The Region has strong connections to Launceston (SA3 population 87,000), which is Tasmania's second largest city and a commercial and business hub for northern Tasmania. The City of Launceston LGA is, in its current form, Tasmania's most populous, with almost 72,000 residents. The city is an important regional centre for both education and health services, has a major hospital, university campus and other service facilities. While manufacturing has declined in recent decades, Launceston is an important regional centre with growing services and tourism sectors as well as continuing to support surrounding agricultural districts.

Over the past 15 years, it has become increasingly clear that parts of the West Tamar and Northern Midlands LGAs in particular have been evolving into 'satellite' commuter suburbs of Greater Launceston. The combination of the geography of the Tamar estuary with the frequency and scale of interaction between residents of this broader region suggests a strong community of interest.

The historic townships of Evandale, Perth, Longford and Hadspen are increasingly connected to Launceston. Currently, more than 60% residents of Longford, Perth, and Evandale in the workforce commute to Launceston on a daily basis (See table p.13). Westbury has a strong commuter connection with Launceston (673 Westbury residents work in Launceston), but Deloraine does not (299 residents of Deloraine work in Launceston) (see 'Tasmania's changing community dynamics' below).

These patterns highlight the need to discuss whether these settlements should be included in the Tamar Valley Catchment (Scenarios 3 and 4). These commuting connections also do not extend into the current Latrobe, Dorset, Break O'Day, or Central Highlands LGAs.

The township of George Town (population 4536) sits at the mouth of the kanamaluka / Tamar River, and is a centre for heavy industry and manufacturing based at the neighbouring Bell Precinct including Bell Bay Aluminium and Liberty Bell Bay. The Bell Bay Advanced Manufacturing Zone (BBAMZ) is supporting the development of new low emissions industries, including establishing a renewable hydrogen hub to ensure the future of the industrial site.

Geographically, George Town is part of the Tamar consultation group although, owing to its distinctive economic and industrial base, is to a much smaller extent within greater Launceston's commuting zone. 1,434 people both live and work in George Town, while some 730 people, just over 26% of all employed residents, live in George Town but work in Launceston. The Board has been considering the orientation of George Town in terms of functional, commuter and communities of interest. To this end, George Town has also been included in the *North-East Community Catchment* consultation group with a scenario that merges the existing George Town and Dorset LGAs.

The remainder of the Tamar Valley hosts a number of townships with strong and growing connections. The Valley features small scale intensive agriculture (especially grapes) and a growing number of semi-rural lifestyle properties. While the east and west Tamar have traditionally had their own identities, they are connected via both Launceston and the Batman Bridge.

The region is (as the map above depicts) a patchwork of population growth and decline, with notable pockets of substantial growth evident. Opportunities presented by population growth also bring challenges in the form of demands on built and social infrastructure, transport, and housing. Climate change mitigation and responses to extreme weather events are other issues that will benefit from being managed collectively

by council/s with enhanced capabilities. The region also hosts a range of manufacturing industries, tourism ventures, and service and retail businesses, which could be leveraged through the enhanced capability of consolidated council/s.

The existing councils in this region participate in some of the most extensive shared service and partnership arrangements in the State, such as the Tamar Estuary Management Taskforce, the Northern Tasmanian Waste Management Group, the Northern Employment and Business Hub, and the Northern Tasmania Sports Facility Plan, amongst others. Many of these arrangements also involve the neighbouring councils of Dorset, Flinders and Break O'Day.

In this catchment, the Board wants to talk to councils and communities about how to best establish a system of local government that can:

- coordinate the residential and commercial development that is occurring in this catchment
- advocate effectively to the State and Commonwealth Governments to play their part in providing infrastructure and to partner on economic development and job opportunities
- provide fair and equitable local government services and representation to both urban and rural residents
- partner with the State and Commonwealth Governments to provide residents across the catchment with access to the full range of government services.

## Tasmania's changing community dynamics

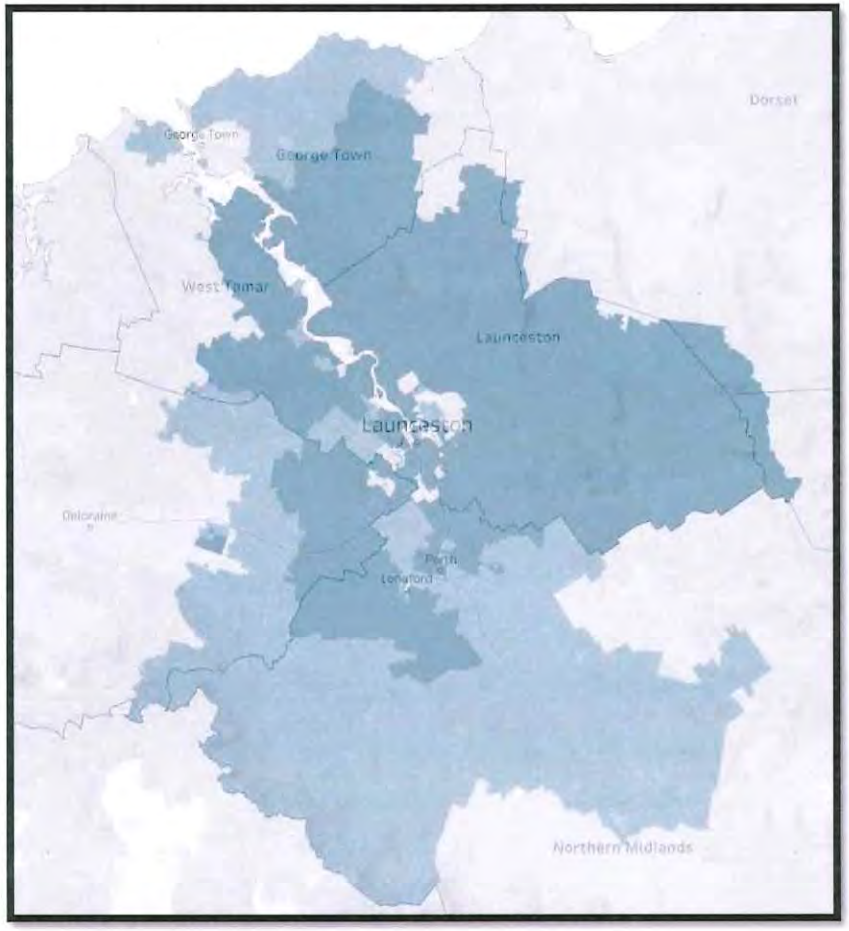
Tasmanians are much more mobile than a generation ago and a growing number of residents cross at least one local government boundary every day. One widely accepted way of defining a 'community of interest' that provides insights into the appropriate scale for local government is to identify the areas in which most residents live, work, and use government services (Productivity Commission 2017). Reflecting this approach, the Board has produced a series of maps and tables which illustrate commuting to major employment centres as one possible tool to help inform community discussions around boundary consolidation options.

Launceston is a significant regional centre and employment hub with growing numbers of workers living in neighbouring communities and commuting to Launceston on a regular basis.

These commuting dynamics suggest the community of interest associated with Launceston extends beyond the current boundaries of the Launceston LGA inviting discussion about appropriate size and scale of councils in the Tamar Valley Catchment to best meet the future needs of the community.

Launceston's pull as an employment centre takes in much of the Tamar Valley as well as parts of the current Meander Valley LGA (Carrick/Hadspen in particular) and the Northern Midlands (especially Longford and Perth). In fact, the connection of Longford, Perth, and Evandale to Launceston is considerably stronger than the rest of the Northern Midlands' connection to them (which is to say that more people commute from Longford, Perth, and Evandale to Launceston than commute from the rest of the Northern Midlands to Longford, Perth, and Evandale). More people leave these three settlements every day to work in Launceston than stay behind.

*Commuting connections in the Tamar Valley community catchment, 2021*




**Key**
***Unshaded*** – SA1s fewer than 30 workers (less than 13 %) work within this area
***Light blue*** – between 30 and 100 (13%-40%) workers work within this area
***Dark blue*** – more than 100 (40%) workers work within this area

**Place of work (SA2)**

| Place of usual residence (SA2) | Launceston | Legana | Riverside | Prospect | Deloraine | Hadspen - Carrick | Westbury | Longford | Perth - Evandale | Dilston - Lilydale | George Town |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Launceston | 22,209 | 278 | 426 | 1,079 | 169 | 74 | 167 | 317 | 1,069 | 113 | 540 |
| Legana | 1,348 | 338 | 109 | 52 | 9 | 7 | 14 | 17 | 69 | 4 | 74 |
| Riverside | 2,220 | 109 | 431 | 128 | 12 | 10 | 23 | 26 | 103 | 14 | 73 |
| Prospect | 3,736 | 38 | 64 | 910 | 31 | 27 | 64 | 76 | 222 | 9 | 99 |
| Deloraine | 249 | 3 | 4 | 44 | 1,618 | 13 | 114 | 15 | 22 | 4 | 7 |
| Hadspen - Carrick | 1,047 | 18 | 20 | 124 | 35 | 225 | 51 | 49 | 74 | 9 | 33 |
| Westbury | 590 | 14 | 9 | 55 | 214 | 43 | 556 | 69 | 52 | 5 | 12 |
| Longford | 724 | 15 | 19 | 66 | 16 | 6 | 54 | 565 | 137 | 3 | 13 |
| Perth - Evandale | 1,484 | 26 | 24 | 103 | 17 | 11 | 32 | 126 | 543 | 12 | 34 |
| Dilston - Lilydale | 1,186 | 8 | 15 | 55 | 8 | 3 | 17 | 11 | 56 | 383 | 97 |
| George Town | 675 | 15 | 9 | 28 | 8 | 4 | 5 | 7 | 36 | 15 | 1,434 |
| **Local workforce ratio** | 57.5% | 32.2% | 34% | 32.3% | 66.6% | 49.1% | 45.5% | 38.3% | 20.3% | 61.3% | 50.2% |

*The data presented in the table above are from the ABS 2021 *Australian Census of Population and Housing* and are based on SA2 areas. In larger or more populous urban areas (such as Launceston, several SA2s have been combined to reflect established communities as closely as possible.

## Tamar Valley: Scenario 1

### Overview

Scenario 1 establishes one council for a large proportion of the Tamar Valley Catchment area, capturing the existing West Tamar, George Town, and Launceston LGAs, extending to incorporate Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights as continuously connected suburbs of Launceston.

This scenario reflects communities of interest and a shared geography, based around the Tamar Valley and its hinterland with Launceston as the service centre.

Launceston would remain the primary administrative and service hub for the council, with the potential to maintain customer service hubs and works hubs in George Town, Beaconsfield, Riverside and Exeter, as discussed further below.

| 2021 Population | % Growth 2011-21 |
|---|---|
| 108,835 | 10.2% |

# Tamar Valley Scenario 1

## Rationale and evidence

Scenario 1 would benefit residents within the Tamar Valley Community Catchment by increasing the scale and capability of the council, with an approximate population of 109,000. This could assist with attracting and retaining key skills. The model recognises the strong workforce connections across the area. It would also present benefits in terms of strategic planning for the area, particularly around the West Tamar growth corridor.

A key consideration for this single council model will be ensuring local representation, employment and service delivery across the entire Tamar Valley Community Catchment (particularly for rural communities). Notably, the consolidated council would have additional resources (hypothetical rate revenue of over $90m) to invest in community engagement and establishing/maintaining administrative and service delivery hubs across the community.

While the council excludes the Launceston commuting areas of Perth, Evandale and Longford, councils and communities may wish to discuss their inclusion given strong and growing connections as per Scenario 3.

### Alignment with the principles for successful structural reform

**Focus on future community needs:** Creating a single council along these boundaries would recognise the geography of the Tamar Valley and surrounding catchment. Under this scenario, 94% of residents would be within a 30-minute drive of the major service and administrative hubs of Beaconsfield, Riverside, George Town and Launceston. The latter also hosts key educational and healthcare facilities for the region ensuring access to services and a large and diverse rate base.

Consolidation would support enhanced scope capabilities in areas such as strategic planning, development and environmental health assessment, and could help manage urban development and infrastructure planning. In particular, whole of catchment land-use planning would be supported, although this scenario does not include other commuting satellite areas, such as Hadspen, Perth, Launceston and Evandale. To compensate for this, it would be desirable to continue planning coordination through the Northern Tasmanian Planners Group. Consolidation could also streamline and improve regional economic development and collaborations with key regional organisations such as the NTDC, the Launceston Chamber of Commerce and partnerships such as the Launceston City Deal and the administration of the Tamar Estuary Management Taskforce.

**Retain local jobs and services:** Establishing a large council to represent the Tamar Valley region would deliver scale benefits including the ability to attract and retain specialist staff and invest in productivity-enhancing equipment and 'back-office' systems. There is significant scope to retain existing council administrative and operations hubs in Beaconsfield, Exeter, Riverside and George Town, as well as Launceston, to maintain local employment and to support local engagement and service delivery. Strengthening partnerships with Service Tasmania to provide combined customer service centres would also enhance service delivery.

The *Northern Tasmanian Councils Shared Services Study* (KPMG 2017) found that establishing common IT platforms would provide the greatest gains to current councils and would provide a foundation for extending the current resource sharing arrangements. While the new council would have significant capacity, there may be benefits in it participating to some extent in any new, centralised 'back-office' online support system for council finance and administration, particularly cloud-based systems (see Supporting Paper on *Shared Services Models*). This would reduce staff

## Tamar Valley Scenario 1

time on repetitive administrative tasks and system management, allowing them to focus on improving services to council staff and communities.

**Preserve and enhance local voice:** The new, larger council would have the capacity to invest in new and more systematic approaches to community engagement to ensure all communities within the larger council area are heard and represented, particularly those in rural parts of the Tamar Valley. If required, there would also be scope to introduce community advisory panels regularly consulted by council to ensure constituents enjoy enhanced formal representation and direct influence in the decision-making process, including community budgets (see Supporting Paper on *Supporting Strong and Empowered Local Communities*). Operations hubs could also be used for a program of scheduled regional council meetings in different areas of the municipality.

**Fair funding models:** Applying existing rates and funding models to the new council area, the total rates revenue in 2021 dollars would be an estimated $90m. The area would have access to rates revenue from a diverse mix of residential, commercial, industrial land. One challenge would be establishing an equitable and consistent approach to rating across the proposed council given the City of Launceston's relatively low residential rates, partly attributable to its larger scale and commercial centre, relative to West Tamar and George Town. George Town has a relatively complex rating system to differentiate between residential and industrial land, which would also need careful consideration.

**Appropriate resourcing for transition:** Transition arrangements for this scenario would need to consider how services provided by the Northern Tasmanian Development Corporation, both to member councils and other councils across the broader region, would be undertaken under the new arrangements. The three existing councils within the proposal have all delivered balanced budgets or operating surpluses in recent years with financial assets exceeding liabilities.

# Tamar Valley Scenario 1

## Community data and alignment with reform criteria

The table below presents demographic, household, employment and operational council data for the hypothetical council established under Scenario 1. These data have been produced by analysing 2021 ABS Census (SA1 level) and other relevant data sets to align with the hypothetical boundaries of the new areas proposed in each scenario.

As we have indicated, these data are indicative and are designed to inform community discussions about the merits of different structural reform options. Structural reforms adopted by the Tasmanian Government based on the Board's recommendations will likely be subject to a detailed technical review and implementation plan. While every effort has been made to ensure consistency and accuracy, variation between SA1 and LGA boundaries may mean that some of the figures below may differ slightly from existing council statistics. Detailed methodological notes are presented in the *Methods and Technical Background* Supporting Paper.

