

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



Monday, 2 September 2024

MUNICIPAL MONITORS FOR CASEY, STRATHBOGIE AND WHITTLESEA

Municipal monitors will be appointed to three Victorian councils to guide newly elected councillors in their first year of elected representation following the local government elections in October.

Monitors will be appointed to Casey City, Whittlesea City and Strathbogie Shire Councils to support the transition back to elected councillors and ensure good governance practices.

Casey and Whittlesea councillors were dismissed in 2020 until the 2024 elections, while Strathbogie councillors were dismissed in late 2023 for the remainder of the term.

The monitors will support the newly elected councillors to restore good governance and help prevent the recurrence of issues that led to each council's dismissal.

The monitors and their terms of reference will be announced in due course.

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

Councils will have a uniform councillor code of conduct to create consistent standards of behaviour and increase accountability. A program of mandatory training will be introduced for councillors and mayors, including annual professional development.

The reforms introduce stronger sanctions for councillor misconduct and improved processes to resolve conduct matters earlier.

The Minister for Local Government will have strengthened powers to deal with councillors that are found to have created a serious risk to health and safety or are preventing their council from performing its functions.

The reforms have been developed in response to reports and recommendations from IBAC, the Chief Municipal Inspector and other interventions which highlighted the need for stronger processes and powers to resolve conduct issues, and better training so councillors can perform their roles effectively.

Further information about the reforms is available at localgovernment.vic.gov.au/council-governance.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Local Government Melissa Horne

"As Casey City, Whittlesea City and Strathbogie Shire Councils return to elected representation, these monitors will guide incoming councillors in governance practices to help them best serve their ratepayers."

"I thank the Administrators for their work in supporting the local community through this challenging time – Victorians rightly expect newly elected councillors to maintain the high standard of good governance that have been put in place."