

New blood could spell regime change

LOBBY groups have vowed to clean out the senior levels of Port Phillip Council if they win control in November's election.

If a majority of councillors are elected from the Community Alliance of Port Phillip (CAPP), Unchain St Kilda or the Greens, they will review management positions.

CAPP is developing a policy that would require the new councillors to implement an independent review of leadership positions in the first 30 days of their term to determine the future of employees, including CEO David Spokes.

"A very thorough investigation into the operations of the council is needed," CAPP treasurer Brenda Forbath said.

The groups renewed their calls for Mr Spokes to step down after revelations that contractors were paid more than \$100,000 without going through a proper tendering process.

A report, released on September 22, found that by last December 12 per cent of contracts were in breach of the Local Government Act as suppliers and traders had not had to bid for the work.

Mr Spokes last week issued a

statement saying all contracts had now been brought into line with the requirements.

Unchain St Kilda president Serge Thomann said addressing the problem was not enough.

"They're saying that everything's been fixed but no one's been punished. The people who made the mistakes should be made accountable."

But councillors continue to stand by their CEO. Mr Spokes would not comment on the calls for him to stand down until the Ombudsman had completed his inquiry.