



Minister for Local Government,  
Minister for Racing and  
Minister for Multicultural Affairs

Our ref: MC18/5298

Your ref: A356771

17 SEP 2018

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Dear Neil

Thank you for your letter of 27 August 2018 about petition number 2936-18 received by the Queensland Legislative Assembly on 22 August 2018 concerning a request for a Parliamentary Inquiry into Local Government and a request to replace the Crime and Corruption Commission (CCC) with an Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC).

Local Governments in Queensland are already subject to oversight by a number of independent bodies including:

- the Queensland Audit Office
- the Queensland Ombudsman
- the CCC.

The request for a Parliamentary Inquiry is a matter for the Parliament to consider however the afore-mentioned independent bodies each operate under specific Acts which collectively provide wide-ranging powers to conduct inquiries and investigations into Local Governments.

In respect of the CCC and its jurisdiction over matters involving corrupt conduct in Local Government, it has proven to be extremely effective in uncovering and exposing corrupt practices in Local Government as proven in a number of Inquiry Reports. Those reports include the recent Operation Belcarra and Operation Windage Reports.

In its Operation Belcarra Report, the CCC made 31 recommendations all of which the Government supports or supports in principle. The Government has already enacted legislation to implement its response to five of these 31 recommendations and is on track to implement its response to all the remaining recommendations. The CCC has also initiated prosecutions against several Councillors and Council employees.

Furthermore, the role of the CCC in investigating Councillor conduct needs to be considered in the context of the overall Councillor conduct complaints system. The CCC, quite appropriately, only has jurisdiction for the most serious matters involving corrupt conduct. Less serious matters such as Councillor misconduct which does not constitute corrupt conduct, are currently managed by the Department of Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs in accordance with the provisions of the *Local Government Act 2009* and may, in some instances, result in referral to the Local Government Remuneration and Discipline Tribunal or a Regional Conduct Review Panel.

However, in May 2018, Parliament enacted legislation to reform the system for managing Councillor conduct complaints. While the CCC retains responsibility for matters involving corrupt conduct, responsibility for matters involving Councillor misconduct will be transferred to the new Office of the Independent Assessor and the new Councillor Conduct Tribunal from December 2018.

These reforms will provide a simpler, more streamlined system for making, investigating and determining complaints about Councillor conduct in Queensland.

I would like to thank the petitioners for raising these matters with me and I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely



**STIRLING HINCHLIFFE MP**  
**Minister for Local Government,**  
**Minister for Racing and**  
**Minister for Multicultural Affairs**