**Summary Data – Scenario 1**

| Category | | Measure | Council |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Overview** | Demographics | Population | 108,835 |
| | | Median age | 42 |
| | | SEIFA[1] (decile) | 4 |
| | Housing | Total dwellings | 43,207 |
| | | No. of single person households | 12,984 (30.0%) |
| | | % dwellings vacant | 8.1 |
| | | **Indicator** | |
| **1. Place and Representation** | Alignment with local communities of interest | % area workforce residing locally | 82.7% |

[1] SEIFA', or 'Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas', is an index developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics which ranks areas in Australia according to relative socio-economic advantage or disadvantage.

# Tamar Valley Scenario 1

| Category | | Measure | Council |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Established administrative, commercial and service hub/s | % of population within 30 mins of administrative hub | 94% |
| | Urbanisation | % of population in urban areas of population 10,000 or greater | 74% |
| | Mobility/Migration | % of population living at a different address 5 years ago | 35.5 |
| **2. Future Needs and Priorities** | Population growth | Population change *2011-21* | 10,092 (10.2%) |
| | Housing supply and infrastructure demand | Change in total dwelling numbers (2011-21) | 4,531 |
| | | % Change in total dwelling numbers (2011-21) | 10.5% |
| | Employment growth | Change in labour force 2011-21 by place of residence | 13% |
| | Older/aging communities | % Population over 65 | 16% |
| | Younger communities | % Population under 15 | 19% |
| **3. Financial Sustainability** | Value of rateable land | Value of rateable land - residential | $22,126,600,000 |
| | | Value of rateable land - primary production | $1,197,300,000 |
| | | Value of rateable land - industrial | $882,400,000 |
| | | Value of rateable land - commercial | $3,067,100,000 |
| | | Value of rateable land - vacant | $805,500,000 |
| | | Value of rateable land - other | $2,941,800,000 |

## Tamar Valley Scenario 1

| Category | | Measure | Council |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Value of rateable land - total | $31,020,676,300 |
| | Estimation of theoretical rate revenue applying current rates[2] | Estimated rate revenue - residential | $62,900,000 |
| | | Estimated rate revenue - commercial | $13,800,000 |
| | | Estimated rate revenue - industrial | $5,300,000 |
| | | Estimated rate revenue - primary production | $3,000,000 |
| | | Estimated rate revenue - vacant | $ 2,600,000 |
| | | Estimated rate revenue - other | $2,300,000 |
| | | Estimated rate revenue - total | $90,100,000 |
| | Road Infrastructure | Km of council roads - unsealed | 460.9 |
| | | Km of council roads - sealed | 1,072.9 |
| **4. Operational Sustainability** | • The council would supplement the already significant population base of City of Launceston Council, although it would have a larger area to service. Nevertheless, it should have the capacity to provide high quality services to communities across the council area.<br>• While the council would have significant internal capacity, there would be value in it participating in any new centralised service-sharing arrangements for 'back-office' services such as IT systems, accounting, and procurement.<br>• While some current service sharing agreements would become unnecessary if this council were established (e.g. Tamar NRM, Northern Workforce Development Program), many others would need to continue as they involve councils outside this area. | | |

[2] There are limitations involved with this analysis, and it is acknowledged that the modelled revenues underestimate actual council revenues in some instances. The modelled revenues are a superior measure of relative fiscal capacity between council scenarios, and caution is advised for any comparison between modelled revenues for scenarios and existing councils. More information is provided in the Methods and Technical Background Supporting Paper.

# Tamar Valley: Scenario 2

## Overview

Scenario 2 establishes one council capturing a large proportion of the Tamar Valley catchment area, but with alternate boundaries to Scenario 1. The council would encompass the existing West Tamar and Launceston LGAs but, unlike Scenario 1, does not include George Town.

This scenario reflects communities of interest and commuting data. George Town, with its distinctive economic and industrial base, is less connected greater Launceston. George Town, and a proportion of the current Launceston LGA around Lebrina, have also been included in one scenario under the North-East Community Catchment (Scenario 1).

Launceston would remain the primary administrative and service hub for the council, with the potential to maintain customer service hubs and works hubs in Beaconsfield, Riverside and Exeter, as discussed further below.

| 2021 Population | % Growth 2011-21 |
|---|---|
| 94,605 | 10.7% |

# Tamar Valley Scenario 2

## Rationale and evidence

Scenario 2 would benefit residents within the Tamar Valley Community Catchment by increasing the scale and capability of the council, with an approximate population of 94 000, although not quite to the extent of Scenario 1. Increased scale would assist with attracting and retaining council staff and would increase the scope and consistency of services across the region. The model recognises the strong workforce connections in the area and would deliver benefits in terms of strategic planning, particularly around the West Tamar growth corridor.

This scenario reflects George Town's distinctive economic and industry bases and weaker commuter links to Launceston. As one alternative, it may instead combine with Dorset under the North-East Catchment and incorporate Lebrina, forming a local government area that stretches along the northeast coast and hinterland, encompassing similarly rural, agricultural, and industrial communities.

As with Scenario 1, the challenge for this single council model will be ensuring local representation, employment and service delivery across the entire Tamar Valley Community Catchment (particularly for rural communities), although the consolidated council would have the resources (hypothetical rate revenue of $78.8m) to invest in additional community engagement and establishing administrative and service delivery hubs across the community.

**Alignment with the principles for successful structural reform**

**Focus on future community needs:** Creating a single council along these boundaries reflects strong and growing connections between the West Tamar, the southern section of the East Tamar and Launceston. For example, four times as many residents of Legana work in Launceston (1,430) than work locally. It would support integrated planning and service provision along the West Tamar growth corridor. Under this scenario, 95% of residents would be within a 30-minute drive of the major service and administrative hubs of Beaconsfield, Riverside and Launceston, which also hosts key educational and healthcare facilities for the region. This proximity supports access to services and would ensure economic diversity amid the transition from predominately manufacturing to services industries.

Consolidation would support enhanced scope capabilities in areas such as strategic planning, development and environmental health assessment, and could help manage issues such as urban consolidation and infrastructure planning. In particular, whole of catchment land-use planning would be supported, although this scenario does not include other commuting satellite areas, such as Hadspen, Perth, Launceston and Evandale. It would be necessary to continue planning coordination through the Northern Tasmanian Planners Group and a larger council would be better placed to support neighbouring rural councils. Consolidation could also streamline and improve regional economic development and collaborations with key regional organisations such as the Northern Tasmanian Development Corporation (NTDC), and the administration of the Tamar Estuary Management Taskforce and the

# Tamar Valley Scenario 2

Launceston City Deal, noting that many of these arrangements also involve other councils outside this scenario. Maintaining and expanding its service offerings should be simpler under consolidated council models.

As noted, George Town is omitted from this Scenario owing to its distinctive economic and industrial base and comparatively weaker connections to Greater Launceston. Roughly 1450 people both live and work in George Town, while some 731 or (16%) of the local population, live in George Town but commute to Launceston.

**Retain local jobs and services:** Establishing a large council to represent the Tamar Valley region would deliver scale benefits including the ability to attract and retain specialist staff and invest in productivity-enhancing equipment and 'back-office' systems. There is significant scope to retain existing council administrative and operations hubs in Beaconsfield, Exeter, and Riverside, as well as Launceston, to maintain local employment and to support local engagement and service delivery. Strengthening partnerships with Service Tasmania to provide combined customer service centres would also enhance service delivery.

The *Northern Tasmanian Councils Shared Services Study* (KPMG 2017) found that establishing common IT platforms would provide the greatest gains to current councils, and would provide a foundation for extending the current resource sharing arrangements. While the new council would have significant capacity, there would be benefits from participating in any new centralised 'back-office' online support system for council finance and administration, particularly cloud-based systems (see Supporting Paper on Shared Services Models). This would reduce staff time on repetitive administrative tasks and system management, allowing them to focus on improving services to council staff and communities.

Southern boundaries remain the same to ensure neighbouring council areas have greater scale and can be more self-sustaining.

**Preserve and enhance local voice:** The greatest challenge for this scenario would be ensuring that a single council is able to not only preserve but enhance local voice and representation. The new, larger council would have the capacity to invest in new and more systematic approaches to community engagement to ensure all communities within the larger council area are heard and represented, particularly those in the rural West Tamar. If required, there would also be scope to introduce community advisory panels regularly consulted by council to ensure constituents enjoy enhanced formal representation and direct influence in the decision-making process, including community budget priorities (see Supporting Paper on *Supporting Strong and Empowered Local Communities*). Operations hubs could also be used for a program of scheduled regional council meetings in different areas of the municipality.

**Fair funding models:** Applying existing rates and funding models to the new council area, the total rate revenues in 2021 dollars would be an estimated $78.8m. The area would have access to rates revenue from a mix of residential, commercial, and agricultural land. There is a reasonably consistent approach to rating across the current councils in the Catchment although the City of Launceston does charge lower residential rates per capita than West Tamar, highlighting both the benefits of scale and the need for carefully designed transitional measures.

**Appropriate resourcing for transition:** Transition arrangements for this Scenario would also need to consider how services provided by the NTDC, both to member councils and other councils across the broader region, would be undertaken under the new arrangements. Similarly, the future

status and role of any partnerships (such as the City Deal) would need to be considered.

# Tamar Valley Scenario 2

## Community data and alignment with reform criteria

The table below presents demographic, household, employment and operational council data for the hypothetical council established under Scenario 2. This data has been produced by analysing 2021 ABS Census (SA1 level) and other relevant data sets to align with the hypothetical boundaries of the new areas proposed in each scenario.

As we have indicated, this data is indicative and designed to inform community discussions about the merits of different structural reform options. Structural reforms adopted by the Tasmanian Government based on the Board's recommendations will likely be subject to a detailed technical review and implementation plan. While every effort has been made to ensure consistency and accuracy, variation between SA1 and LGA boundaries may mean that some of the figures below may differ slightly from existing council statistics. Detailed methodological notes are presented in the *Methods and Technical Background Supporting Paper*.

### Summary Data – Scenario 2

| Category | | Measure | Council |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Overview** | **Demographics** | Population | 94605 |
| | | Median age | 41.1 |
| | | SEIFA[3] (decile) | 4 |
| | Housing | Total dwellings | 37344 |
| | | No. of single person households | 11,189 |
| | | % dwellings vacant | 7.7 |
| | | **Indicator** | |
| **1. Place and Representation** | Alignment with local communities of interest | % area workforce residing locally | 78.7% |

[3] SEIFA', or 'Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas', is an index developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics which ranks areas in Australia according to relative socio-economic advantage or disadvantage.

# Tamar Valley Scenario 2

| Category | | Measure | Council |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Established administrative, commercial and service hub/s | % of population within 30 mins of administrative hub | 95% |
| | Urbanisation | % of population in urban areas of population 10,000 or greater | 78% |
| | Mobility/Migration | % of population living at a different address 5 years ago | 36.2 |
| **2. Future Needs and Priorities** | Population growth | Population change *2011-21* | 9176 |
| | Housing supply and infrastructure demand | Change in total dwelling numbers (2011-21) | 3841 |
| | | % Change in total dwelling numbers (2011-21) | 11.5% |
| | Employment growth | Change in labour force 2011-21 by place of residence | 14% |
| | Older/aging communities | % Population over 65 | 16% |
| | Younger communities | % Population under 15 | 19% |
| **3. Financial Sustainability** | Value of rateable land | Value of rateable land - residential | $19,168,600,000 |
| | | Value of rateable land - primary production | $826,700,000 |
| | | Value of rateable land - industrial | $739,400,000 |
| | | Value of rateable land - commercial | $2,888,100,000 |
| | | Value of rateable land - vacant | $646,400,000 |
| | | Value of rateable land - other | $2,686,600,000 |

# Tamar Valley Scenario 2

| Category | | Measure | Council |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Value of rateable land – total | $26,955,753,200 |
| | Estimation of theoretical rate revenue applying current rates[4] | Estimated rate revenue - residential | $55,800,000 |
| | | Estimated rate revenue - commercial | $13,100,000 |
| | | Estimated rate revenue - industrial | $3,700,000 |
| | | Estimated rate revenue - primary production | $2,100,000 |
| | | Estimated rate revenue - vacant | $1,800,000 |
| | | Estimated rate revenue - other | $2,200,000 |
| | | Estimated rate revenue - total | $78,800,000 |
| | Road Infrastructure | Km of council roads - unsealed | 339.4 |
| | | Km of council roads - sealed | 827.2 |
| **4. Operational Sustainability** | • This council expands the significant population base of City of Launceston Council, although it would have a larger area to service. Nevertheless, it should have the capacity to provide high quality services to communities across the council area.<br>• Perhaps the most significant challenge from a sustainability perspective associated with this scenario would be the implications for George Town if it were to be included in a smaller North-Eastern council.<br>• While this council would have significant internal capacity, there may still be value in it participating in any new centralised service-sharing arrangements for 'back-office' services such as IT systems, accounting, and procurement.<br>• Most current service sharing agreements would need to continue in some form under this scenario as they involve George Town and other councils outside this area. | | |

[4] There are limitations involved with this analysis, and it is acknowledged that the modelled revenues underestimate actual council revenues in some instances. The modelled revenues are a superior measure of relative fiscal capacity between council scenarios, and caution is advised for any comparison between modelled revenues for scenarios and existing councils. More information is provided in the Methods and Technical Background Supporting Paper.

# Tamar Valley: Scenario 3

## Overview

Scenario 3, like the other scenarios in this catchment, creates one council area. It combines the existing West Tamar, George Town and Launceston LGAs with Launceston's major commuting townships of Hadspen, Carrick, Longford, Perth, Evandale and their immediate surrounds.

This Scenario is primarily informed by commuting and community of interest data and includes all major towns and settlements with connections to Greater Launceston.

There is potential to retain customer service, administration and works hubs in their existing locations, thus supporting continued local employment opportunities.

| 2021 Population | % Growth 2011-21 |
|---|---|
| 122,360 | 10.8% |

# Tamar Valley Scenario 3

## Rationale and evidence

Scenario 3 would benefit the Tamar Valley catchment by increasing the scale and capability of the proposed council. With an approximate population of 122,000, this is one of the largest potential councils discussed in the *Information Packs*.

Under this scenario there is strong alignment between council boundaries with communities of interest and the geography of the region. Although George Town's commuter connections to Launceston are not as strong as other areas (as discussed under Scenario 2), geographical and service connections provide other ties to the region. This scenario would streamline cooperation and service sharing in the region, as well as collaboration with other tiers of government. The arrangement would build on many of the service sharing arrangements currently in place in the Catchment.

### Alignment with the principles for successful structural reform

**Focus on future community needs:** The consolidated council established under this scenario would have resources and capabilities to respond to emerging community needs. In terms of accessing services, if existing council offices across the Community Catchment were maintained as a part of a network model, then 95% of residents would be within a 30-minute drive of the major service and administrative hubs.

This council would incorporate Carrick, Longford, Perth and Evandale, which were former rural settlements, but are increasingly commuter satellite hubs to Launceston. Approximately 60 per cent of employed residents in these towns now work in Launceston. The rapid growth and development in these areas, and in suburbs such as Legana and St Leonards, provides compelling evidence that the connection of the wider Tamar Valley area to Launceston will only continue to grow in the coming decades.

Consolidation would support enhanced scope capabilities in areas such as strategic planning, development and environmental health assessment, and could help manage issues such as urban consolidation and infrastructure planning. In particular, whole of catchment land-use planning initiatives, such as the Northern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy (STRLUS), would be streamlined and supported.

