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Subject: Future of Local Government Review

Categories: Acknowledged

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Thank you for this opportunity. I wish to make comments on just a few matters.

1. The amalgamation of councils should be on the basis that all councils have approximately the same revenue base.
2. Examples of places where one council represents over one million people are only realistic if every person feels that adequate representation occurs. Would Tasmanians be happy with just one member of federal Parliament? Or one local government and no State government? More representation leads to more accountability, and generally less corruption.
3. Local rates should not be the only source of council funding especially when some of the funding which used to flow to local government has been subsumed in authorities such as Taswater. State and federal governments must be prepared to hand over more funding to councils which now have to deal with the impacts of the climate crisis as well as other emergencies. Less dependence of random handouts from the two other government tiers should be replaced with regular funding.
4. It is inevitable that Tasmania will be inundated with climate refugees from the mainland and internationally. To prepare for this government must make decisions on population boundaries so that there is land left for growing food, and to allow for forests, parks and gardens to create carbon sinks. The UK and most countries in the EU, recognise the importance of placing limits on population centres. Councils should have the power to do this.
5. Given (4) above, then councils should also take the opportunity to limit areas of population so that infill settlement occurs, and if necessary, vertical, not horizontal development. By that I mean that no land development outside designated areas is to take place until all vacant land is used, and, in all communities, that units and single accommodation is built in vertical blocks.

Dr Helen Hutchinson

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This generation is the last one which can save the world from climate disaster. Add your voice.

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