • population of above 75,000 — 9 to 15 councillors (including the mayor). 		<p>One Council Member opined that the band for populations between 5000 and 75000 is too vast and believes the number of Councillors should continue to be determined by each local government. Another commented that because each local government has different needs there should not be a consistent number of Councillors according to population and that there needs to be enough Councillors to be able to respond to ratepayers.</p>
<p>Wards in small local governments can cover very limited areas, with small populations. In line with a broader trend, it is proposed that wards for all small local governments be abolished.</p>	<p>14% supportive 15% neutral 71% not supportive</p>	<p>The majority of Council Members are not supportive of abolishing wards, some of the reasons provided were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abolishing wards would lead to increased campaigning costs which may deter young and diverse candidates or encourage political parties to become involved in campaigns. • Council Members know their wards intimately and wards are important for local representation.
<p>Rules for who is eligible to vote or run for council will be tightened, ensuring that only legitimate residents or businesses will be eligible. New laws will prevent candidates from using sham leases in council elections. The basis for why a candidate is eligible to run will also be required to be publicly disclosed.</p>	<p>71% supportive 29% neutral</p>	
<p>Local governments will be required to establish a Charter which sets out how it will engage with ratepayers and the community about the local government’s proposed policies, initiatives, and projects. A model Charter will be published to assist local governments who wish to adopt a standard Charter.</p>	<p>71% supportive 29% neutral</p>	
<p>Theme 5. Clearer roles and responsibilities</p>		
<p>New principles will be included in the Act to foster a culture of better practice, based on the recommendations of the Local Government Review Panel Report.</p>	<p>57% supportive 43% neutral</p>	
<p>Local governments will be required to introduce a communications agreement outlining communications process between councillors and the CEO.</p>	<p>71% supportive 29% neutral</p>	
<p>It is proposed to amend the Act to specify the roles and responsibilities of all Elected Members.</p>	<p>86% supportive 14% neutral</p>	
<p>A statewide caretaker period for local governments is proposed. This means that all local governments across the State will have the same clearly defined election period, during which all councils operate on a caretaker basis.</p>	<p>29% supportive 28% neutral 43% not supportive</p>	<p>One Council Member observed that “a caretaker period would mean that during a significant part of each two years, Council cannot make decisions” and that this would distract from the “requirement for Councillors to act in the best interests of the town and the residents at all times, including the run up to each election.”</p>
<p>Local governments will be able to decide to make superannuation contributions for elected members. Councils will also be able to decide to cover tuition fees for elected members who undertake further study related to local government</p>	<p>71% supportive 14% neutral 15% not supportive</p>	<p>At the Ordinary Council Meeting on 16 November 2021, Council resolved to support WALGA’s advocacy for the Act to be amended to make superannuation compulsory for all Councils (carried 6/4). One Councillor opined that superannuation should be mandatory for all local governments to ensure consistency.</p>

DLGSC propose to establish an approved panel of CEO recruitment panel members for the role of independent person on a recruitment and selection panel. Local governments will be able to appoint people outside of the designated panel with approval from the Local Government Inspector.	57% supportive 43% neutral	
It is proposed that roles will be further defined, providing a greater understanding of the CEO's responsibilities and clear delineation between the functions of council and the CEO, as leader of the administration.	71% supportive 29% neutral	
In accordance with the Local Government Review Panel Report's recommendation, WALGA will no longer be constituted under the Local Government Act 1995. This will provide clarity that WALGA is not a State Government entity.	14% supportive 71% neutral 15% not supportive	
Theme 6. Improved financial management		
New standardised templates will be established for local government financial statements. Smaller (band 3 and 4) local governments will have more streamlined standard financial statements, reflecting the generally less complex operations of smaller local governments.	100% supportive	
All local governments will adopt a short Rates and Revenue Policy. The policy will provide greater clarity for ratepayers by linking the cost of services and the maintenance of assets (such as roads and recreation facilities) to the setting of rates.	29% supportive 71% neutral	
Local governments are required to report seven ratios in their annual financial statements which are reported on the MyCouncil website. The financial metrics reported on the MyCouncil website will be reviewed and adjusted to ensure they best reflect the underlying financial position of the local government.	29% supportive 71% neutral	
There is currently no legislative requirement for employee credit card statements to be provided to Council. New reforms will introduce a requirement that employee credit card statements are to be provided to council at meetings on a monthly basis.	71% supportive 29% neutral	Employee credit card transactions are included in the list of payments report presented to Council for each month.
Other changes to the legislation will provide for general improvements for financial management: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to require audit and risk committees to have an independent chairperson and allowing regional local governments to share audit and risk committees to reduce costs. Reforms will allow local governments to provide fixed-interest loans to building owners to fund specific building upgrade finance. The cost of waste collection services provided to a property will be required to be separately stated on any rates notice for that property. 	Feedback sought only	<p>The following comments were provided with respect to the proposed changes to Audit and Risk Committees:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> "How will the independent Chair of the Audit and Risk committee be resourced? What qualifications will they need? What happens if a local government can't find a suitable person willing to do it?" "Sharing of audit and risk committees will not work because each locality is different and has different needs. Cost reduction should not be the reason for this type of "reform". <p>With respect to the ability for local governments to provide fixed interest loans a Council Member opined that "local governments are not financial institutions so should not provide loans to any entity."</p>