



31<sup>st</sup> July 2023

Ms S Smith  
Chairperson  
Local Government Board  
LGBoard@dpac.tas.gov.au

Dear Madam,

### **FUTURE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW – STAGE 3**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback to the Board's Stage 3 Information Packs and Supporting Papers.

Council has considered the scenarios, the supporting data, engaged with the identified catchment councils and reflected on our long standing position of supporting reform.

Our conduct and formal position is on the public record to:

- the 2015 - 2018 SE Council reform project as per the KPMG South East Councils Feasibility Study 30<sup>th</sup> Sep 2016;
- the Local Government Board Sorell & Tasman Councils Review August 2018;
- the subsequent Sorell Council ordinary meeting agenda 21<sup>st</sup> August 2018; and
- Council's Board submissions of 24<sup>th</sup> August 2022 and 19<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

For brevity, Council accordingly refers the Board to the above publications and papers.

The principal focus for Sorell Council on how a LG organisation can best and sustainably serve the south east region into the future across the broad range of community, asset, service delivery, advocacy and engagement functions remains. A regional basis is our preferred approach.

Council has consistently advocated for a regional catchment assessment to determine a sustainable and equitable distribution of population, assets, land use and revenue generation in preference to a reliance on existing Council boundaries. We recognise that by analysing a variety of catchment overlays, multiple spatial outcomes are created that would inform a regional footprint e.g:

- Industry – transport / supply distribution networks and corridors;
- Employment – locations, growth / decline sectors;
- Tourism – source of visitors, destination and routes;
- Primary production – productive (incl. irrigation districts & potential) v passive rural areas, aquaculture;
- Socio economic profile and forecasts – capacity to pay;
- Education – capacity and quality (real and perceived);

- Demographic profile and forecasts – current and future needs;
- Recreation – location and function;
- Services – availability of and access to transport, social and health services;
- Sustainable rating basis - land use type, values and capacity to pay, methodology;
- Investment – by sector and scale; and
- Risk exposure to natural disasters.

Council maintains that the strongest long term outcomes for the SE region and the communities within it would be provided through a regional LG approach. This has been evidenced by the success of SERDA inclusive of the SE Economic Infrastructure Strategy (2015 & 2019) and SE Regional Workforce Plan 2017 culminating in the formation of BEST delivering a nationally recognised jobs hub for employers and employees. For the past ten years, both State and Federal Governments have recognised, supported and preferred to engage and fund on a regional basis. This has extended to waste management.

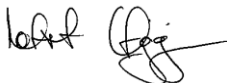
Accordingly, Council's preferred scenario is the SERDA catchment (noting a review of the northern portion of GSB and south-east corner of SMC would be advised).

An alternate scenario to consider would be east of the Meehan Range in the Clarence LGA combining with Sorell, GSB and Tasman (similarly noting the above review comments for GSB and SMC).

Council again commends the Board for their work in developing the catchment scenarios and has continued to support and encourage elected members and staff to make individual submissions.

If you have any further enquiries regarding this matter please contact me on 📞 0400 123 933 or via email [robert.higgins@sorell.tas.gov.au](mailto:robert.higgins@sorell.tas.gov.au)

Yours sincerely,



**Robert Higgins**  
GENERAL MANAGER