

Media Release

The Hon Melissa Horne MP

Minister for Casino, Gaming and Liquor Regulation

Minister for Local Government

Minister for Ports and Freight

Minister for Roads and Road Safety



Wednesday, 10 July 2024

MONITOR APPOINTED TO COLAC OTWAY SHIRE COUNCIL

A municipal monitor has been appointed to Colac Otway Shire Council to support good governance processes and practices at the council.

Minister for Local Government Melissa Horne today announced Ms Christine Ferguson will begin as municipal monitor to Colac Otway Shire Council from 12 July 2024 to 31 January 2025. She will provide a report to the Minister at the end of her term.

The Chief Municipal Inspector recommended the Minister exercise her powers under the *Local Government Act*, based on reports of issues relating to the conduct of councillors and a lack of adherence to governance rules.

Ms Ferguson will oversee, advise and support the council to improve its governance processes and practices and assist in the lead up to, and during, the local government elections in October.

Christine Ferguson is an accomplished executive and non-executive director with extensive experience in the Victorian public sector. She is currently serving as a non-executive Director at Triple Zero Victoria, and has also held a range of senior roles at the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action.

The Allan Labor Government has passed reforms to the *Local Government Act 2020* to improve culture, governance and integrity standards in Victoria's councils.

The reforms introduce mandatory training for elected representatives, a uniform councillor code of conduct and strengthened powers for the Minister to address councillor conduct.

Further information about these reforms and the terms of reference for the municipal monitor are available at localgovernment.vic.gov.au/council-governance.

Quote attributable to Minister for Local Government Melissa Horne

"Christine Ferguson's valuable experience puts her in an excellent position to support Colac Otway Shire Council to improve its governance processes and practices ahead of the council elections in October."