

# Media Release

Wednesday 18 April 2018



## Challenges for Ararat Rural City Council

The VLGA is aware of the challenges facing the Ararat Rural City Council.

There are no provisions under the current Local Government Act (1989) for a mayor or any elected councillor to stand down on a motion of no confidence. However, councillors are elected to represent, lobby and advocate on behalf of their community. They are leaders in the community and are expected to make decisions in the interest of their community.

This is especially true for mayors, who are elected by their fellow councillors as their leader. Mayors are expected to work closely with all elected councillors and council administration in discharging their duties.

It is not uncommon for elected councillors to have paid employment in addition to their council duties due to relatively low levels of councillor allowances.

Mayors have a higher level of allowance than their fellow councillors reflecting their additional duties. While some mayors choose to focus exclusively on their mayoral duties, some do take on additional employment.

The VLGA offers training and support to council staff, councillors, and mayors in performing their duties. While Ararat is not a member of the VLGA, we encourage Ararat Council to seek support to guide them through this uncertain time and offer our support and services to them.

Importantly, the work of the VLGA is to focus on good governance leadership – going beyond the mandated duties outlined in the Local Government Act (1989) to encourage and support mayors and councillors to act with integrity and exercise due diligence in their decision making so as to maintain public trust and confidence in council. The proposed new Local Government Act also clearly outlines the governance requirements of elected local councillors.

### **ENDS:**

Attributable to Kathryn Arndt Chief Executive Officer

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