

FUTURE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUBMISSION

by Central Highlands Council

Consultation Questions – Part 1

Which of the four core roles of councils needs more emphasis in the future? Why?

Council is already performing these keys roles (a service provider, a regulator, a facilitator or partner, and an advocate) and they vary significantly between individual Councils. They are local focused and will be influenced by local circumstances.

The Regulator role should be financially supported more by the State Government, especially building, plumbing & environmental health.

Do you agree that there is general community support for councils continuing to deliver their current range of functions and services? Are there any functions and services councils deliver now, that they shouldn't? Why?

Yes, as Councils are in the best position to be influenced by local knowledge, local representation and are readily accessible by the community. Direct feedback can be obtained so a Council can provide a service if needed or are able to lobby on behalf of their communities to other more appropriate service providers to provide that service.

Assuming they have access to the right resources and capabilities, are there services or functions you think councils could be involved in? Why?

More focus is needed in when Climate Change issues and natural disasters are becoming more prevalent. The ongoing costs for recovery from these impacts, need to be more State based.

Where do councils currently make the biggest contribution to community wellbeing? What wellbeing functions and services should they provide in the future and how can they be supported to do that?

This is such a broad & open question. Every function, at every level that a Council performs, is connected in some form to the wellbeing of our community. Whether it is social, environmental, structural or economic. Any future provided service, will only increase capacity of a community's wellbeing.

Consultation Questions – Part 2

Do you agree with Board's assessment that Tasmania's current council boundaries do not necessarily reflect how contemporary Tasmanians live, work and connect?

The word **contemporary** has always been in local government's vocabulary. Councils have been adapting and changing to the demands of their communities for many years.

What about the non-contemporary Tasmanian – have we not been considering them?

We have heard that councils need to be “big enough to be effective and small enough to care”. How big is big enough to be effective? How small is small enough to care? What factors determine that? How do we strike the balance between these factors?

Residents must be able to have a 'voice'. If their voice is not heard or lost, then a Council is too big.

Other factors include geographical, distance & logistics, financial capacity and achievement of services levels.

Thinking about Tasmania now, and how it might change over the next 50 years, what are the most important things to consider if were to 'redraw' our council boundaries?

No comment

Consultation Questions – Part 3

Which of three broad reform pathways do you think has the best chance of delivering what the community needs from local government? Why?

THREE REFORM PATHWAYS

- 1. Significant (mandated) sharing and consolidation of services.**
- 2. Significant boundary consolidation to achieve fewer larger councils.**
- 3. A 'hybrid' model combining both service and boundary consolidation.**

The Central Highlands Council has previously expressed their opposition to any form of consolidation. This is supported by many studies undertaken as well as other Australian States having failed processes.

If these options were our only choice, then #3. A 'hybrid' model combining both service and boundary consolidation.

What would be your biggest concerns about changing the current system? How could these be addressed?

No change, no concern.

In any structural reform process, how do we manage the very different needs and circumstances of rural and urban communities?

No comment