



Local Government Association Tasmania

# **MEDIA RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Property Council Naivety Once Again on Display**

“It is a bit rich that the major lobby group for water reform is now suggesting that the system be turned upside down and councils not get the returns that they were promised,” President of the Local Government Association of Tasmania, Mayor Easter said today.

“The naivety and hypocrisy of the Property Council is once again on display. On one hand it wants rates reduced and on the other hand, seeks to deprive councils of one of its basic revenue sources,” Mayor Easter said.

“It is also unfortunate that the Premier has again resorted to the blame game by suggesting that councils were neglectful in their management of water and sewerage assets and this has led to increased pricing.”

“The reform we had to have was pushed by the Property Council and driven by the State Government. It set up the regulatory environment and it determined that environmental standards had to be met swiftly,” he said.

“It is frustrating that councils were subjected to a reform by others, the pricing of which was known in advance and totally out of the control of councils. This reform should not be about blame.”

Mayor Easter said councils were assured that they would receive the same levels of returns that they earned when they ran these services at the local level. “They have received nowhere near those returns and now the Property Council wants to deprive them of more.”

“Councils have worked diligently to implement a reform that has caused them and customers much grief and anguish. Resorting to blame is counterproductive and misplaced,” Mayor Easter said.

“Councils were happy providing these services to their local communities and continue to look at improvements that will provide greater benefit and value to their communities.”

“No one likes increasing prices but there is an independent regulator that makes that determination. This is the same regulator that, for many years, oversaw the spiraling costs of electricity. Do we assume that this is the result of the underinvestment by the State Government in its electricity infrastructure?” Mayor Easter said.

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**For media enquiries, contact LGAT President Barry Easter on 0408 334 936.**