# Robert Armstrong MLC
## Independent Member for Huon

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## Disappointment and concern at leadership failure

FORMER Huon Valley Mayor and Member for Huon in the Legislative Council, Robert Armstrong says he is concerned and disappointed at the failure of leadership on the Huon Valley Council.

Mr Armstrong said in his years as Mayor he found the Council management and staff to be extremely capable and consistently providing excellent services to the ratepayers and community of the Huon Valley.

It was distressing to see the current level of dysfunction on Council and only effective leadership could resolve this.

Mr Armstrong said it would be a tragedy for local democracy if leadership failure resulted in the Minister dismissing the Council.

"As an extremely interested observer, it appears that Mayor Peter Coad has been unable to provide the leadership necessary to bring the Council together.

"He has a responsibility under the Local Government Act to be the Council spokesperson and to demonstrate effective leadership.

"But he also needs to understand that while as Mayor he may be first among equals, he also has just one vote, the same as every other Councillor.

"So it is very much up to the Mayor to understand and respect this, to be a leader and to bring the Council with him.

"The role and functions of Mayor are clearly stated in the Local Government Act. It's not rocket science and by acting in accordance with his proper responsibilities and treating Councillors, management and staff with respect, the Mayor could quickly resolve any difficulties."

Mr Armstrong said he found the Mayor's criticisms of Council management and staff particularly distasteful.

"My experience is that Council employees from the General Manager down are working extremely hard and always do their best for our community.

"To attempt to blame them for the Mayor's leadership shortcomings is extremely poor form," Mr Armstrong said.

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