
From: Melinda Reed <melinda.reed@sorell.tas.gov.au>
Sent: Sunday, 19 February 2023 11:55 PM
To: Local Government Board
Subject: Local Government Reform - Stage 2 response

Hello and thank you to the LG Review Board and staff for the thorough research and comprehensive engagement undertaken for the review.

I have contributed to Sorell Council's submissions in August 2022 and again this week, and now add my personal response to the Stage 2 options:

- strongly endorse the need for genuine reform through systemic redesign for better community outcomes - more efficient processes largely invisible to the public alongside more transparent and effective community engagement so that Councils are more trusted and better resourced at all levels
 - increased certainty, efficiency and leverage of economic and social capital
 - more capable and accountable for improved environmental, social and governance outcomes
- highlight Sorell Council's unique position as the voice of experience, having participated in shared services and actively explored boundary reform for several years, only to see neighbouring councils withdraw one by one
- highlight the conflicts of interest demonstrated in the amalgamation attempts in recent years which confirmed that some kind of mandated change is necessary to counter inherent conflicts of interest at a local level, especially for some Councillors and senior management who will most likely be required to make the most change to their personal circumstances through the reform process
- support maintaining genuine local representation and community voice in the way future Councillors are elected
- support improvements to Councillor remuneration and professional development so that elected members have more capacity to work with their community and other stakeholders, contribute to policy more effectively and be respected for their strategic advocacy
- support a hybrid reform solution to achieve best of both worlds outcomes - fewer Councils with scale and more efficient application of council resources, including improved community engagement contributing to wellbeing outcomes at a local level
- support the redesign of sensible regional or state-wide systems for some current Council functions - public authorities working with Councils, communities of practice amongst Councils, centres of expertise within some Councils that retain and develop in-house expertise, enabling staff to work to their strengths and consult/outsource to other Councils (for example: asset management at Sorell, heritage expertise at Southern Midlands, community engagement at Huon Valley and Waratah Wynyard etc)
- support the redesign of Council boundaries to better align with regionalised communities and improve economies of scale, capacity to advocate and capacity to retain and develop skilled people

In short - great work, please get on with it! Not one size fits all.

Cheers,
Melinda

