

Executive Summary

On 20 November 2025, the Honourable Ann Leahy MP Minister for Local Government and Water and Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers, introduced the Local Government (Empowering Councils) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 (the Bill) into the Queensland Parliament. The Bill was referred to the Local Government, Small Business and Customer Service Committee (committee) for detailed consideration.

The overarching policy objectives of the Bill are to:

- empower councils
- empower mayors
- improve the councillor conflicts of interest and register of interests frameworks
- reduce unnecessary red tape and regulation
- provide certainty to councillors about matters relating to remuneration, leaves of absence, vacation of office, and eligibility
- promote good governance and decision-making
- enhance safeguards for local government election candidates and participants
- make various minor, administrative and/or technical amendments.

The committee received and considered evidence including: 68 submissions, a written briefing, 2 oral briefings from the Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers, and heard evidence from key stakeholders, including councils, at a public hearing.

Key issues raised by stakeholders concerned the following proposals in the Bill:

- the appointment of 'senior executive employees' by a panel consisting of the mayor, CEO and deputy mayor or committee chairperson
- changes to the conflicts of interest and register of interests frameworks
- removing conduct breaches from the councillor conduct framework
- changes to mandatory training requirements for councillors
- the automatic removal from office of a councillor upon nomination as a candidate for the Legislative Assembly.

The committee is satisfied that the Bill gives sufficient regard to the rights and liberties of individuals and the institution of Parliament as required by the *Legislative Standards Act 1992*.

Further, the committee is satisfied that the Bill is compatible with human rights as defined in the *Human Rights Act 2019*.

The committee made 1 recommendation, found at page vi of this report.