

## Submission to Discussion Paper

Name	Paul Caine
Suburb	Glen Huntly 3163 VIC
Age*	61
Gender*	Male

*\*Please see the last page of this document for our terms and conditions around privacy of your information*

If you work in an organisation/council, please provide the following information:

Organisation/council name:	
Position/job title	
Are you providing this submission on behalf of yourself or the organisation?	Myself / Organisation

Thank you for the opportunity to have input into the LG Review. I have been personally attending council meeting in the City of Caulfield and the City of Glen Eira for more than three decades. In this time I have seen radical changes in the way business is conducted. The Kennett Local Government reform in the 1990, effectively corporatising the structures of our local councils, has seen democratic process whittled away and resident opinions marginalised. I am hoping that this review can recommend or possibly legislate to return much needed democratic reform into our local government structures.

### **1. Notice of Motion procedures should be made mandatory for all city councils**

*The Glen Eira City Council is, I believe, the only city council that does not have "Notice of Motion" procedures within its Local Law provision. These processes were removed from our Local Laws in the 1990's. Without this provision our councillors have no formal process by which they may place an item on the Agenda for a Council Meeting. This is a serious gap in procedural matters and democratic representation. The current procedure in Glen Eira sees the council meeting agendas formed solely by the CEO or bureaucrats. This lack of democratic procedures impedes or makes it near impossible for our*

*elected councillors to represent residents. Other concerns could impede councillors uncovering misdeeds or corruption with the bureaucracy, as they could be stymied or blocked by the bureaucrats, leaving councillors with no legal procedures under local law to discuss the issues.*

**2. Mandate that all councils net-cast their council meetings**

*A significant number of city councils now live-broadcast their council meeting via the internet (net-casting); this makes council meeting accessible to many more residents. The cost to implement this service has plummeted over the last decade, and is now affordable to all city councils. This review should mandate a time-period for implementing the broadcasting of council meetings, as well as set bench marks standards for video and audio quality for this service.*

**3. All councils adhere to have 'dissent from the chair' procedure placed under their Local Law provisions**

*Dissent from the chair should be made mandatory for all council under their Local Law provisions. The reasoning; it may help stop a majority or factional majority among councillors, gagging another councillors right to speak. This gagging tactic is common behavior in Glen Eira City Council Chamber*

**4. All councils adhere to regular rotation of Audit Committee membership and council committee membership**

*This a simple strategy help prevent any systematic corruption flourishing within a city council*

**5. Make it mandatory that all councils publish agendas and full minutes for advisory committee meetings and that these meetings also be open to the public**

*Advisory committees are commonplace in city councils; they provide a democratic window by which residents can participate in council planning and, in another dimension, help with community-based decision making. In my experience bureaucrats tend to censor these committees, by not publishing minutes if they disagree with the discussion or direction the committee representative/s may take. This tension between the two bodies residents and bureaucrats could be helped if the full minutes of all advisory committees where published and the meeting were open to the public*

**6. Mandatory advertising of all CEO positions at the end of their contracts**

*The position of the CEO in local government has become a very powerful position and like all positions they should not be for life. At the end of a contractual term of a CEO the position should be advertised.*

**7. No CEO be appointed for more than 2 consecutive contracts**

*This would aid community governance, by bringing new ideas and methods into local government.*

**8. Minutes to include how each councillor voted**

*This would help residents understand what their councillors are supporting, and also help residents judge councillor's performance.*

**9. The provision of effective guidelines for open, timely and evidence based public consultation on major LG issues etc.**

*The vast majority of residents do not participate in public consultation/s at a LG level. Most residents do not engage in any public consultation processes because they feel their input will be undervalued or ignored. The prevailing opinion of residents that do participate in LG consultation processes is that they are badly run and they believe the outcome was forgone, and the process was held to enable bureaucrats to tick the box of public input. Negative attitudes exist on both sides of the fence with both residents and bureaucrats on what makes for adequate public consultation. Local Governance could be greatly improved if consultation processes provided were more accessible, more genuine, less controlled with the information they offer, and completed with follow through process that enable residents to better understand why or what was achieved.*

We are now post Paris Climate Change talks, and the review discussion material provide was scant in its mention on sustainable development, climate change, and the environment. LG's are in prime position to tackle and show leadership on many of these environmentally related issues. Most of the problems and solutions for ameliorating the effects of climate change will be solved at the local level. Both bureaucrats and Councillors will need to understand the problems and changes needed to transition their LG areas to a lower carbon future. This review should be more encouraging in this area. Ignoring these important issues is not an option.