

Date: 20 July 2023

Our Ref:

Ms Sue Smith
Chairperson
Local Government Board

LGBoard@dpac.tas.gov.au

Dear Sue

The Future of Local Government Review – Stage 2 Interim Report

Kingborough Council welcomes the opportunity to provide this submission in response to the Future of Local Government Review – Stage 2 Interim Report and Community Catchment Information Packs.

Kingborough Council has previously considered structural reform of local government on many occasions over the past decade and has always demonstrated an openness to reform, and a desire to collaborate with our neighbours to achieve improved outcomes for the communities we serve.

In our previous submission to the Board on 21 February 2023 Council acknowledged that the Board have outlined a compelling case to explain why they think the status quo is not an option. One of the many factors that underscore this view is the realisation that increasingly communities across Tasmania are seeking greater support and service delivery from councils while financial pressures continue to grow.

As we move forward councils' need core capabilities to service existing functions but also need the flexibility to develop new capabilities to service new or rapidly evolving functions.

On 29 May 2023 the Board released detailed information packs for each of the nine Community Catchments identified in their Stage 2 Interim Report. Kingborough Council was identified in scenarios in both the Western Shore and Southern Shore information packs.

Councillors and staff have attended engagement sessions facilitated by the Board and LGAT over the past few months. Council discussed and considered the Stage 2 Interim Report and Community Catchment scenarios at a workshop held on 10 July 2023.

At the Council meeting held on 17 July 2023 Council received a report on the Future of Local Government Review Stage 2 Interim Report (refer attached). In the report strengths and weaknesses were identified for each of the scenarios in the Western Shore and Southern Shore scenarios that involved Kingborough Council.

The report to Council concluded that Council's submission to the Board should express Council's openness to collaborate with Huon Valley Council to further investigate Southern Shore Scenario 2. The report identified the strengths and weaknesses of Southern Shore Scenario 2 as follows:

Southern Shore Scenario 2 – Combines the existing Kingborough and Huon Valley Council areas to create one new council area.

Kingborough Council

📍 Civic Centre, 15 Channel Highway, Kingston TAS 7050

☎ (03) 6211 8200

✉ kc@kingborough.tas.gov.au

✉ Locked Bag 1, Kingston TAS 7050

🌐 www.kingborough.tas.gov.au

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This scenario maximises the opportunities increased scale provides by having one council south of Hobart. • This scenario increases the population base to approximately 59,000 residents and rates revenue in 2021 dollars would be an estimated \$45.1m. • It appears to be a logically defined geographical area. • This scenario would maximise opportunities for a regional approach to service delivery. • Existing Council administrative service centres and depots are maintained under this scenario. • This scenario appears to be easy to implement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could lead to a loss of rural representation in the new council. • May be viewed as a Kingborough takeover of Huon Valley Council. • Creates some service challenges to cover an area from Tarooma to Cockle Creek.

The Future of Local Government Review provides a unique opportunity to reshape the Tasmanian local government sector to deliver a more capable and sustainable system of local government.

The Board have previously identified that the challenge will be to develop a model where consolidation and partnerships enhance the long-term capability of councils and the sustainability of services while strengthening local representation, governance, and democracy.

Kingborough Council has concluded that the Southern Shore Scenario 2 that combines the existing Kingborough and Huon Valley Council areas to create one new council area south of Hobart appears to be the most suitable to investigate further. Investigation of this scenario should involve consideration of the potential addition of Tarooma to our capital city council, and investigation of an alternative governance arrangement for a Bruny Island Board based on the Lord Howe Island Board model.

Kingborough Council acknowledges that the compressed timeframe for councils to digest/discuss/consider community catchment scenarios identified in the Stage 2 Information Packs did not allow time for detailed financial analysis and modelling of a preferred scenario to occur. Importantly, Kingborough Council also acknowledge that consultation with the community has not been undertaken by Council.

In conclusion, Council at its meeting held on 17 July 2023 resolved unanimously (by those councillors in attendance) to provide a submission to the Local Government Board that:

- (a) Reiterates Council's continued openness to reform that seeks to deliver a more capable and sustainable system of local government; and
- (b) Expresses Council's openness to collaborate with Huon Valley Council to further investigate Southern Shore Scenario 2.

Yours sincerely



GARY ARNOLD
GENERAL MANAGER