

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ADMINISTRATION) REGULATIONS 1996 —  
ELECTRONIC MEETINGS**

*Statement by Minister for Local Government*

**MR J.N. CAREY (Perth — Minister for Local Government)** [12.08 pm]: I rise to inform the house that new regulations to allow local government council meetings to continue to be held electronically have been gazetted. Temporary arrangements were in place that enabled councils to hold meetings electronically, as part of the McGowan government's world-leading COVID-19 response. Following the end of the state of emergency, these new provisions will enable local governments across our state to continue to hold meetings electronically. This is another initiative being delivered as part of the McGowan government's package of local government reforms, which are the most significant reforms for local government in more than 25 years.

The new provisions, which are already in effect, will enable councils to hold up to half of all council meetings via electronic means, and provide that councillors—with approval from the mayor, shire president or a majority of council—can attend meetings via electronic means. There will be a cap on the number of meetings a councillor can attend via electronic means; however, this will not apply to councillors living with a disability. These measures will be particularly beneficial to regional local governments because councillors often have to travel some distance to participate in the council decision-making process. Although the measures will provide flexibility to the sector, I encourage local governments to generally hold their meetings in person and host meetings electronically only when necessary.

These regulations will be reviewed after 12 months. A public consultation process will take place, and members of the public will be able to provide feedback on how council meetings have operated under these changes. New provisions relating to the live streaming and recording of council meetings are also being progressed as part of the state government's local government reforms.