**Retain local jobs and services:** While increasing scale benefits, such as the ability to attract and retain specialist staff and invest in productivity-enhancing equipment and 'back-office' systems, there would have to be a clear strategy of retaining jobs and teams across the region to maintain local employment and knowledge. This could include retaining customer service, works and administration hubs in, for example, George Town, Exeter and Beaconsfield. Strengthening partnerships with Service Tasmania, (as occurs in Beaconsfield) to provide combined customer service centres could also enhance service delivery (see Supporting Paper on *State Government Partnership Opportunities*), although there would be less of a need under this scenario than under others in this catchment.

While the new council would have significant scale, capacity and purchasing power, there may still be benefits in it centrally sourcing some basic common services, such as cloud-based ICT systems, to support council finance and administration (see Supporting Paper on *Shared Services Models*). This would reduce staff time on repetitive administrative tasks and system management, allowing them to focus on improving tailored local services to communities. A council with this capability and

## Tamar Valley Scenario 3

capacity would be well placed to support and share specialist staff with smaller rural councils, potentially acting as a hub for regional or state-wide shared service provision.

**Preserve and enhance local voice:** A challenge under this scenario would be ensuring that a single regional council is able not only to preserve but also enhance local voice, representation, and engagement. Despite its increased size, a single consolidated council would, however, have the capacity to invest in new and more systematic approaches to community engagement to ensure all communities within the larger council areas are heard and represented, including those in the rural hinterland areas and segments of the Launceston community which traditionally haven't engaged with local government. In a local government area of this size, there would also be merit in considering mechanisms to ensure that all areas of the Tamar Valley were afforded localised representation by the new council.

If required, there would also be scope to introduce community advisory panels regularly consulted by council to ensure constituents enjoy enhanced formal representation and direct influence in the decision-making process, including community budget priorities (see Supporting Paper on *Supporting Strong and Empowered Local Communities*). Operations hubs could also be used for a program of scheduled regional council meetings in different parts of the council area.

**Fair funding models:** Applying existing rates and funding models to the new council area, the total rates revenue in 2021 dollars would be an estimated $101.2m. The consolidated council would have access to a significant rate base drawn from a mix of residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural lands. One challenge would be establishing an equitable and consistent approach to rating across the proposed council given the City of Launceston's relatively low residential rates, partly attributable to its larger scale and commercial centre, relative to West Tamar and George Town. George Town has a relatively complex rating system to differentiate between residential and industrial land, which would also need careful consideration.

**Appropriate resourcing for transition:** Transition arrangements would need to consider the need for existing regional structures and how best to adapt and integrate the systems across the existing councils into integrated frameworks to meet the future needs of the Tamar Valley Catchment.

## Community data and alignment with reform criteria

The table below presents demographic, household, employment and operational council data for the hypothetical council established under Scenario 3. These data have been produced by modelling 2021 ABS Census (SA1 level) and other relevant data sets to align with the hypothetical boundaries of the new areas proposed in each scenario.

As we have indicated, these data are indicative and are designed to inform community discussions about the merits of different structural reform options. Structural reforms adopted by the Tasmanian Government based on the Board's recommendations will likely be subject to a detailed technical review and implementation plan. While every effort has been made to ensure consistency and accuracy, variation between SA1 and LGA boundaries may mean that some of the figures below may differ slightly from existing council statistics. Detailed methodological notes are presented in the *Methods and Technical Background Supporting Paper*.

### Summary Data – Scenario 3

| Category | | Measure | Council |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Overview** | **Demographics** | Population | 122,360 |
| | | Median age | 42.2 |
| | | SEIFA[5] (decile) | 4 |
| | Housing | Total dwellings | 48,539 |
| | | No. of single person households | 14,406 (29.7%) |
| | | % dwellings vacant | 7.9 |
| | | **Indicator** | |
| **1. Place and Representation** | Alignment with local communities of interest | % area workforce residing locally | 92.9% |

[5] SEIFA', or 'Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas', is an index developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics which ranks areas in Australia according to relative socio-economic advantage or disadvantage.

# Tamar Valley Scenario 3

| Category | | Measure | Council |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Established administrative, commercial and service hub/s | % of population within 30 mins of administrative hub | 95% |
| | Urbanisation | % of population in urban areas of population 10,000 or greater | 66% |
| | Mobility/Migration | % of population living at a different address 5 years ago | 34.9% |
| **2. Future Needs and Priorities** | Population growth | Population change *2011-21* | 11,941 (10.8%) |
| | Housing supply and infrastructure demand | Change in total dwelling numbers (2011-21) | 5,398 |
| | | % Change in total dwelling numbers (2011-21) | 12.5% |
| | Employment growth | Change in labour force 2011-21 by place of residence | 14% |
| | Older/aging communities | % Population over 65 | 21% |
| | Younger communities | % Population under 15 | 17% |
| **3. Financial Sustainability** | Value of rateable land | Value of rateable land - residential | $24,883,200,000 |
| | | Value of rateable land - primary production | $2,048,000,000 |
| | | Value of rateable land - industrial | $1,146,000,000 |

## Tamar Valley Scenario 3

| Category | | Measure | Council |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Value of rateable land - commercial | $3,192,700,000 |
| | | Value of rateable land - vacant | $978,800,000 |
| | | Value of rateable land - other | $2,218,000,000 |
| | | Value of rateable land – total | $34,466,613,900 |
| | Estimation of theoretical rate revenue applying current rates[6] | Estimated rate revenue - residential | $70,500,000 |
| | | Estimated rate revenue - commercial | $14,300,000 |
| | | Estimated rate revenue - industrial | $6,900,000 |
| | | Estimated rate revenue - primary production | $4,000,000 |
| | | Estimated rate revenue - vacant | $3,000,000 |
| | | Estimated rate revenue - other | $2,400,000 |
| | | Estimated rate revenue - total | 101,200,000 |
| | Road Infrastructure | Km of council roads - unsealed | 504.1 |
| | | Km of council roads - sealed | 1304.9 |
| **4. Operational Sustainability** | • This council would expand the significant population base of the City of Launceston LGA, although it would have a larger area to service. Nevertheless, it should have the capacity to provide high quality services to communities across the council area.<br>• Perhaps the most significant challenge from a sustainability perspective associated with this scenario would be the implications for any new council in the Central Midlands, given approximately 8,000 residents of Evandale, Perth and Longford would be included in the Tamar Valley council. | | |

[6] There are limitations involved with this analysis, and it is acknowledged that the modelled revenues underestimate actual council revenues in some instances. The modelled revenues are a superior measure of relative fiscal capacity between council scenarios, and caution is advised for any comparison between modelled revenues for scenarios and existing councils. More information is provided in the Methods and Technical Background Supporting Paper.

## Tamar Valley Scenario 3

| Category | Measure | Council |
|---|---|---|
| | • While the council would have significant internal capacity, there may be value in it participating in any new centralised service-sharing arrangements for 'back-office' services such as IT systems, accounting, and procurement.<br><br>• Many current service sharing agreements would become unnecessary if this council were established (e.g. Tamar NRM, Northern Workforce Development Program), however some others would need to continue as they involve councils outside this area. | |

## Tamar Valley: Scenario 4

This scenario recognises that commuter links are more pronounced between areas of the Meander Valley and Launceston than between the Meander Valley and the Cradle Coast. It has been developed to promote a discussion about the most suitable local government arrangements for the western part of the Meander Valley, given the regional significance of Launceston.

Given the scale of the council established under this scenario multiple primary administration and service centres with supporting works and service hubs would be established to support regional representation and service deliver and to maintain regional employment opportunities.

| 2021 Population | % Growth 2011-21 |
|---|---|
| 123,051 | 10.2% |

### Overview

Scenario 4 also creates one new council area combining West Tamar, George Town, and Launceston existing LGA., It also encompasses the agricultural land to the west of the Tamar Valley, including the townships of Westbury and Deloraine.

# Tamar Valley Scenario 4

## Rationale and evidence

Scenario 4 would benefit residents within the Tamar Valley Community Catchment by increasing the scale and capability of the council, with an approximate population of 123 000.

A council of this scale based around a major regional city would be able to attract and retain key professional and technical staff and would have the resources and capability to managing future growth in the region and offer a wide range of community services. The model would also present benefits in terms of strategic planning for the area.

The extent to which western areas of the existing Meander Valley (such as Mole Creek) should be incorporated under this scenario or connected to another catchment should be considered by communities. Perth, Longford, and Evandale have been excluded from this Scenario to consider their place in any future configuration of the Central Midlands Community Catchment. The community may also wish to discuss the possible inclusion of some or all of these towns, as discussed under Scenario 2, in this community catchment.

The challenge for this large single council model would be ensuring local representation, employment, and service delivery across the entire Tamar Valley Community Catchment. This is particularly important for rural communities given the physical size of the area covered by this scenario, which extends from Mole Creek in the west to Beechford in the northeast. The consolidated council would have the resources (hypothetical rate revenue of $98.4m) to invest in community engagement and establishing administrative and service delivery hubs across the community.

### Alignment with the principles for successful structural reform

#### Focus on future community needs:

This scenario would establish one large council. This model is similar to Scenario 3, although rather than including commuter townships to the south of Launceston, it has been extended further to the west to include most of the existing Meander Valley LGA. The single council reflects strong connections between the West Tamar, upper East Tamar, into the Meander Valley, and Launceston, and the fact that these communities lack their own strong economic base.

It would support integrated planning and service provision along the West Tamar growth corridor and surrounding areas.

Westbury has a strong commuter connection with Launceston (673 Westbury residents, 35% of the employed population, work in Launceston), but Deloraine does not (299 residents of Deloraine, 11% of the employed population, work in Launceston). While Deloraine's commuter connections to Launceston are not as pronounced as other areas, it has a reasonable connection which is stronger than to centres to the north such as Latrobe. Additionally, Meander Valley's involvement in shared service arrangements and regional partnerships tends to be oriented to the northern councils mostly captured under this catchment, with few formal links to the Central Highlands or Cradle Coast regions.

Under this scenario, 92% of residents would be within a 30-minute drive of the service and administrative hubs of Launceston, Westbury, Riverside, and George Town. Launceston hosts key educational and healthcare facilities for the region. This proximity supports access to services and

would ensure economic diversity amid the transition from predominantly manufacturing to services industries.

Consolidation would enhance capabilities in areas such as strategic planning, development and environmental health assessment, and could help manage issues such as urban consolidation and infrastructure planning. In particular, whole of catchment land-use planning would be supported, although this scenario does not include other commuting townships areas, such as Hadspen, Perth and Evandale.

Consolidation could also streamline and improve regional economic development and collaborations with key regional organisations such as the Northern Tasmanian Development Corporation (NTDC), and the administration of the Tamar Estuary Management Taskforce, and the implementation of the Northern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy (NTRLUS). Many of these arrangements, however, would need to continue as they involve the current Northern Midlands area to the south as well as other north-east councils outside the area. Maintaining and expanding service offerings should be simpler under consolidated council models, however.

**Retain local jobs and services:** Establishing a large council to represent the entire Tamar Valley region would deliver scale benefits including the ability to attract and retain specialist staff and invest in productivity-enhancing equipment and 'back-office' systems. There is significant scope to retain existing council administrative and operations hubs in Beaconsfield, Exeter, George Town, Westbury, and Launceston, to maintain local employment and to support local engagement and service delivery. Strengthening partnerships with Service Tasmania to provide combined customer service centres would also enhance service delivery.

The *Northern Tasmanian Councils Shared Services Study* (KPMG 2017) found that establishing common IT platforms would provide the greatest gains to current councils and would provide a foundation for extending the current resource sharing arrangements. While the new council would have significant capacity, there may be benefits in it participating in any centralised 'back-office' online support system for council finance and administration, particularly cloud-based systems (see *Supporting Paper on Shared Services Models*). This would reduce staff time on repetitive administrative tasks and system management, allowing them to focus on improving services to council staff and communities. Retaining existing southern boundaries may help provide some scale in neighbouring council areas.

**Preserve and enhance local voice:** The new, larger council would have the capacity to invest in new and more systematic approaches to community engagement to ensure all communities within the larger council area are heard and represented, particularly those in the rural areas, such as the Meander Valley. If required, there would also be scope to introduce community advisory panels regularly consulted by council to ensure constituents enjoy enhanced formal representation and direct influence in the decision-making process, including community budget priorities (see *Supporting Paper on Supporting Strong and Empowered Local Communities*). Operations hubs could also be used for a program of scheduled regional council meetings in different areas of the municipality.

**Fair funding models:** Applying existing rates and funding models to the new council area, the total revenues in 2021 dollars would be an estimated $98.4m. The area would have access to rates revenue from a mix of residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural land. There is some variation in rating strategies across the councils, so careful

consideration would need to be given how to establish an equitable and consistent approach across the new council area. Given that sections of five existing councils would be incorporated in the consolidated council careful transition arrangements would have to be implemented.

**Appropriate resourcing for transition:** Transition arrangements for this scenario would need to consider how services provided by the NTDC both to member councils and other councils across the broader region, would be undertaken under the new arrangements. Similarly, the current status of the joint arrangements and provision of regulatory services, particularly by West Tamar, would need to be considered, including any financial and staff commitments those councils have made to other councils. For example, the legal services shared contract that involves eight north-east councils would need to be considered.

## Community data and alignment with reform criteria

The table below presents demographic, household, employment and operational council data for the hypothetical council established under Scenario 4. These data have been produced by modelling 2021 ABS Census (SA1 level) and other relevant data sets to align with the hypothetical boundaries of the new areas proposed in each scenario.

As we have indicated, these data are indicative and are designed to inform community discussions about the merits of different structural reform options. Structural reforms adopted by the Tasmanian Government based on the Board's recommendations will likely be subject to a detailed technical review and implementation plan. While every effort has been made to ensure consistency and accuracy, variation between SA1 and LGA boundaries may mean that some of the figures below may differ slightly from existing council statistics. Detailed methodological notes are presented in the *Methods and Technical Background* Supporting Paper.

