

6 July 2012

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT REGULATION – ISSUES PAPER RELEASED**

Submissions are now invited to the Productivity Commission’s inquiry into local government regulation.

The Commission has today released an issues paper setting out the inquiry terms of reference (TOR) and posing a series of 65 questions for public consultation.

Commission Chair Murray Sherwin said that local authorities delivered an increasingly wide range of regulatory functions and services that directly impact on the lives of New Zealanders.

“The quality of local government is critical for the smooth functioning of our society and to the productivity of the New Zealand economy,” Mr Sherwin said. “The Commission is pleased to have this opportunity to invite New Zealanders to offer their insights on what and how local authorities regulate.”

He said the Commission’s inquiry would focus on how best to allocate regulatory functions between central and local government; including a stock-take of what councils are doing, how much of that is driven by central government, and how much is driven locally.

The Commission has also been asked to find opportunities for improving local government’s regulatory performance and to recommend options for regular assessment of that performance.

“Councils have a whole raft of regulatory responsibilities. There are questions to be asked as to whether local bodies are always best-placed to implement, enforce and monitor all the regulations they currently handle,” said Mr Sherwin.

The issues paper is available on our website: [www.productivity.govt.nz](http://www.productivity.govt.nz). The due date for initial submissions is 31 August 2012.

The Commission’s inquiry work will feed into the Government’s wider local government review, outlined in *Better Local Government*, published in March this year.

### **Key inquiry dates**

The draft report, incorporating the response to the first consultation round, will be released in December 2012 for further submission by February 2013. The final report is expected to be with the Government by 1 April 2013.

### **About the New Zealand Productivity Commission**

- Established April 2011.
- An independent crown entity with a dedicated focus on productivity.

- The Commission carries out in-depth analysis and research on inquiry topics selected by the Government (currently local government regulation and a trans-Tasman joint study with the Australian Productivity Commission).
- The Commission's aim is to provide insightful, well-informed and accessible advice that leads to the best possible improvement in the wellbeing of New Zealanders.

For further information about the Productivity Commission or its inquiry into local government regulation, please contact:

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