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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

2 January 2013

Mr Glenn Worthington  
Secretary  
Joint Select Committee on the Constitutional Recognition of Local Government  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House  
**CANBERRA ACT 2600**

Dear Mr Worthington

### **Constitutional Recognition of Local Government**

The City of Boroondara is a predominantly residential municipality in the inner and middle rings of Melbourne's eastern suburbs representing a diverse and complex community with a relatively stable population of approximately 160,000 residents.

Councils throughout Australia play a vital role in the provision of essential services and infrastructure at the local and regional level including at times of natural disasters.

The importance of the constitutional recognition of local government has been highlighted in stark terms by the 2009 decision of the High Court in the case of *Pape v Federal Commissioner of Taxation* which raises legal doubt over the Commonwealth's powers to fund local government directly.

Council strongly supports constitutional recognition as an essential step in ensuring that local communities receive the services and infrastructure they deserve. Council considered and passed a resolution on 11 April 2011:

1. To call on all political parties to support a referendum in 2013 (or coinciding with the next Federal election) to change to the Australian constitution to achieve recognition of local government.
2. To declare its support for financial recognition of local government in the Australian constitution so that the Federal Government has the power to fund local government directly, and for the inclusion of local government in any new preamble to the Constitution if one is proposed.

The issue of local government's financial recognition in the Constitution is vitally important for the long term sustainability of local government as a sector and something that Boroondara City Council supports.

Yours sincerely

~~Cr Jack Wegman~~  
**MAYOR**

