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From: Phil Anastasakis [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 9 November 2018 5:10 PM
To: DLGSC Act Review
Subject: Local Government Act Review submission

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Hi,

I recently attended the LG Act Review session in Busselton with Councillors and found it very useful and valuable, but I wanted to add comment on one additional topic, being the appointment of CEO's to Council.

I first came to work in local government in 1996, and have for a majority of the last 22 years working for a variety of regional and rural local governments. I have worked as the CEO of two local governments for approximately 8 1/2 years, and as a senior manager in most of my other local government positions.

What I would like to see considered in the current review of the local government Act is the appointment process for CEO's to Council's. There have been too many examples in recent years where Council's (particularly regional and rural Councils) have appointed a CEO that is not adequately qualified, experienced or has been the subject of corruption charges or findings at previous Council's.

I believe the appointment of CEO's for local governments should be not be left solely at the discretion of local government Councillors, but the appointment process and selected applicant should be either :

- 1. overseen by the Public Sector Commission (PSC) through the involvement of a PSC Officer in the interview panel; or**
- 2. or at minimum the preferred applicant is reviewed by the Public Sector Commission before an appointment is made (enabling an appeals option for unsuccessful applicants); or**
- 3. the Local Government CEO is employed as a Senior Executive through the State Public Sector Commission.**

CEO's are often caught between a rock and a hard place when dealing with Councillors and Code of Conduct issues, and compliance with the requirements of the LG Act, regulations, CCC, PID or other matters relating to conduct, behaviour and interactions with Councillors and staff. This leaves CEO's in an unenviable situation where they are required to monitor and report certain Councillors behaviours or matters to the Department, CCC or Public Sector Commission, and then those same Councillors determine whether the CEO is offered a new contract or if their Performance Review is satisfactory.

I have personally experienced this while working as a CEO, and the ensuing fallout from having to report a Councillor caused significant ill feeling, gossip, undermining, and defamation of character and has limited my career options. If I had not reported the particular Councillor then I would have been in breach of the law.

Councillors come from a variety of backgrounds and experiences. Some are well trained in management and human resources matters, and others while often well intentioned, do not have any real experience in employee recruitment, management and performance assessment.

The involvement of the Public Sector Commission in leading the appointment and review of CEO's would provide an expert recruitment and performance management system that would increase the calibre of CEO's working in the local government sector, but would also protect and support CEO's in their role, and enable them to perform their function without fear of retribution from a Councillor or Councillors.

These comments are my personal views, and no doubt there would be many Councillors who would not support my opinion, but in the 22 years since I first entered local government I have seen too many examples where CEO's have been appointed to roles that they should not have through their lack of experience, training or previous corrupt actions, and Councillors who have not understood the functions of the CEO and made appointments based on their personal likes or dislike of a candidate, or political agendas.

Regards



Phil Anastasakis

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