



## CIRCULAR HEAD COUNCIL

24 July 2023

Future of Local Government Review  
Emailed to: [lgboard@dpac.tas.gov.au](mailto:lgboard@dpac.tas.gov.au)

Dear Review Board,

### **FUTURE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW – SUBMISSION BY CIRCULAR HEAD COUNCIL**

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to Stage 3 of the Local Government review.

On behalf of Circular Head Council, I attach a brief submission supporting Scenario 2 as adopted by Council at its July meeting.

The submission considers feedback from community, staff, and elected members, also recognising the outputs from discussions organised separately by LG Pro and LGAT.

While forced amalgamations are off the table, the Board has made the case for reform and the concerns and challenges that Local Government faces have not gone away. Council acknowledges that 29 Councils mostly operating as silos, all providing the same services in competition for staff and resources is inefficient and the model is not fit for purpose in a digital age.

The challenges specific to rural and regional areas have been well-articulated by the Board and for Circular Head include attracting and retaining skilled specialist staff, increasingly limited contractor availability, increased cost of materials and working with a lower rate base yet having the same and in some cases greater infrastructure maintenance and renewal responsibilities than many urban councils.

The challenges also include our limited ability to manage the impact of climate change on infrastructure, limited ability to address our regulatory responsibilities, and limited ability to modernise without imposing undue burden on our communities.

We therefore recognise that some form of 'scaling up' is likely to be necessary to improve the overall quality and range of services provided to the community and for us to have a better chance of attracting and retaining skilled workers and for us to be able to provide better systems and structures to support those workers to improve services.

The submission discusses place-shaping options for maintaining voice and local representation, the importance of retaining Somerset, the possibility of State Government partnerships, and offers a perspective on how to move forward with shared services. We also note the likely prospect of a Renewable Energy Zone in the area and consider how the Western Regional Strategic Partnership might be engaged.

### **CIRCULAR HEAD COUNCIL**

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In terms of the resources and support required to set a new council up for success, the submission outlines a number of positions and Council has asked me to highlight the following which formed the final Council resolution:

- Funding for future Health and Wellbeing initiatives
- A fair share of the Heavy Vehicle Tax
- The ability to levy rates on new and existing renewable energy generation projects or a fair share of royalties
- Equitable representation from each municipality that might be more broadly based than simply population
- A share of income from future tourism ventures such as Dismal Swamp (Project Far North West)

Yours faithfully

Vanessa Adams  
**GENERAL MANAGER**

Attachment: Stage 3 Submission  
CC: [dion.lester@lgat.tas.gov.au](mailto:dion.lester@lgat.tas.gov.au)