

# Appendix A:

## Submissions and comments

We have consulted with the Department of Government Services and the agencies named in this report. We considered their views when finalising our analysis in this report. As required by the *Audit Act 1994*, we gave a draft copy of this report, or relevant extracts, to those agencies and asked for their submissions and comments.

Responsibility for the accuracy, fairness and balance of those comments rests solely with the agency head.

We also provided a copy of the report to the Department of Treasury and Finance and the Department of Premier and Cabinet for their information.

### Responses received

Agency	Page
Department of Government Services	A-2



## Department of Government Services

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Our ref: CSEC-2-23-18543

Mr Andrew Greaves  
Auditor-General  
Victorian Auditor-General's Office  
Level 31  
35 Collins Street  
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

By email: [REDACTED]

Dear Mr Greaves

### RESULTS OF 2021-22 AUDITS: LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROPOSED REPORT

Thank you for your letter of 10 February 2023 providing me with a copy of the proposed report titled *Results of 2021-22 Audits: Local Government* (the report) along with an invitation to provide comments for inclusion in the final report.

I note that to date 175 clear audit opinions have been issued for 2021-22 across the sector, including 97 clear opinions on financial reports and 78 clear opinions on performance statements. It is pleasing that this means Parliament and the community can confidently use these reports.

I welcome the finding that councils' balance sheets remain relatively strong, and that the sector's financial position remains sound with low debt levels. Nevertheless, the report also highlights the future financial challenges facing Victorian councils. The department, through Local Government Victoria, will continue to work with the sector to strengthen their financial sustainability. This will emphasise sound management and informed decision making on priorities and planning by councils.

I also note the six recommendations in the report. The department accepts the recommendation directed to Local Government Victoria, who will work with your office during 2023 to streamline the 2023-24 Local Government Model Financial Report and to enhance the structure and layout of the 2023-24 Local Government Model Performance Statement.

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The department will write to all Victorian council Chief Executive Officers following the tabling of the report in Parliament to reinforce the importance of all councils addressing the remaining five recommendations. The critical importance of meeting legislated reporting timeframes will be emphasised.

If you require further information, please contact Mike Gooley, Executive Director Local Government Victoria on [REDACTED].

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Jo de Morton  
Secretary

20 / 2 / 2023

Cc:

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

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