### Summary Data – Scenario 4

| Category | | Measure | Council |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Overview** | **Demographics** | Population | 123,051 |
| | | Median age | 42.4 |
| | | SEIFA[7] (decile) | 4 |
| | **Housing** | Total dwellings | 48,739 |
| | | No. of single person households | 14,497 (29.7%) |
| | | % dwellings vacant | 8.1 |
| | | **Indicator** | |
| **1. Place and Representation** | Alignment with local communities of interest | % area workforce residing locally | 86.9 |

[7] SEIFA', or 'Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas', is an index developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics which ranks areas in Australia according to relative socio-economic advantage or disadvantage.

| Category | | Measure | Council |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Established administrative, commercial and service hub/s | % of population within 30 mins of administrative hub | 92% |
| | Urbanisation | % of population in urban areas of population 10,000 or greater | 66% |
| | Mobility/Migration | % of population living at a different address 5 years ago | 34.8 |
| **2. Future Needs and Priorities** | Population growth | Population change *2011-21* | 11,422 (10.2%) |
| | Housing supply and infrastructure demand | Change in total dwelling numbers (2011-21) | 5,048 |
| | | % Change in total dwelling numbers (2011-21) | 11.6% |
| | Employment growth | Change in labour force 2011-21 by place of residence | 13% |
| | Older/aging communities | % Population over 65 | 16% |
| | Younger communities | % Population under 15 | 19% |
| **3. Financial Sustainability** | Value of rateable land | Value of rateable land - residential | $24,612,400,000 |
| | | Value of rateable land - primary production | $2,918,000,000 |
| | | Value of rateable land - industrial | $947,400,000 |
| | | Value of rateable land - commercial | $3,169,000,000 |
| | | Value of rateable land - vacant | $996,800,000 |
| | | Value of rateable land - other | $3,286,700,000 |
| | | Value of rateable land - total | $35,930,188,200 |

# Tamar Valley Scenario 4

| Category | | Measure | Council |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Estimation of theoretical rate revenue applying current rates[8] | Estimated rate revenue - residential | $67,300,000 |
| | | Estimated rate revenue - commercial | $14,200,000 |
| | | Estimated rate revenue - industrial | $5,600,000 |
| | | Estimated rate revenue - primary production | $5,900,000 |
| | | Estimated rate revenue - vacant | $3,000,000 |
| | | Estimated rate revenue - other | $2,500,000 |
| | | Estimated rate revenue - total | $98,400,000 |
| | Road Infrastructure | Km of council roads - unsealed | 731.5 |
| | | Km of council roads - sealed | 1,618.1 |

[8] There are limitations involved with this analysis, and it is acknowledged that the modelled revenues underestimate actual council revenues in some instances. The modelled revenues are a superior measure of relative fiscal capacity between council scenarios, and caution is advised for any comparison between modelled revenues for scenarios and existing councils. More information is provided in the Methods and Technical Background Supporting Paper.

| Category | Measure | Council |
|---|---|---|
| **4. Operational Sustainability** | • The council would supplement the already large population base of the City of Launceston LGA, although it would have a larger area to service. Nevertheless, it should have the capacity to provide high quality services to communities across the council area.<br><br>• While the council would have significant internal capacity, there may nevertheless be value in it participating in any new centralised -wide service-sharing arrangements for 'back-office' services such as IT systems, accounting and procurement.<br><br>• While some current service sharing agreements would become unnecessary if this council were established (e.g. Tamar NRM, Northern Workforce Development Program), many others would need to continue as they involve councils outside this area. | |

## 3. Comparison of scenarios

| Criteria and Indicator | Scenario 1 | Scenario 2 | Scenario 3 | Scenario 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Place and Representation** | | | | |
| **Alignment with local communities of interest** *% area workforce residing locally (local workforce ratio)* | 82.7% | 78.7% | 92.9% | 86.9% |
| **Established administrative, commercial and service hub/s** *% of population within 30 minutes of administrative hub* | 94% | 95% | 95% | 92% |
| **Urbanisation** *% of population in urban settlements* | 74% | 78% | 66% | 66% |
| **Mobility/Migration** *% of population who have moved in last 5 years* | 35.5% | 36.2% | 34.9% | 34.8% |
| **Future Needs and Priorities** *(Note – population projections are not available at SA1 level)* | | | | |
| **Population growth 2011-21** *% growth and absolute number* | 10,092 (10.2%) | 9,176 (10.7%) | 11,941 (10.8%) | 11,422 (10.2%) |

| Criteria and Indicator | Scenario 1 | Scenario 2 | Scenario 3 | Scenario 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Housing supply and infrastructure demand**<br>***Ten-year change (2011-21) in dwelling numbers (absolute and per 1000 pop)*** | 4,531 (41.6 per 1000) | 3,841 (40.6 per 1000) | 5,398 (44.1 per 1000) | 5,048 (41.0 per 1000) |
| **Employment growth**<br>***% growth in employment since 2011*** | 13% | 14% | 14% | 13% |
| **Older/ aging communities** ***population aged over 65 years (as % of total)*** | 16% | 16% | 21% | 16% |
| **Younger communities** ***population aged under 15 years (as % of total)*** | 19% | 19% | 17% | 19% |
| **Financial Sustainability** | | | | |
| **Value of rateable land**<br>***Total $ value within region*** | $31,020,676,300 | $26,955,753,200 | $34,466,613,900 | $35,930,188,200 |
| ***Estimated total rate revenue***[9] | $90,053,888 | $78,795,006 | 101,247,397 | $98,446,766 |

[9]There are limitations involved with this analysis, and it is acknowledged that the modelled revenues underestimate actual council revenues in some instances. The modelled revenues are a superior measure of relative fiscal capacity between council scenarios, and caution is advised for any comparison between modelled revenues for scenarios and existing councils. More information is provided in the Methods and Technical Background Supporting Paper.

| Criteria and Indicator | Scenario 1 | Scenario 2 | Scenario 3 | Scenario 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Estimated rate revenue as a % of area total rateable property value** | 0.29% | 0.29% | 0.29% | 0.27% |
| **Road infrastructure**<br>***Length and type of councils roads in new region***<br>***Km by type*** | | | | |
| **Km of council roads - unsealed** | 460.9 | 339.4 | 504.1 | 731.5 |
| **Km of council roads - sealed** | 1,072.9 | 827.2 | 1304.9 | 1,618.1 |
| **Additional Key Metrics** | | | | |
| **Population** | 108,835 | 94,605 | 122,360 | 123,051 |
| **Median Age** | 42 | 41.1 | 42.2 | 42.4 |
| **SEIFA (decile)** | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |

## 4. Implications for neighbouring Community Catchments

Community Catchments have been established to facilitate discussions about options for council consolidation at a regional level. We are also mindful that the design of the reforms in one community catchment will have impacts on neighbouring regions and the local government system as a whole. Given this, it is important to note how the design of the Tamar Valley Catchment may have implications for neighbouring Community Catchments and councils therein.

Launceston and Tamar Valley constitute a clearly defined geographical region. The extent to which neighbouring towns and settlements – specifically those increasingly connected to the City of Launceston – should be included in the Tamar Valley has implications for neighbouring community catchments needs to be carefully considered. Specific issues include:

- Whether the Launceston suburbs of Blackstone Heights and Prospect Vale should be included in the Tamar Valley Catchment given they are part of urban Launceston (Scenario 1).
- Whether George Town should be included in the Tamar Valley or the North-East Catchment (Scenario 2).
- Whether the townships of Perth, Evandale and Longford to Launceston's south should be included in the Tamar Valley or Central and Midlands Catchment (Scenario 3).
- Whether the townships of Westbury and/or Deloraine should be included in the Tamar Valley or in the Central and Midlands Catchment (Scenario 4). And if so, how far into the western end of the existing Meander Valley should the incorporation extend? Further, if areas are excluded, in which other local government area should they be re-located?

These boundary questions will need to be resolved in discussion with relevant communities and councils in the affected areas.

## 5. Appendix

**Analysis of existing Councils within (or partially within) community catchment[10]**

| Council | Population | No. of employees | Average Residential Rates & Annual Charges per Residential Property ($) | Current ratio (10 yr average) | Cash Expense Cover Ratio | Own source revenue coverage ratio (10 yr average) | Underlying surplus ratio (10 yr average) | Debt service cover ratio (8 yr average) | Asset sustainability ratio (7 yr average) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Year | 2021 | 2020-21 | 2020-21 | 2011-21 | 2011-21 | 2011-21 | 2011-21 | 2013-21 | 2014-21 |
| George Town | 7033 | 40 | 1152.95 | 3.47 | 5 | 83% | 0% | 22.3 | 71% |
| Launceston | 70055 | 433.76 | 1731.13 | 3.23 | 11 | 92% | -1% | 20.2 | 70% |
| Meander Valley | 20709 | 82.15 | 1094.4 | 8.54 | 13 | 79% | 3% | 5.0 | 126% |
| Northern Midlands | 13745 | 64.5 | 1141.91 | 4.71 | 18 | 75% | -2% | 6.0 | 101% |
| West Tamar | 25145 | 106 | 1582.49 | 4.62 | 12 | 93% | 6% | 22.0 | 87% |

[10] Definitions of data items can be found *Existing Council Data Definitions Supporting Paper*.

| Council | Asset renewal funding ratio (7 yr average) | Asset consumption ratio (7 yr average) | Cash and investments held ($'000s) | Net Financial Liabilities Ratio (%) | Interest bearing liabilities ($'000s) | No. of discretionary development applications received | Value of all development approvals ($) | No. of councillors |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Year | 2014-21 | 2014-21 | 30-Jun-22 | 2020-21 | 30-Jun-22 | 2020-21 | 2020-21 | 2018 |
| George Town | 91% | 84% | 8,129 | 13% | 4,346 | 113 | 40,326,245 | 9 |
| Launceston | 91% | 76% | 81,902 | 13% | 26,000 | 844 | 393,159,275 | 12 |
| Meander Valley | 91% | 79% | 24,323 | 50% | 3,600 | 278 | 85,081,713 | 9 |
| Northern Midlands | 115% | 81% | 26,152 | 5% | 9,570 | 248 | 59,101,247 | 9 |
| West Tamar | 89% | 74% | 24,634 | 61% | 2,200 | 355 | 93,343,336 | 9 |

**The future of local government review**

# Information Pack – Supporting Paper

## Supporting Strong and Empowered Local Communities

Tasmanian Government

## Introduction

The discussion about consolidating council boundaries the Board is promoting through its Information Packs will no doubt raise a range of questions about how structural reform might impact on local community voice and representation, jobs, and service presence.

Consistent with its Structural Reform Principles, the purpose of this Paper is to help councils and communities to think about and be open to new ideas in relation to the following:

- potential opportunities for enhancing local community voice and input in council decision making;
- some of the Board's views on maintaining local council jobs and service presence; and
- opportunities for alternative governance arrangements to better support the State's isolated and sparsely populated areas.

## Protecting and enhancing local voice

During the Board's Stage 2 engagement, we heard concerns, particularly from Tasmanians from rural areas, that consolidating council areas could reduce their access to elected representatives and, by extension, local representation. We understand many Tasmanians in smaller, more isolated communities value being able to see and speak to their elected representatives as they go about their daily lives – at a local event, or even at the supermarket or in the street.

On the other hand, we also heard strong sentiment from those under 45 and Aboriginal Tasmanians that their councils do not adequately engage with, consult, or make decisions in line with their needs and interests, and that in general they feel disillusioned with and disconnected from local government. We also heard from a number of peak body representatives that council decision making needs to better reflect and consider the voices of our marginalised and minority communities.

The Board does not think moving to a system of larger, more capable councils needs to come at the cost of local voice and representation. In fact, increased capability could open up new opportunities to *enhance* community representation and governance – by improving the quality and sophistication of council community engagement practices.

**Wards or electoral districts – one possible pathway?**

Throughout the Review, we have heard through a number of submissions, as well as general commentary, that establishing wards or electoral districts within local government areas as a means of preserving local representation should be considered in any scenario where the state moves to a system of fewer, larger councils.

While provisions exist under the Local Government Act for 'electoral districts' they have not been used since the transition in 1993 from our previous 46 councils to the current 29.

Wards or electoral districts do offer one possible way of ensuring specific areas of an LGA retain representation and the Board remains open to these ideas. However, they are not the only option.

Our research and engagement has also highlighted some significant potential drawbacks of wards, which need to be carefully considered if a compelling case was to be made to rely on them as a central feature of local government in Tasmania in the future. For instance:

- One of the key principles for the Board's case for fewer, larger councils is that our existing council boundaries do not reflect the way our contemporary communities live and work. Implementing wards in new councils could undermine the positive outcomes in establishing councils with more strongly aligned communities of interest and broader, more diverse constituencies.
- We have heard that wards could entrench factionalism and parochialism in councils, which would be particularly damaging at a time when new councils and communities could be building a new shared vision for their community.
- International evidence shows councils that shift from 'at large' to 'ward' elections see a decrease in housing supply and economic activity. Findings show that wards – through decentralising council decision making to 'wardens' – give disproportionate influence to not-in-my-backyard (NIMBY) influences over development application assessments[1].
- Wards, particularly in low population rural areas often fail to attract a broad and diverse range of candidates, potentially creating undemocratic and unrepresentative outcomes. This has led to some recently amalgamated councils in Australia (which had implemented wards to ostensibly preserve 'local voice'), have their residents soon vote to abolish them[2].

## Opportunity: more consistent, deliberative, and better-resourced engagement practices

During the Review we have identified an increasing acknowledgement, both in Australia and Internationally, of local government's important role in 'place shaping'. This is a trend which has seen councils move toward a more active role in developing and preserving local identity and promoting community wellbeing. This is the case in Tasmania too. In particular, research by the University of Tasmania has identified that effective place shaping requires that councils support and contribute to community networks, and are prepared to engage with or devolve decision making responsibilities to their residents[3].

We have heard strongly during the Review that to support this important role, Tasmanians have an increasing expectation that their councils continually engage with them, and listen and respond to the issues and challenges they face. Establishing frameworks that enable and empower councils to do this will create better outcomes for the whole State.

[1]Evan Mast; Warding Off Development: Local Control, Housing Supply, and NIMBYs. The Review of Economics and Statistics 2022; doi: https://doi.org/10.1162/rest_a_01192

[2]Ben Raue; Mapping the Dubbo referendum. The Tally Room 2021; https://www.tallyroom.com.au/44528

[3] Tasmanian Policy Exchange; Place shaping and the future role of local government in Tasmania: evidence and options. 2022; FoLGR-UTas-Paper-3-Place-shaping-and-the-future-role-of-local-government-in-Tasmania.pdf

Local democracy is not confined to four-yearly council elections. We have observed shifts across Australia's local government landscape to more deliberative and direct community engagement processes, which actively consider and involve citizens in decision making. Examples of these include community panels, citizens juries, deliberative polls and regional town hall meetings.

While there are many positive examples of community engagement within Tasmanian local government, engagement planning and approaches are patchy in their application, and this is reflected in community dissatisfaction with how their councils go about engagement. This is reflected in our state-wide survey of Tasmanians, which found that councils rated poorly on how well their decisions represented the whole of the community[4].

We believe there is significant scope to enhance how our councils engage with all members of their communities. Community engagement should be at the core of local government's role, and the sector needs to be supported to build capability in capacity in this area.

A key consideration for enhancing how our councils engage with their communities is whether the sector has the capacity and capability to plan and undertake genuine and sophisticated deliberative engagement. We have seen that, under the status quo, there are notable inconsistencies in council approaches to engaging with their communities. Achieving greater scale through larger councils should increase the organisational capability of councils to embed and deliver effective community engagement practices that better support council decision-making.

The Board believes that community engagement plans should be mandated for all councils – underpinned by clear principles for deliberative engagement. That is, councils must plan and engage with their communities in a way which is genuine, informative, and representative. This does not mean that councils need to undertake long, deliberative engagement processes (such as citizen's juries) for every decision they make, but they should ensure people impacted by a decision are genuinely consulted about those impacts.

Engagement plans may also need to contemplate how smaller communities within councils are more effectively represented. This could be through a range of activities, including local community plans, and leveraging improved State Government partnerships and technology to hold more face-to-face regional council meetings in different townships, and otherwise providing digital hubs which councils could utilise for more effective community engagement, connectivity and service delivery.

As evidenced where deliberative community engagement is deployed at a local government level, outcomes for communities are better - council decisions reflect local values more closely and are more widely accepted and supported. Additionally, citizens who are given the opportunity to participate in deliberative engagement processes feel stronger connections to their communities, and their representatives. This will also enhance the capability of our councillors, by actively elevating the importance of their role in decision making to a more strategic level – to genuinely consider and represent all relevant community voices.

[4] The University of Newcastle; The Future of Local Government Review Tasmanian Residents State-wide Phone Survey Report, 2023; https://www.futurelocal.tas.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Report-Tasmania-wide-phone-survey-v2.pdf

### Opportunity – Enhanced community-based engagement and decision-making mechanisms

There are opportunities for larger, more capable councils to enable greater local democratic participation through establishing citizen committees/panels. Councils could engage with these panels on issues related to particular towns or communities within an LGA, recognising the importance of local knowledge and networks, and providing greater self-determination and input into council's decision-making processes.

