



**Media Release**  
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## **Tasmanian councils told they have vital role in the State's future**

In a defining era for government globally, councils are in the front-line of changes and challenges and are best placed to take the lead in turning these challenges into opportunities.

This was the message to Tasmanian councils from leading business futurist Ross Dawson in his address to delegates at the Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT) Annual Conference today.

Mr Dawson said among the prominent trends were the rapid ageing of our communities, particularly in regional areas, changing patterns to work enabled by communications technologies, heightened expectations of service and a widespread desire to ensure our society is sustainable.

“Councils need to address these shifts in their organisational structures, from attracting and inspiring talented younger workers, to making the knowledge and expertise of their most experienced staff available beyond their retirement,” Mr Dawson said.

“The ability to collaborate easily and effectively is now fundamental for any organisation and one of the biggest opportunities is for councils to get their communities truly involved in their day-to-day thinking.

“Around the world, forward-thinking local councils are creating powerful ways for their residents to participate, contribute, and to have genuine conversations across their communities on the issues that really matter to them.

“Tapping into the ideas and energy of local residents can help to generate better outcomes than ever before.”

Mr Dawson said elected representatives could also benefit greatly from understanding the current dramatic shift in how people communicated with their peers and friends.

“Those who can participate genuinely in the new flow of online conversation will be best positioned to have their voices heard and views supported,” he said.

“The vital role played by local government will grow even more important in the decades ahead as greater value is placed on peoples' local communities.

“Local government is the closest tier of government to the people and is central to creating a prosperous world for our citizens.

“It just needs to recognise and effectively respond to the inexorable forces of change.”

**ENDS**

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