



Anthony Carbines MP

State Member for Ivanhoe
Parliamentary Secretary for the Environment



MEDIA RELEASE

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STRONGER COUNCILLOR CONDUCT STANDARDS TO BE INTRODUCED.

The Member for Ivanhoe, Mr Anthony Carbines, has today reinforced the importance of the Andrews Labor Government's plan to strengthen councillor conduct standards.

"The proposed Local Government (Improved Governance) Bill 2015, to be presented to Parliament in the next month, will clarify expectations of councillors, provide tougher standards against councillors doing the wrong thing and ensure councils have the ability to respond earlier to misbehaviour", Mr Carbines advised.

The change reflects the feedback of local councils across the state and the need for improvements to the conduct system - particularly in time for the 2016 council general elections.

Mr Carbines said that once agreed to by the Parliament, the Bill would update and improve the current councillor conduct framework.

"Reforms will include requiring councillors to agree to codes of conduct before taking office, making it mandatory for councils to establish procedures to deal with alleged breaches, and enabling conduct panels to suspend councillors for six months without pay in instances of serious misconduct.

The changes will also afford the Minister for Local Government, Natalie Hutchins, the power to direct councils to improve governance and, on the advice of the municipal monitor, stand down councillors for up to 6 months to allow a panel to hear the matter", Mr Carbines added.

He also said that the Andrews Government was committed to ensuring standards of conduct and governance across the state's 79 councils, in addition to more transparent, open and accountable local government.

Quotes attributable to the Member for Ivanhoe, Anthony Carbines:

"While misconduct is thankfully rare, it's important for councils and communities that there are responsive and robust conduct laws in place."

"These reforms are a result of consultation with the local government sector and will give councils and the Victorian Government a broader range of powers to deal with councillors in breach of their codes of conduct."