It is also recognised that citizens panels can support councils in dealing with complex local policy issues, by allowing them to tap into local knowledge and expertise.[5] Additionally, our research commissioned by UTAS found that the introduction of community boards, 'people's panels' and other participatory models could lead to considerable improvements in Tasmanian local government representation.[6] The Board wants to continue to explore the benefits for both council and communities, in having citizen committees as a formal feature of our system of local government.

### Opportunity – Provide more transparent and accessible information about council performance

So that councils can understand how to continually respond to and improve service delivery and local representation, we are developing specific reform recommendations aimed at ensuring our local government sector is underpinned by a transparent system of performance reporting and ongoing improvement. Communities' confidence in their councils can be built by ensuring appropriate visibility of, and accountability for, performance. Transparent performance reporting can serve as a foundation for informing communities on the challenges council's face in balancing finances and services, which can further support meaningful engagement with councils and ensure communities better understand decision-making.

Earlier in the Future of Local Government Review process, the Board released two data dashboards which collate and present publicly available data on Tasmanian councils with the purpose of helping to inform the public's knowledge of what councils do, and to support engagement with the Review. These dashboards were well received by the sector and public, and could serve as a platform for a future public performance reporting framework.

### Opportunity – Provide more ways to access and engage with council processes

There is significant scope for local government in Tasmania to further modernise and provide equitable access to council meetings for communities. In particular, there is an opportunity for all council meetings to be livestreamed, with recordings published to council websites alongside agendas, meeting papers and minutes. Currently, all councils must publish their meeting agendas, meeting papers and minutes under the *Local Government Act 1993,* but only a few councils livestream and publish the recordings of their meetings. We think that recording and publishing meetings would allow greater accessibility to council meetings for all Tasmanians.

Additionally, there are opportunities for councils to better utilise online tools and content to support engagement with and participation from a broader range of their residents. Importantly,

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[5] Australian Centre for Excellence in Local Government; The Role and Future of Citizen Committees in Australian Local Government, 2013; https://opus.lib.uts.edu.au/bitstream/10453/42125/3/ACELG_Citizen_Committees_Report_.pdf

[6] Tasmanian Policy Exchange; Place shaping and the future role of local government in Tasmania: evidence and options. 2022; FoLGR-UTas-Paper-3-Place-shaping-and-the-future-role-of-local-government-in-Tasmania.pdf

this doesn't mean that councils should be exclusively using online tools to engage and inform their communities, but utilising both modern engagement approaches with traditional methods such as face-to-face meetings, print media and paper-based surveys. This would ensure that councils are more accessible and inclusive of all their community members.

As part of the broader shift to deliberative engagement as a defining feature of the design of local government in Tasmania, there are further opportunities for new, larger councils to host meetings across different townships through their LGAs. This initiative is seen at both State and Federal level with regional Cabinet meetings, and would allow bigger councils to have a more active presence across all their townships and communities.

## Maintaining local service presence and jobs

We have heard contrasting views from council staff in relation to the potential impacts of structural change on local government employment. Some staff view structural change more positively - particularly from a career and workload standpoint - where they believe a larger council would provide better opportunities for professional development, workload management and career progression, as well as increased workforce scale and more supported teams. Alternatively, some staff are concerned that council consolidation will lead to the centralisation of services, which will equate to job losses in regional communities and the reduction of services.

In our Stage 2 Interim Report we highlighted the importance of local government as a major employer, particularly in small, rural communities, and the benefits this has for the strength and prosperity of our regions – now and into the future. We also looked to the 1993 local government reforms where, instead of the 'mass job losses' some had predicted, what was actually delivered was increased capacity through employment of a greater range of staff.

Underpinning any transition process towards larger councils, mechanisms and systems need to be established to support the retention of local government employees, particularly in rural areas. Importantly, the potential council models defined in our information packs identify existing council administrative and operations hubs which can and should be maintained – to allow existing staff to remain in their local areas.

As we have noted in our Interim Report for Stage 2, the Board is being guided by a number of relevant foundations for structural reform that concern the workforce. The foundations are informing the way we explore structural reform scenarios, and the way we will consider any alternative proposals:

- High-functioning rural local governments can and do operate successfully with regional or dispersed workforces and workforce hubs.
- Appropriately dispersed regional workforces supporting an equitable level of localised service delivery, responsiveness and community wellbeing.
- The size and distribution of the outdoor workforce is determined principally by the quantity, quality, and distribution of infrastructure assets, and not the location or scale of the administrative centre.

- Irrespective of any structural change, as local government services become increasingly complex and professionalised, future workforces should continue to leverage technologies and new work practices in order to ensure access to scarce professional and technical workers and the services they provide to regional communities.

### Opportunity: decentralised remote working opportunities underpinned by better digital technology

Tasmania has changed significantly since 1993. Our population has grown and is dispersed differently. Our roads are better, our vehicles are more efficient, our technology enables us to communicate and work remotely. The suggestion that building scale through boundary consolidation will naturally come at the cost of local jobs and communities does not stack up – depots and shop fronts do not need to close or relocate to a central location, and staff can (and want to) utilise flexible working arrangements to suit their needs.

A key lesson from COVID 19 is that teams can be formed from people working remotely. This trend continues despite the reduced risks from COVID-19. Understanding *how* remote and flexible working arrangements can improve employment (particularly regional employment) is a key area of our enquiry and we are expecting councils and staff to provide important insights during consultation in Stage 3.

In particular, we have heard from some council staff that they believe working for a larger, more capable council would provide better platforms and structures for them to utilise flexible working arrangements (amongst other benefits), and see this as a key opportunity stemming from our program of structural reform.

### Opportunity: establishing accountabilities for councils to retain local staff and service hubs

So that council staff are supported through any transition process, there need to be accountabilities in place that ensure local jobs and service hubs or depots are retained to the greatest possible extent.

Options to support this, such as making new councils report on the location of their workforces/FTEs and service centres as part of their broader workforce planning, would provide transparency on maintaining their local jobs and services. This would also ensure councils are considering community needs and interests first and foremost.

## Exploring alternative governance arrangements

## King and Flinders Islands

The Board notes that, while there are connections to neighbouring councils and communities, the Bass Strait Islands (the islands) are very different to the rest of Tasmania's LGAs, and the State in general – geographically, economically and socially. As a result, their councils face a unique set of challenges across community issues, revenue generation, and functional service delivery and costs. Due to the geographically isolated nature of the islands, changes to community identity and composition over the last 30 years are arguably less tangible than the rest of the State. We believe this may warrant consideration of unique governance arrangements to support these councils and ensure regional equity in the event of any state-wide structural reform program.

During our Stage 2 community workshops on the islands, we heard suggestions from participants that supporting models of governance are needed for the islands. We were made aware of several alternative governance models which are a feature of islands in other Jurisdictions, which could better support the councils in supporting their communities, and providing efficient services and infrastructure.

*Case Study - Kangaroo Island (South Australia)*

An Island Commissioner for Kangaroo Island is a Statutory Office established under Legislation in South Australia. This role was established through recognition of the unique governance challenges faced on Kangaroo Island, and the need for better integration of on-island plans and services across levels of government. The Commissioner has an office in both Adelaide and on Kangaroo Island. Under the *Commissioner for Kangaroo Island Act 2014* the key functions of the commissioner are:

- to improve the management, co-ordination and delivery of infrastructure and services provided by government agencies on the Island;
- to provide appropriate assistance to residents and businesses on Kangaroo Island in dealing with government agencies (with a view to ensuring co-ordinated delivery of infrastructure and services to such residents and businesses);
- to assist with improving the local economy on Kangaroo Island;
- to prepare, and keep under review, management plans on infrastructure provision, service delivery and community engagement.

We think there is merit in exploring the commissioner model further, and we want to discuss this opportunity during consultation with councils. The establishment of a commissioner's office (or coordinator) would effectively work to overcome geographic barriers and create a more formal and active link between the council, State and Federal Governments and service providers. This would help the island councils address challenges in skills shortages and service delivery, and also support them to maintain a greater focus on their roles in place shaping and supporting community wellbeing.

Importantly, in exploring this model further the Board would like insights on how it could be ensured that this approach (or similar) could provide tangible and meaningful benefits for the islands.

*Case Study - Lord Howe Island (New South Wales)*

Unlike Kangaroo Island, Lord Howe Island does not have a municipal council. Instead, there is a Lord Howe Island Board – a statutory authority established under the provisions of the *Lord Howe Island Act 1953.*

The Lord Howe Island Board is responsible to the NSW Minister for the Environment and comprises four Islanders elected by the local community and three members appointed by the Minister (to represent the interests of business, tourism and conservation). It is charged with the care, control, and management of the Island and the affairs and trade of the Island. It is also responsible for the care, improvement, and welfare of the Island residents.

While we have included this model here for discussion, the population of Lord Howe Island is notably smaller than both King and Flinders Islands.

## Unincorporated areas

Across New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia (and the territories), there are regions which are not governed by councils – in most cases due to their sparse populations. These unincorporated areas are usually directly administered and managed by State Government bodies or statutory authorities. We think there is merit in exploring similar governance arrangements for Tasmania's sparsely populated areas – such as areas surrounding national parks and World Heritage Areas.

Our national parks and World Heritage Areas in particular, are already managed by The Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS) – however there is potential for the State to support isolated, rural councils by taking a greater role in managing and maintaining core infrastructure such as roads and provision of core municipal services. This could be done through purchasing agreements with councils, which still support local employment and services.

*Summary of Unincorporated Areas in Australia*[7]

New South Wales

- The far west and north of New South Wales constitutes the Unincorporated Far West Region – managed by the Crown Land Department.
- Lord Howe Island managed by a Board (see above)

Victoria

- Victoria has 10 small unincorporated areas, which are either small islands directly administered by the state, or ski resorts administered by state-appointed management boards.

South Australia

- Approximately 60% of the state belongs to the Pastoral Unincorporated Area.
- The Outback Communities Authority (OCA), established under the *Outback Communities (Administration and Management) Act 2009*.
- The OCA manages public services and facilities, promotes improvements in service and facility provision, and advocates for views and interests of communities.
- OCA is managed by a seven-person board, appointed by the Governor of SA (three-year terms) – four are members of different outback communities.
- OCA has some rating powers under local government act through 'asset sustainability levies', and 'community contributions'. Amounts are fixed by the Minister for Local Government.
- Funded jointly by the State and Federal Government (state grants commission funds are provided). Roughly 50/50. Annual budget of around $5m, with about $1.5m from community contributions and other revenues.

[7] (Queensland, Tasmania and WA are all portioned entirely into LGAs)

**The future of local government review**

# Information Pack – Supporting Paper

## State Government partnership opportunities for Local Government

Tasmanian Government

## Introduction

Local government exercises many functions on behalf of State Government. It does this under statute (e.g. regulatory functions under the *Building Act 2016*) or under agreement (e.g. Break O'Day Community Wellbeing Pilot Project).

The Board has received a range of submissions suggesting that there is a need for, and a potential benefit from, local government receiving stronger and more targeted support from State Government. The kinds of support suggested includes regulatory guidelines, decision support tools, staff exchanges, shared facilities, staff training and funding.

The Board has identified a number of specific opportunities for establishing new or enhanced partnerships with State Government that could be pursued in conjunction with structural reforms to councils. These partnerships could enhance the quality, range and accessibility of services provided by councils to the community, and also reduce the cost of providing those services.

By enabling the community's access to government services at a range of locations, including at home through online and phone services, stronger State Government partnerships could support two of the core guiding principles discussed in the Stage 2 Interim Report:

1. Retain jobs and service presence locally
2. Preserve and enhance local voice.

These opportunities are outlined in more detail below and include greater potential customer-centred services partnership, alignment, or integration with a substantial number of State agencies, including Service Tasmania, Health, Justice and Parks and Wildlife.

## Leveraging the Tasmanian Government Services Division

The Government Services division within the Department of Premier and Cabinet has a focus on developing improved operational and financial approaches for Government Services, including incorporating digital services for the public and across agencies. They Support the development of the workforce, and the tools and systems they use, to provide the best possible customer service to Tasmanians. The Government Services Division includes *Service Tasmania* and *Digital Strategy and Services* (DSS).

## Partnerships with Service Tasmania

*A strengthened council partnership with Service Tasmania could see more 'one-stop' government service hubs co-located with councils, providing in-person services to more Tasmanians, as well as greater access to a wider range of council services online and by phone.*

Service Tasmania (ST) provides convenient access to a wide range of government services:

- over-the-counter at ST's 27 service centres;
- over-the-telephone through the Government Contact Centre; and
- online at www.service.tas.gov.au.

Customers can access approximately 600 services over the counter and in excess of 500 services over the phone. Additionally, ST offers electronic bill payment functionality, online and by phone.

Service Centre Locations

ST currently provides council services for 6 of Tasmania's 29 councils, meaning residents can enter any ST location to undertake a range of local government transactions. Council services provided include:

- Rates Payment/enquiry
- General invoice/statement payments
- Council Enquiries – General
- Parking Infringement Payment/Enquiry
- Dog Registration – Establish/renew
- Dog Health & Kennel licencing
- Pensioner Parking Permit

- Pensioner rates remission application
- Planning/Building/
- Venue/miscellaneous item hire applications
- Dog nuisance complaints
- General application receipt/payment
- Event RSVP
- Make council officer appointment
- Receipt documents
- Service delivery complaint



## Opportunity: Integrated Face-to-Face, Phone and Digital Service Delivery with Service Tasmania

Integrating services across the State and Local Government offers opportunities to make life simpler for Tasmanians and unlock economies of scale.

During life's key events, information that people need is often distributed across layers of government, and indeed non-government sources. Collaboration and service alignment around the individual, rather than government silos, means people can find support more easily and do not need to tell their story time and again. An example would be someone moving home, who requires information from both local government and multiple state entities.

To deliver these outcomes, both State and Local Government need to sustain common service delivery capabilities, such as face-to-face, phone and digital services. Sharing costs of these not only helps optimise the customer experience but also helps make them more sustainable and comprehensive.

Face-to-face services

Three ST service centres are currently physically co-located alongside council staff in their premises (Beaconsfield, Oatlands, Currie). One council agreement (Devonport City Council) is more developed, where Service Tasmania now acts as the first point of contact for the majority of council customers physically visiting co-located premises. Many of these transactions can be resolved at this first point of contact. ST charges councils for services provided on a per transaction basis. Additionally, ST also provides services for the Commonwealth, particularly Services Australia.

Co-location offers convenience for the public in accessing multiple government services, and in many instances furthers the 'no wrong door' principle where people need not know which layers of government they should be interacting with. It is often financially advantageous to share rent and outgoing costs with a partner organisation. Staff from the various organisations are able to share knowledge and ideas, and in some instances share certain tasks and activities.

Based on experience with Devonport City Council, the approach of service integration seems to offer the most comprehensive advantages of any current co-location model. Under this approach ST can utilise existing systems to process basic transactional activity on behalf of councils (under a negotiated financial agreement). This is not a significant additional overhead but would otherwise be an additional workload for council staff.

Where councils have service agreements in place with ST, residents benefit from being able to access local services at *any* of the 27 service locations, as well as by phone and online at www.service.tas.gov.au. Analysis has demonstrated that a significant number of these rate payers transact outside of their LGA, indicating people find the option of multiple payment points to be convenient.

