



## DAVID MORRIS MP

Member for Mornington

# Local Government Minister must act on flawed contracts process

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Revelations from today's [report](#) from the Victorian Ombudsman that a senior member of Melton City Council IT staff was able to direct over \$1 million worth of work to one of his own companies are deeply disturbing and must be immediately acted upon by Labor's Minister for Local Government, Shaun Leane.

The individual concerned reportedly used other companies controlled by him to submit separate and more expensive quotations to give the impression that council requirements had been met.

The report exposes significant gaps in local government contract oversight process. The Ombudsman notes:

- Several layers of contractual arrangements helped mask his associations.
- As a contractor, the individual concerned did not receive the same induction as a permanent employee would have.
- A lack of effective oversight.
- A contract that was insufficiently specific about the actual work to be undertaken.
- A lack of due diligence in tender and requirement processes.
- Lax oversight permitted this person to manipulate Council processes for almost two years

The Ombudsman concludes that this person knowingly misused his position at the Council to obtain a significant private benefit of about \$1.6 million.

Victorians deserve accountability and transparency from the Andrews Labor Government, not endless delays and cover-ups. Only a Liberal Nationals Government will deliver that.

### **Comments attributable to Shadow Minister for Local Government, David Morris:**

"In 2019-20, local councils spent \$9.4 billion providing services and building infrastructure for their local communities. A big chunk of that \$9.4 billion is provided by contractors through what this report clearly demonstrates is a flawed process.

"Why has the Minister for Local Government allowed a situation to develop where Councils are not required to demonstrate compliance with proper contract management practices,

and what is he doing to fix it?"