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Tasmanian Government

Glamorgan Spring Bay Councillors

Dear Councillors

I write in response to Council's motion endorsed at the general meeting of 28 January 2025, whereby it was moved that:

Council requests the Director of Local Government's urgent involvement to ensure stable operation of Glamorgan Spring Bay Council.

Following that meeting, the Acting General Manager referred the motion to me and provided additional context at my request. I appreciate that Council has been grappling with some challenging issues that have generated tension within chambers, and I therefore wish to share my views on the motion and the concerns raised with me, in order to assist Council in charting a way forward.

The Office of Local Government undertakes its best endeavours to support all Tasmanian councils in performing their roles and functions. This support can take the form of formal or informal advice, guidance, education, or targeted regulatory intervention. However, the Office's power to intervene—particularly in the internal operations of councils—is appropriately limited. Any significant intervention by this Office or by the Minister is not taken lightly and is considered a last resort.

While I have not formed a definitive view on the motion itself, I understand that Council, through its Acting General Manager, is currently navigating a period of change in its senior executive leadership team, further complicated by the absence of the substantive General Manager and the associated acting arrangements of Mr Porch. It is open to Council to request operational information from the Acting General Manager, especially where such details are pertinent to your strategic oversight of Council's operations. In my view, it would be appropriate in the first instance for councillors to provide the Acting General Manager with an opportunity to advise on the status of these operational matters—including any recruitment processes or management strategies for the vacant senior executive positions—before seeking further involvement from the Office of Local Government.

I also understand that Council has engaged River Road Consulting to support the potential return to work of the substantive General Manager. Beyond that specific engagement, in the circumstances it may be beneficial for Council to consider a broader application of external, objective governance support. For example (and without directing Council), such support could temporarily assist in areas including:

- Conduct associated with Council governance, meeting processes, and procedures;

- Clarifying the management of conflicts;
- Clarifying roles and functions of councillors and the General Manager (i.e., strategic versus operational roles); and
- Facilitating constructive debate.

An objective third party could help Council 'reset' and restore a more effective working environment, which may further support the Acting General Manager during this challenging period – a matter that appears front of mind for councillors.

While I remain of the view that the Office of Local Government need not intervene in Council's business at this stage, I would be grateful for an update on the direction Council wishes to take regarding these matters. At the same time, I always encourage councils to resolve internal issues independently and respectfully, ensuring that external and/or regulatory support is engaged in a measured and appropriate manner.

I remain available to assist further, including in the development of a Terms of Reference should Council decide to proceed with broader temporary governance support.

Yours sincerely



Mike Mogridge
Acting Director of Local Government

Cc: Acting General Manager

5 February 2025