Contact Centres

The Government Contact Centre (GCC) currently handles a wide variety of service enquiries, and opportunities exist for local government to leverage this capability. This could contribute to decreased community costs and has the capability to smooth financial impacts across the State

Integrating local government enquiries into a shared contact centre capability would provide access to efficient and effective operating practices, best in class technology and support, along with economies of scale. Councils may often experience surges in demand such around rates notice periods and emergencies, and so leveraging a more scalable capability can assist at these times.

The GCC operated a 'distributed' model meaning operators can work from anywhere in the state, so local staff can be retained, handling those enquiries remotely under the centralised highly skilled GCC management team.

With both face-to-face and contact centre services, Councils may find that a service agreement with ST also proves to be financially attractive compared to the cost-to-serve with lower customer volumes themselves. Councils need not, of course, stop providing such a service themselves, but may find that over time they can re-prioritise staffing resource to other service areas of need if customer volumes fall.

Digital

In late 2023/early 2024, ST will launch a digital services portal, providing Tasmanians with a secure and easy-to-use access point for Government services, accessed through a single login. Stage 1 will allow Tasmanians to create a secure account to access their digital services. Over time, the portal will provide foundational tools that could potentially assist councils to enhance the range of services that can be offered online. Examples of these tools include e-forms, a central customer relationship management platform and a systems integration capability.

Benefits of councils leveraging myServiceTas would likely include:

- Ability to leverage a central, robust model for complex, resource intensive and higher risk activities such as cyber security.
- Potential to link into existing infrastructure where councils have already made investments in systems and tools.
- Significantly reduced need to invest in other foundational requirements to hold and secure information such as digital identity through investing in a common platform and solutions.
- Reduced public confusion by offering a common entry point to state and local government services, allowing many services to be presented side-by side (e.g. care registration and rates notices).

## Improving Digital Inclusion and Cyber Security (through DSS)

*A strengthened council partnership with DSS could build councils' digital capability and increase the community's access to secure digital services, particularly in remote areas.*

DPAC Digital Strategy and Services Division (DSS) supports key actions associated with the State Government's digital transformation initiatives. Through collaboration and engagement, DSS partners with agencies and contracted suppliers to remain at the forefront of emerging technology and digital trends. DSS works within the broader scope of the Government's strategy for digital transformation – *Our Digital Future* – which establishes the Government's vision, priorities, principles and objectives for the foundational phase of digital transformation.

The Board sees great potential for the work of DSS being broadened to include local councils, and the benefits of the opportunities in this area are likely to be enhanced by appropriate structural reform. The Board notes that the three principles of Our Digital Future are equally relevant to communities being served by local councils:

- Accessibility: more equitable coverage and connectivity
- Ability: inclusive strategies for digital literacy, knowledge and skills
- Affordability: digitally-delivered essential services within reach of all.

Building on these principles, a DSS partnership with local government could aim to achieve:

- Better service delivery to regional areas (improving local service delivery)
- Improved capability within councils to provide a wider range of digital services
- Improved remote work outcomes for Tasmanians (i.e. maintaining local employment through improved connectivity)
- Better equality in access to digital services (improved digital literacy outcomes)
- Investment in rural communities
- Affordability of digital services through local access solutions
- Consolidating government services into a one-stop-shop.

The Board considers that the following opportunities are worth exploring in the context of structural reform of local government.



### Opportunity: Improving connectivity to regions and accessibility

DSS provides Data and Internet services that connect government sites (Including some council sites today), even in very remote areas. These data and Internet services for remote sites are improving all the time, for example, it is working with technology partners to develop access to a secure satellite-based broadband service using Starlink. Where needed, this could be extended to allow councils to better serve remote locations.

Improved connectivity would enable Digital hubs to be established in regional areas, with well supported digital access and a range of council and community facilities, such as service shopfronts, conferencing facilities and meeting rooms. By focussing State Government and council investment in this way, such premises could be available for council 'regional' meetings, community engagement sessions and regional online attendance to improve community representation. To build capability to support these things locally, there is also scope for the State Government's emerging Digital Workforce Capability program to be leveraged for local council staff – the program will focus on three areas: digital skills and workforce planning, digital careers development and digital talent pipelines.

The WA Government has established a Digital Inclusion Accord - a shared commitment between a variety of organisations and entities, with varying expertise and capabilities, from industry, community service, WA communities and Government, to improve digital inclusion outcomes in WA. Through the Accord, members identify opportunities where resources, capabilities and expertise could be combined to support digital inclusion outcomes.

Such an Accord applied in Tasmania could build on *Our Digital Future* by providing a mechanism for collaboration between Stage agencies, local councils and other public and private sector participants to invest in infrastructure and service uplift. The Department of StateGrowth also attracts investment in digital infrastructure to the state and may also play a role in such and Accord and these opportunities more broadly.

### Opportunity: Support the shared procurement of cloud-based core service business systems

With improved connectivity the opportunities to leverage cloud base services increases. Councils could purchase cloud-based services (such as Software as a Service and Public Cloud Infrastructure) The

State's enterprise agreements could be expanded as part of future procurements to include a broader range of cloud services and eligibility for councils to participate . This could allow for more integrated and adaptable service provision by councils in partnership with State Government. It would also support continued regionalisation of jobs by allowing for Councils to establish regionally distributed corporate teams with greater accessibility and flexibility in performing their work.

A number of councils are already supported by DSS when procuring data and internet services. This relationship could be expanded in the future to include cloud-based services. By drawing on the consolidated expertise of DSS in procuring whole-of-government digital capabilities, councils would be able to reduce their risks when working in this complex area.

### Opportunity: Cyber security support for Tasmanian councils

DSS is delivering the Tasmanian Government Cyber Security Program. The objective of the program is to improve the Government's ability to protect Tasmanians' data and minimise the potential for disruption of government services from cyber security threats. Key initiatives established under the Program include: Building cyber security incident response capacity and capability; Supporting Tasmanians who have been affected by identity theft; Increasing cyber security awareness across government to ensure staff understand their role in reducing cyber security risks; Implementing role specific cyber security training for staff that will enable them to recognise cyber security threats and to respond appropriately; and Upskilling cyber security professionals across government with the latest techniques.

A number of councils have already experienced costly and disruptive cyber security incidents. Bringing councils under the umbrella of the State Government's cyber security arrangements would reduce costs to councils and reduce cyber risks to all Tasmanians.

## Partnerships with Consumer, Building and Occupational Services

*A strengthened council partnership with CBOS could build council capacity in building and plumbing regulation.*

Councils are responsible for issuing building and plumbing permits under the *Building Act 2016* and ensuring compliance with Tasmania's Building Regulatory Framework. Skills and resourcing shortages mean that councils are having trouble fulfilling all their responsibilities under this Act. Consumer, Building and Occupational Services (CBOS) is responsible for the *Building Act 2016* at the State level, educating consumers and people in the building industry about the state's building legislation and national standards, licensing building service providers, and enforcing and also ensuring compliance with building laws.

## Delivering better services through shared systems

### Case Study: PlanBuild

The PlanBuild Tasmania 'Enquiry Service' currently allows councils and the community to identify planning, building and plumbing rules that may apply to a proposed project.

Phase 2 of the PlanBuild Tasmania portal, 'Application Services' will give councils the facility to receive development applications online and carry out related transactions and referrals. Members of the public will be able to submit applications, pay fees, purchase certificates of title, track applications, receive notifications and permits.

PlanBuild Tasmania is a clear example of how systems can be aligned to develop both a common access point for community and a more consistent service infrastructure for councils.

Since launching in February 2022, use of the PlanBuild Tasmania Enquiry Service has received positive feedback, with over 41500 enquiries being undertaken.

### Opportunity: Increased support for the implementation of *Building Act 2000* regulatory processes

Councils' skills shortage in building and plumbing matters could be partially alleviated through greater engagement with CBOS who in turn can provide greater support to council staff. This support could take the form of professional training for council staff, improved guidelines, templates and decision-making support tools and potentially a professional support hotline. A support program designed through collaboration between CBOS, and councils would have the greatest chance of success. The Board understands CBOS is committed to exploring possible options with the local government sector to ensure a strong co-regulatory approach to Tasmania's building framework.

## Partnerships with Department of Health

*A strengthened council partnership with the Department of Health could drive the implementation of the workforce development strategic plan for Environmental Health Officers.*

Councils have a range of public health responsibilities, including under both the Food Act 2003 and the Public Health Act 1997. This includes monitoring food business compliance with food safety requirements and responding to food safety incidents. The role of Councils under the Public Health Act is important in protecting communities for threats to public health and includes running school immunisation programs, regulatory management of public health risk activities such as tattooing and piercing, monitoring and reporting on recreational water quality, and regulatory management of private drinking water supplies. Councils have reported ongoing difficulties recruiting and retaining Environmental Health Officers, leading to failures to monitor and report on food safety and other public health risks.

### Opportunity: Implement some considerations in the Environmental Health Officer workforce development strategic plan

In 2020, a workforce development strategic plan for Environmental Health (*Strengthening the front-line health protection and environmental management workforce in Tasmania*) was developed through collaboration between UTAS, LGAT, the Department of Health, the EPA, and the Environmental Health Association (Tas) (EHA). While the issues and opportunities for the Environmental Health workforce have evolved considerably since the publication of this plan, some of the high priority recommendations from that report involved collaboration between the Department of Health, the local government sector and others.

The Board believes that a collaborative implementation group should be established to explore how the current workforce challenges may best be resolved in the broader context of reforms contemplated in the Future of Local Government Review. The Board sees great benefit in an early focus on developing EHO local government workforce solutions that can deliver on the particular needs of the workforce, provide greater capacity and equity in service delivery and compliment broader structural considerations for the sector.

Other opportunities in this space may exist to leverage common systems and services to support and streamline staff tasks, including utilising PlanBuild as a common point to capture water quality tests results or register food businesses.

### Opportunity: Clarify and support councils' role in preventative health

The *Healthy Tasmania Five-Year Strategic Plan* recognised that local government is playing a key role in supporting community health and wellbeing. The Plan gave an undertaking to clarify the role of local government in the preventive health system, to strengthen the partnership between the Department of Health and local government, and to consider resourcing local government for local health and wellbeing action plans. The Board believes this could be an important partnership that would help councils make the best use of their local knowledge and relationships.

Preventative health is one aspect of the broader concept of community wellbeing, which the Board is considering as part of the proposed Local Government Charter. The Department of Premier and Cabinet is developing the state's broader wellbeing framework, and it will be important to align councils' role in preventative health with that framework.

## Partnerships with Parks and Wildlife Service

*A strengthened council partnership with NRE could streamline the development approval process.*

For a significant portion of Crown Land, The Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS) represents the Crown as the owner of Crown land, and controls the management, use and development of that land in accordance with the *Crown Lands Act 1976* and the *Nature Conservation Act 2002*. Crown land can include public reserves, school and hospital sites, verges of roads, reserved roads, land along riverbanks and coastal areas, sporting grounds, parks and picnic facilities. Councils manage significant areas of Crown land on behalf of the State Government and can interact with PWS and other State Agencies as they undertake management actions.

### Opportunity: Streamline the treatment of development applications on Crown Land

Most Development applications (DA) impacting upon Crown and Reserved land require Crown consent from the Minister (or delegate) administering the relevant land before a DA can be lodged. This additional step in the DA process can cause complications for proponents, councils and Government agencies managing the relevant Crown land. The Board believes there is an opportunity for the State Government and councils to work together to better understand each arm of government's requirements and constraints, and to streamline this approval process. The next phase of the PlanBuild Tasmania portal will allow enquirers to identify if the property is Crown or Reserved land and future functionality will allow for the enquirer to request advice from the Crown Land Authority directly, before lodging an application. Additional functionality will allow councils to more simply refer applications to other agencies. There may be further opportunities to build on this facility to both streamline the referral process, as well as the documentation and approval requirements through a collaborative exercise between both State and local government.

### Opportunity: Enhance understanding of the role and responsibilities of PWS and State Agencies as landowners.

The Crown manages Crown land and reviews applications as a landowner and the custodian of public land, not as a regulator. The Crown can be considered as a party to any development and must consider a range of additional matters over and above specific planning concerns, such as the longer-term strategic use of a site, whether a lease can adequately protect the Crown's interests, whether or not the Crown will be left with legacy issues if infrastructure (such as a sea wall) fails etc. Therefore PWS attempts to make threshold determinations prior to providing Crown landowner consent. The PWS's role in considering landowner can often be misunderstood, including by Councils. In exploring opportunities to streamline the treatment of DAs, there is also opportunity to improve collaboration,

education and communication between councils, PWS and State Agencies through an enhanced understanding of the role and responsibilities of the Crown.

## Broader Government Opportunities: Improve spatial information service offerings to councils

All councils deal with spatial information for planning, land management and asset management. The State Government also maintains mature spatial mapping capabilities in both the Department of State Growth and the Department of Natural Resources and the Environment.

Stronger partnerships with State Agencies and improved digital systems could support the ongoing development of a mature capability for the benefit of Local Government and the State Government.

## Other partnership opportunities

The Board is interested in understanding how other partnership opportunities might be further enhanced or enabled through the structural reforms being discussed in the Information Packs. We are asking you to think about these opportunities as you contemplate the scenarios discussed in the Information Packs.

**The future of local government review**

# Information Pack – Supporting Paper

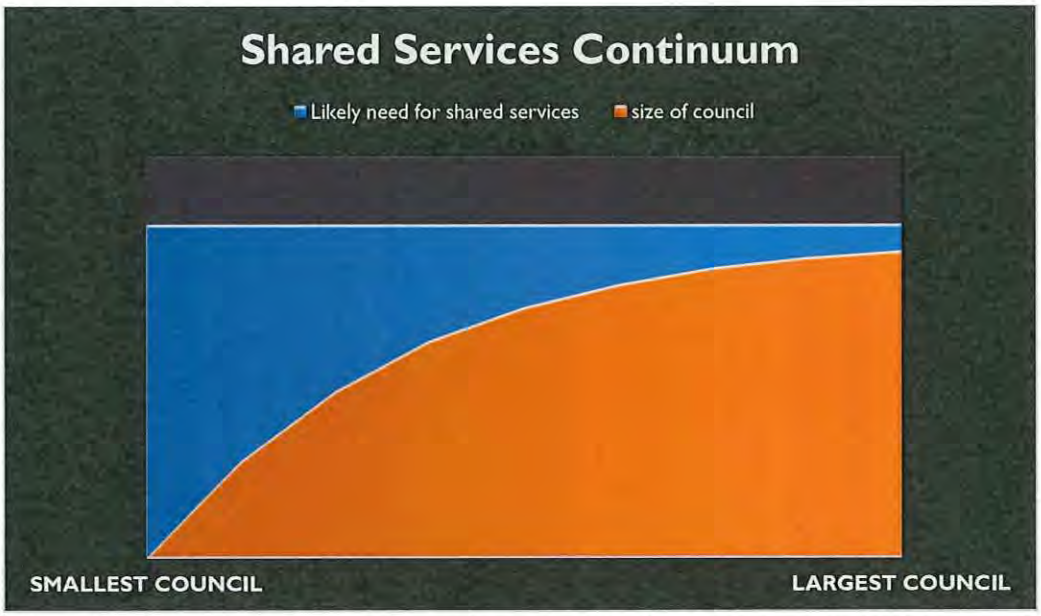
## Shared Services Models

Tasmanian Government

## Introduction

Alongside the discussion about the scenarios for potential new council boundaries and structures for each of the community catchments, the Board wants councils and communities to consider how both existing and potential shared service arrangements[1] could support all councils and the workforce in delivering a consistently higher quality of services to Tasmanian communities.

The question of where shared services might 'fit' and the role they might play in the overall structural reform discussion is inherently linked to potential future council boundary scenarios. This is because the Board believes the nature and extent of shared service arrangements in any future local government design will depend to a significant extent on both the standalone and relative size, scale, and capability of our councils (see diagram 1, below).




*The above table is for illustrative purposes only - there may be a range of other factors that influence the need for shared services.*

In its Stage 2 Interim Report, the Board identified two main instances where shared services will form part of an overall structural change proposal:

1) state-wide or regional service sharing opportunities where there is broad consensus on benefits and opportunities, irrespective of any boundary consolidation ('boundary reform agnostic'); and

[1] For the purposes of this paper, shared service arrangements are taken to encompass a broad range of forms such as fee for service arrangements, sharing of resources (both informal and formal), funding or establishing entities that perform certain functions on behalf of member councils.

2) other service sharing opportunities where benefits may be contingent on boundary adjustments, existing regional characteristics, or specific council service delivery models. This approach may help ensure that regional councils have access to and can tailor capability to meet the future needs of their communities.

For example, scenarios that propose a larger number of smaller, individual council areas may need to be supported by more extensive shared services arrangements to achieve the operational scale necessary to deliver long-run capability and financial sustainability. On the other hand, scenarios that include council areas taking in much larger areas may require less in the way of service sharing and may be more 'self-sufficient'. For catchment scenarios that include a larger urban council and one or more smaller rural councils, it may make sense or be necessary for the smaller councils to share services with their larger neighbour.

The Board is also aware that Tasmanian councils are already engaged in a range of existing shared services models and cooperative arrangements of varying formality and complexity across multiple functions, services, and strategic planning activities. The Board requested advice from councils on the current suite of service sharing arrangements they currently have in place, and this information is summarised in **Appendix A**.

As we consider potential future boundary scenarios, careful thought will need to be given to how these arrangements might continue, adapt, or evolve to support new consolidated council administrative structures. It is also the case that some arrangements may become unnecessary or redundant in future local government design because of a reduction in the number and complexity of inter-council relationships that need to be maintained.

The Information Packs talk about the potential role of both existing and new shared services models in the context of the boundary scenarios for each catchment. The purpose of this Paper is to provide some background information on the Board's overall thinking and approach to considering shared services models as part of the overall structural reform 'mix'.

As with potential boundary consolidation scenarios, consideration needs to be given to the Board's principles for structural change, in particular, that shared services:

- can support councils in focusing on current and future community needs;
- are compatible with retention of local jobs and services; and
- receive appropriate resourcing for transition.

## Drivers, Success Factors, and Barriers

Shared services arrangements are not an end in themselves and are not always necessary or appropriate. They should only be pursued where there are clear drivers, needs and benefits to all the councils involved, over a single council delivery model.

Drivers for shared services vary depending on local circumstances. However, common drivers of shared services, identified through the Board's engagement and research, are to:

- Meet **skill shortages** and provide a means for attracting locally based resources in regional areas.
- Increase **organisational capacity** to meet service standards and, potentially, capacity to provide higher level and/or additional services.
- **Achieve efficiencies** in service delivery through economies of scale, helping to improve financial sustainability, and reduced duplication of effort and resources.
- Improve **risk management** due to sharing of risks and improved ability to comply with legislation due to increased capacity and resources.

The success factors for shared services in local government are articulated in the UTAS paper *Options for sharing services in Tasmanian Local Government* as being:

- Identified, realistic, and measurable benefits.
- Transparent, accountable governance arrangements and formalised agreement.
- Role clarity.
- Support from council staff.
- Equitable distribution of resources, cost, and risk.
- Systems and infrastructure compatible with service or resource sharing.

Alongside the success factors sit barriers which UTAS identifies as being mainly as:

- Inappropriate rationale for adoption.
- Lack of data or inadequacy of monitoring, reporting, and evaluation.
- Resistance on the part of councillors or council staff.
- Perceived loss of control or autonomy.

## Shared Services Models: Three Factors to Consider

In broad terms, there are **three interrelated factors** to consider when discussing future shared services models:

- Firstly, the **functions or services** that are delivered by way of a shared service arrangement;

- Secondly, the **scale** at which those services are delivered – for example, sub-regional, regional or statewide; and

- Thirdly, the **governance, funding, and service delivery model** that is applied to the relevant functions or services.

Each of these factors is explained briefly below.

## *1. Services*

In Stage 2 of the Review, the Board commissioned the University of Tasmania Policy Exchange to identify and develop a set of criteria that could be used for assessing the identification of, and viability of potential candidates for mandated shared services. UTAS found that to be viable candidates, services should meet at least one of the following criteria:

- High capital intensity
- Require high levels of specific technical expertise; and
- Are delivered in a relatively uniform or homogenous way across many council areas (i.e. there is not a high level of necessary local specialisation.)

And **both** of the following criteria:

- Benefits can be clearly identified and achieved relative to single-council delivery models –in terms of the efficiency, range, or quality of service offerings.
- Transition costs to establish sharing arrangements are acceptable when considering the long-run benefits.

Applying these criteria, in our Stage 2 Interim Report we identified a range of internal corporate or 'back-office' activities as some of the strongest candidates for service sharing, including:

- **Finance systems**
- **Rates, charges and permit payments**
- **ICT**
- **Legal services**
- **Human resource management**
- **Procurement.**

We have also identified four other candidate service categories, which would be contingent on the scale of councils resulting from reform, as well as local conditions and existing shared service successes. These include:

- Full cycle waste management
- Regulatory services
- Asset construction and maintenance
- Regional strategies and promotion

*The Board is keen to hear from councils and communities about the functions and services where greater sharing and cooperation could deliver better outcomes for communities in the context of broader structural reform.*

## 2. Scale

The second key factor to consider when looking at shared services models is the optimal **scale** for delivering the service. This will depend largely on the extent to which local tailoring and specialisation is important to deliver overall service quality and local responsiveness, as well as the likely size and significance of any marginal benefits such as service efficiency that could be delivered by 'scaling up'.

As councils and communities discuss the various catchment scenarios, the Board believes there are three main levels or 'scale options at which service sharing can occur:

- *Sub-regional* (i.e. within a catchment, including potentially up to all councils within a catchment)

- *Regional* (i.e. sharing occurs beyond the level of identified catchments, including entities providing services to multiple catchments)

- *Statewide* (a single, centralised model providing services to all councils).

## 3. Governance, funding, and delivery

As the UTAS paper identified, 'shared services' captures a highly diverse range of models for council cooperation. The broad suite of arrangements Tasmanian councils have told the Board they are currently engaged in (Appendix A), also bears this out.

The Board believes in a future local government design scenario with fewer, larger councils organised around better serving identified community catchments, there are three main governance models for shared services which might have a potential role to play:

1. **A new, stand-alone centralised service entity (or entities)** - this model involves the establishment of a new entity or organisation to deliver a suite of core local government services to all participating councils. This model would likely operate at either a statewide or regional level. An example of this kind of model would be a statewide service entity delivering a range of common, back office corporate functions for councils, such as IT, legal

advice, procurement, human resources, and finance and payroll. Such an entity might also have the capacity to expand offerings over time into highly technical and specialised professional services, such as statutory planning or civil engineering.

2. **Function-specific joint authorities** - this model involves the creation of an entity or entities focused on the delivery of a specific 'customer facing' service offering to participating councils. This model would most likely apply at either a regional or catchment-wide scale. An example of this type of model would be a regional waste management entity, such as Dulverton Waste.

3. **Provider council ('functional leadership) model** – this model involves a council taking on a lead role in a specific key function(s) or service(s), and establishing, investing in, and developing the capability to provide those services to other councils, on a fee-for-service basis. This type of model would most likely operate at the catchment or regional level. Provider councils in this model would need to be of sufficient scale and capability to take on and maintain a functional leadership role, and there may be some smaller councils that operate as 'clients' only in this arrangement. An example of this kind of model would be the largest council within a catchment providing digital services to smaller rural councils in the catchment.

A version of the 'functional leadership' model exists currently, where one council provides specific services (such as statutory planning) to another under a fee-for-service model. A more systematic and extensive application of the functional leadership model would likely require more formalised governance and funding arrangements.

Both centralised service entity and joint authority models would need to be established and operate as commercial corporate bodies. They would operate under the direction of a Board and have the ability to raise funds, employ staff, and contract with others such as providers of goods and services and host councils to be able to provide services to other councils.

The aim would be for the entities to generate sufficient revenue through charges for shared services to meet its costs and, ideally, produce a small annual surplus which could either be returned to councils as a dividend or allocated to an agreed capacity building purpose. There would need to be an equitable and transparent framework for setting and reviewing service fees under all the above models, and this may require the price-setting oversight of an entity such as the Tasmanian Economic Regulator.

A new centralised statewide service provider may need to be supported by new, special purpose legislation, while the *Local Government Act 1993* already provides for the establishment of joint authorities.

All the above models would require seed funding of some type, as they would be unable to generate income until at least partly operational. A carefully planned approach would also be required for the transition to manage issues such as existing shared service arrangements, contracts, changes in staffing arrangements and training to meet customer service and operational needs and managing legacy issues such as existing legal action.

## Appendix 1 – Current shared service arrangements in local government in Tasmania (green councils responded to survey)

| Name of Body delivering service | Shared Service Model | Service being delivered | Operational status | End date of current commitment to sharing arrangement | Break O'Day | Brighton | Burnie | Central Coast | Central Highlands | Circular Head | Clarence | Derwent Valley | Devonport | Dorset | Flinders | George Town | Glamorgan-Spring Bay | Glenorchy | Hobart | Huon Valley | Kentish | King Island | Kingborough | Latrobe | Launceston | Meander Valley | Northern Midlands | Sorell | Southern Midlands | Tasman | Waratah-Wynyard | West Coast | West Tamar |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Northern Tasmanian Development Corporation | Jointly funded by seven (7) member Councils | Regional economic development | Operational | Current Member Agreement 2023-2026 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 1 |
| Northern Tasmanian Planners Group | Jointly funded by eight (8) member Councils + State Government | Regional Planning, including review of Northern Region Land Use Strategy | Operational | No specified end date | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 1 |
| Visit Northern Tasmania | Jointly funded by seven (7) member Councils and State Government | Regional tourism organisation | Operational | Current Funding Agreement 2024/25 | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 1 |
| East Coast Tasmania Tourism | Jointly funded by two (2) member Councils and State Government | Regional tourism organisation | Operational | Current Funding Agreement expires 30/6/23 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Northern Tasmanian Waste Management Group | Jointly funded by seven (7) member Councils | Implements regional projects and programs in waste and recycling services. | Operational | Current Agreement 2022-2027 | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 1 |
| Northern Regional Emergency Management Committee | Eight (8) Northern Councils + range of organisations | Role defined by Emergency Management Act | Operational | No specified end date | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 1 |
| Tamar Estuary Management Taskforce | Established under the Launceston City Deal | The Taskforce is an advisory body, which seeks to explore and provide options and advice to the Tasmanian Government on how to develop and manage the kanamaluka/ Tamar Estuary. Members include a range of state agencies and other organisations. | Operational | No specified end date | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 1 |
| Northern Tasmania Sports Facility Plan | Jointly funded by five (5) member Councils | The plan presents future directions for sport and active recreation infrastructure across the region | Draft | Plan to be completed in 2023, with no specified end date for implementation | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 1 |

| Name of Body delivering service | Shared Service Model | Service being delivered | Operational status | End date of current commitment to sharing arrangement | Break O'Day | Brighton | Burnie | Central Coast | Central Highlands | Circular Head | Clarence | Derwent Valley | Devonport | Dorset | Flinders | George Town | Glamorgan-Spring Bay | Glenorchy | Hobart | Huon Valley | Kentish | King Island | Kingborough | Latrobe | Launceston | Meander Valley | Northern Midlands | Sorell | Southern Midlands | Tasman | Waratah-Wynyard | West Coast | West Tamar |
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| Northern Region Climate Change Action Program | Jointly funded by eight (8) member Councils | Partnership to support and manage the Northern Tasmanian Climate Change Action Plan | Operational | Current Agreement 2022-2025 | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 1 |
| Bell Bay Advanced Manufacturing Zone | Membership based model | An industry based economic development group working in collaboration with government and community to support growth, investment and business diversification in the Bell Bay, and Tamar Valley regions | Operational | No specified end date | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | 1 |
| Northern Workforce Development Program (Closing the Gap) | Membership based model | Provides outreach services job seekers and is continually working directly with business to understand their requirements and to match local jobs with local people. | Operational | Current Agreement 2023/24 | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | 1 |
| City of Gastronomy | Membership based model under the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) which includes seven (7) Councils | Collaborating through gastronomy to address issues of economic, social and environmental sustainability within the broader Launceston region food plays a vital role in culture, creativity, social exchange and mental wellbeing | Operational | Current Agreement 2022/23 | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 1 |
| Tamar NRM | Jointly funded by three (3) member Councils | Delivery of education, extension and the practical natural Resource management tools to be more sustainable | Operational | Current Agreement 2023/24 | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | 1 |
| NRM North | Joint agreement involving participating Councils | NRM North works with industry and the community to care for natural resources across northern Tasmania. | Operational | No specified end date | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 1 |
| Tamar Estuary and Esk Rivers Program | Jointly funded by five (5) member Councils + other non-local government members | The improvement of scientific understanding of the issues impacting the health of the kanamaluka/Tamar estuary. Members include Hydro Tasmania and TasWater. | Operational | Current Agreement 2023/24 | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 1 |

| Name of Body delivering service | Shared Service Model | Service being delivered | Operational status | End date of current commitment to sharing arrangement | Break O'Day | Brighton | Burnie | Central Coast | Central Highlands | Circular Head | Clarence | Derwent Valley | Devonport | Dorset | Flinders | George Town | Glamorgan-Spring Bay | Glenorchy | Hobart | Huon Valley | Kentish | King Island | Kingborough | Latrobe | Launceston | Meander Valley | Northern Midlands | Sorell | Southern Midlands | Tasman | Waratah-Wynyard | West Coast | West Tamar |
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| Greater Launceston Plan | Current GLP Review is being jointly funded by five (5) Councils | The Greater Launceston Plan (GLP) is a community vision and evidence-based framework for the sustainable development of Launceston and its surrounds over the next 20 years and beyond. | Operational | No specified end date | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 1 |
| Launceston City Deal (Community and Business Advisory Group) | Participation by five (5) Councils + other non-local government members | Provides input and advice to the Launceston City Deal Board | Operational | 2027 | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 1 |
| Simmons Wolfhagen Legal Services Shared Contract | Joint agreement involving participating Councils | Legal services to participating Councils which includes, sharing of advice, Legal advice toolbox, discounted charging rates, and professional development activities commenced 24/9/2019 | Operational | Aug-23 | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 1 |
| Regional General Managers Group | Collaborative arrangement with admin support by Break O'Day Council. | Facilitation, development and delivery of regional and sub-regional projects, activities and services benefiting northern region Councils | Operational | No specified end date | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 1 |
| Plumbing Inspection Shared Services Arrangements MVC and Nth Midlands | Established under MOU | Regulatory services relating to plumbing, shared 1 FTE. | Operational | Under review | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | | | | | | |
| Brighton Council | Fee for service with contractual agreements, generally 12 month contracts. | Brighton Council provides plumbing assessments and inspections to Tasman and occasionally Southern Midlands | Operational | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Southern Midlands Council - plumbing | Resource Sharing Agreement – Fee for service | Provides relief plumbing surveying services to Brighton Council | Operational | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | |

| Name of Body delivering service | Shared Service Model | Service being delivered | Operational status | End date of current commitment to sharing arrangement | Break O'Day | Brighton | Burnie | Central Coast | Central Highlands | Circular Head | Clarence | Derwent Valley | Devonport | Dorset | Flinders | George Town | Glamorgan-Spring Bay | Glenorchy | Hobart | Huon Valley | Kentish | King Island | Kingborough | Latrobe | Launceston | Meander Valley | Northern Midlands | Sorell | Southern Midlands | Tasman | Waratah-Wynyard | West Coast | West Tamar |
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| Brighton Council - Development Engineering | Fee for service with contractual agreements, generally 12 month contracts. | Brighton Council provides development engineering services to Central Highlands and Southern Midlands | Operational | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| Brighton Council - Rates | Ad hoc fee for service | Brighton Council provides rates services to Tasman Council on an ad hoc basis. | Operational | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | |
| Southcentral Workforce Network Regional Jobs Hub | Brighton employs 5 staff and manages the state-funded Regional Jobs hub on behalf of the the four South-Central Subregion councils. | This regional Jobs hub was established with seed co-funding from the Tas Community Fund. | Operational | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| Southern Tasmanian Councils Authority | Joint authority under the Local Governmet Act 1993, with Brighton Council providing the municipal emissions modelling for the 12 southern councils as an in-kind contribution. Brighton and Sorell GMs lead regional planning actions. | A regional organisation of councils created to facilitate cooperative working partnerships and to improve the ability of councils to take joint action to address regional development issues and progress sustainable economic, environmental and social outcomes for Southern Tasmania, its local communities and the State. Key issues include climate change, economic development, planning, City Deal and advocacy in the context of the State election | Operational | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | 1 | | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | |
| South Central Sub-region | Partnership | Brighton administers and leads this sub-regional partnership and the projects that come from it. | Operational | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |

| Name of Body delivering service | Shared Service Model | Service being delivered | Operational status | End date of current commitment to sharing arrangement | Break O'Day | Brighton | Burnie | Central Coast | Central Highlands | Circular Head | Clarence | Derwent Valley | Devonport | Dorset | Flinders | George Town | Glamorgan-Spring Bay | Glenorchy | Hobart | Huon Valley | Kentish | King Island | Kingborough | Latrobe | Launceston | Meander Valley | Northern Midlands | Sorell | Southern Midlands | Tasman | Waratah-Wynyard | West Coast | West Tamar |
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| Southern Midlands Council - Compliance and Building Support | Fee for service with contractual agreements | Southern Midlands Council provides compliance and building support services to Brighton Council. | Operational | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| Circular Head and Waratah-Wynyard Councils | Resource Sharing Agreement | Progressing integrated back office services with Waratah-Wynyard, involving: IT and digital transformation; Risk & business continuity planning; Asset planning and management; Aspects of development and strategic planning. Other joint projects include: shared plant and equipment; shared procurement and contract management; shared policies and procedures; shared meeting attendance and joint committee representation; shared training, integrated strategic and operational planning. 13 positions shared to varying degrees across the two councils. | Operational | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | |
| Dulverton Regional Waste Management Authority | Joint Authority of Central Coast, Devonport City, Kentish and Latrobe Councils established under *Local Government Act 1993*. | Provides landfill and organics recycling services, plus waste advisory and technical consulting services | Operational | | | | | 1 | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | |

| Name of Body delivering service | Shared Service Model | Service being delivered | Operational status | End date of current commitment to sharing arrangement | Break O'Day | Brighton | Burnie | Central Coast | Central Highlands | Circular Head | Clarence | Derwent Valley | Devonport | Dorset | Flinders | George Town | Glamorgan-Spring Bay | Glenorchy | Hobart | Huon Valley | Kentish | King Island | Kingborough | Latrobe | Launceston | Meander Valley | Northern Midlands | Sorell | Southern Midlands | Tasman | Waratah-Wynyard | West Coast | West Tamar |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Shared Emergency Management Committee | Emergency Management Committee established under Emergency Management Act 2006 | | Operational | | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | |
| Mersey-Leven Emergency Management Committee | Regional Emergency Management Committee established under Emergency Management Act 2006 | To maintain the Mersey-Leven Emergency Management Plan (MLEMP) to guide the management of risks to the community arising from emergencies in the combined Mersey-Leven municipal area. | Operational | | | | | 1 | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| Cradle Coast Authority | Joint Authority | Regional economic development, natural resource management and strategic services | Operational | | | | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | |
| Greater Hobart Strategic Partnership | | Collaboration to implement the *Greater Hobart Act 2019* Work Plan and to deliver the Hobart City Deal projects. | Operational | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Southern Waste Solutions | Joint owned/controlled service provision involving Clarence City, Sorell, Tasman, and Kingborough Councils. | Operates a waste management facility network servicing 50% of Tasmania's population, including the Copping landfill, Copping C-Cell and Lutana waste transfer station. | Operational | | 1 | 1 | | | | | 1 | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Kentish-Latrobe resource sharing agreement | Shared services agreement between Kentish and Latrobe Councils | Shared workforce across both councils, provides planning and environmental health services to West Coast Council | Operational | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| Southern Midlands Council - Animal control services | Fee for service | Provides animal control services to Central Highlands Council | Operational | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |

| Name of Body delivering service | Shared Service Model | Service being delivered | Operational status | End date of current commitment to sharing arrangement | Break O'Day | Brighton | Burnie | Central Coast | Central Highlands | Circular Head | Clarence | Derwent Valley | Devonport | Dorset | Flinders | George Town | Glamorgan-Spring Bay | Glenorchy | Hobart | Huon Valley | Kentish | King Island | Kingborough | Latrobe | Launceston | Meander Valley | Northern Midlands | Sorell | Southern Midlands | Tasman | Waratah-Wynyard | West Coast | West Tamar |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Southern Midlands Council - land use planning | Fee for service | Provides land use planning services to Central Highlands Council and Tasman Council | Operational | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Southern Midlands Council - heritage | Fee for service | Provides heritage project management services to Derwent Valley and Central Highlands | Operational | | | | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| Southern Midlands Council - development | | Provides development services to Tasman council | Operational | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | | | |
| West Tamar - regulatory services | Fee for service | Provision of regulatory services to Flinders, George Town, Meander Valley and Dorset | Operational | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | 1 |
| West Tamar - planning, building and plumbing | | Provision of planning, building and plumbing services to Flinders | Operational | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| Cradle Coast Waste Management Group | | Provides region-wide resource recovery, landfill diversion and recycling programs, including school education programs. The programs are managed by Cradle Coast Waste Services (part of Dulverton Waste Management), who also support the Group with administration, financial and communications services. | Operational | | | | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | 1 | | |
| Southern Tasmania Regional Waste Authority | Jointly funded, owned and controlled by twelve(12) member Councils | Waste management, landfill diversion, and resource recovery projects. | Operational | | | 1 | | | 1 | | 1 | 1 | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |

| Name of Body delivering service | Shared Service Model | Service being delivered | Operational status | End date of current commitment to sharing arrangement | Break O'Day | Brighton | Burnie | Central Coast | Central Highlands | Circular Head | Clarence | Derwent Valley | Devonport | Dorset | Flinders | George Town | Glamorgan-Spring Bay | Glenorchy | Hobart | Huon Valley | Kentish | King Island | Kingborough | Latrobe | Launceston | Meander Valley | Northern Midlands | Sorell | Southern Midlands | Tasman | Waratah-Wynyard | West Coast | West Tamar |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Business and Employment Southeast Tasmania (previously SERDA) | Jointly funded by Southeast regional Council group | The program facilitates regional collaboration and consistency in waste and recycling services and to implement regional projects | Operational | Ongoing annual subscription | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | 1 | | | |
| Southern Regional Emergency Management Committee | Twelve (12) Councils + range of organisations | Role defined by Emergency Management Act with re-appointment of municipal emergency coordinator. | Operational | No specified end date | | 1 | | | 1 | | 1 | 1 | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| TBC | | SE Region Youth Initiative | In Development | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | 1 | | | |
| Regional Climate Change Adaptation Planning | Contract arrangement | Southern Midlands Council provides services to Southern Tasmania Councils Authority | | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Southern Midlands Council - natural values assessment | Fee for service | Southern Midlands Council provides natural values assessment services to Brighton Council | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | |
| Western Emergency Management Committee | Regional Committee | Emergency planning | | | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | |
| Burnie City Council - immunisations | Fee for service | School immunisations | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | |
| Burnie City Council - IT | Contract arrangement | Hosting of data and provision of internet | Concluding | Ends 30 June 2023 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | |
| Shared Audit Panel | | Shared Audit Panel services Circular Head, King Island and Waratah-Wynyard | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | |
| West by North-West Tourism | Regional Partnership between councils, local tourism bodies and industry. | Provides advocacy and leadership, industry support, product development and marketing services for tourism in the region. | | | | | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | |
| Blue Derby Mountain Bike Trails | Joint owned | Dorset and Break O'Day Councils are joing owners | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| Name of Body delivering service | Shared Service Model | Service being delivered | Operational status | End date of current commitment to sharing arrangement | Break O'Day | Brighton | Burnie | Central Coast | Central Highlands | Circular Head | Clarence | Derwent Valley | Devonport | Dorset | Flinders | George Town | Glamorgan-Spring Bay | Glenorchy | Hobart | Huon Valley | Kentish | King Island | Kingborough | Latrobe | Launceston | Meander Valley | Northern Midlands | Sorell | Southern Midlands | Tasman | Waratah-Wynyard | West Coast | West Tamar |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | of the three trails in the Blue Derby Network. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| State Growth road maintenance | | Road maintenance work on behalf of State Growth | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| TasWater infrastructure emergency response and connection service | | Infrastructure emergency response and connection service on behalf of TasWater. | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

## 9.2 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

*Responsible Officer:* *Des Jennings, General Manager*
*Report prepared by:* *Des Jennings, General Manager*

### 1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of the report is for Council to consider the *Local Government Reform – General Discussion Paper* and determine whether Council wishes to make a submission on the Local Government Review.

### 2 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

There are a wide range of options that may deliver economies of scale, or other benefits in terms of more effective local government.

Options to be investigated include a range of approaches:

- shared service delivery
- regional collaboration
- boundary adjustment
- voluntary, forced and failed amalgamations of councils

There have been many commissions and reports aimed at reforming local government, with a focus on the question of optimum size and efficiency.

There is often a heavy focus on economic arguments to the exclusion of other issues, for example:

- importance of good governance
- effective local democracy and representation
- evaluation of post-reform experience

### 3 STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-2027

The Strategic Plan 2021-2027 provides the guidelines within which Council operates.

**Lead: Serve with honesty, integrity, innovation and pride**
**Leaders with Impact**
**Strategic outcomes:**
1.1 Council is connected to the community
1.2 Councillors serve with integrity and honesty
1.3 Management is efficient, proactive and responsible
1.4 Improve community assets responsibly and sustainably

**Progress: Economic health and wealth - grow and prosper**
**Strategic Project Delivery - Build Capacity for a Healthy Wealthy Future**
**Strategic outcomes:**
2.1 Strategic, sustainable, infrastructure is progressive
2.2 Proactive engagement drives new enterprise
2.3 Collaborative partnerships attract key industries
2.4 Support and attract wealth-producing business and industry

**People: Culture and society - a vibrant future that respects the past**
**Sense of Place - Sustain, Protect, Progress**
**Strategic outcomes:**

3.1 Sympathetic design respects historical architecture
3.2 Developments enhance existing cultural amenity
3.3 Public assets meet future lifestyle challenges
3.4 Towns are enviable places to visit, live and work

**Place: Nurture our heritage environment**
**Environment - Cherish, Sustain our Landscapes and Preserve, Protect Our Built Heritage for Tomorrow**
**Strategic outcomes:**
4.1 Cherish and sustain our landscape
4.2 Meet environmental challenges
4.3 Eco-tourism strongly showcases our natural beauties
4.4 Our heritage villages and towns are high value assets

## 4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None applicable at this time.

## 5 STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

None applicable at this time.

## 6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No costs have been identified at this time for the preparation of the submission other than officer time.

## 7 RISK ISSUES

Council must consider it is a risk to do nothing or take the opportunity to put forward Council's position.

## 8 CONSULTATION WITH STATE GOVERNMENT

The State Government is inviting community feedback for Phase 1 of the *Future of Local Government Review*.

## 9 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Community members are welcome to provide a submission for Phase 1 of the *Future of Local Government Review*.

## 10 OPTIONS FOR COUNCIL TO CONSIDER

Council may either provide or not provide a submission on the *Future of Local Government Review.*

## 11 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

Direction is being sought from Council as to whether Council wishes to make comment on the Local Government Review.

We are all familiar with the long-established increasing need to do more with less. Sharing services enables us to do this by reducing duplication of effort and expenditure.

There is a wide array of shared services models already operating across Australia. The varying models each have different advantages and disadvantages. One model will not suit all councils. The range of choice out there means that there is very likely to be an effective option for council to consider.

We need to draw on the experiences and lessons learned from those who are already sharing services in the areas of council's interest.

Shared services are not new but can bring financial benefits to councils through the reduction of duplication. They can also improve customer service.

Through resource sharing on a regional basis Councils can improve the efficiency, effectiveness and quality of services and functions. Importantly, they provide the opportunity for Councils to maintain but also to improve service delivery to their communities in response to increasing external pressure resulting from other levels of government and to increasing regulatory, compliance and reporting requirements imposed on them.

Resource sharing can be implemented in a number of ways including:

- Resource sharing through service agreements where Councils as a group agree to allocate functions between themselves – one Council does a function on behalf of the group. Here a Council outsources a function to another Council.
- Resource sharing through a joint enterprise where Councils form a joint business to achieve economies of scale across a functional area of core business.
- Merger/amalgamation where Councils join together voluntarily.

There are other variations of resource sharing through service agreements. These include agency agreements, where one Council performs operations on behalf of other Councils as their agent. As well there could be a range of formal and informal arrangements to jointly fund, operate or provide services and share staff, facilities and assets. Examples of these include the sharing of building inspectors and waste management services.

There are opportunities to rationalise and achieve better utilisation of major operational assets such as plant and equipment, depots, workshops, administration centres and office technology, such as IT systems. Specialised items of plant which may have relatively low utilisation levels can be better utilised.

To achieve a successful outcome from the process of resource sharing it is essential that the process is designed to enable a range of options to be considered and informed decisions made only when the strengths and weaknesses of the options are determined.

Some of the opportunities for shared service delivery/regional collaboration include:

- Information Technology:

  The company that councils in the region were partnering with withdrew from the project. It is understood that the reason for the withdrawal was because it was of greater financial benefit to the company to deal with each council on an individual basis.

  The benefit of common technology platforms is not in the technology cost or operations. Rather, the majority of the potential benefit in shared platforms is in the ability to consolidate and drive synergies in processes across all operations of the councils, regardless of their physical location, size and complexity. This includes the standardisation of all corporate applications (finance, procurement, human resources, etc.) as well as technology platforms used for engineering & GIS, planning & design, asset management and risk management.

Establish a Regional Authority

- Northern Tasmania Waste Management Authority

  NTWMA may be formed to provide waste management and resource recovery services. It would receive and process material on behalf of its constituent councils as well as providing waste management services to private industry.

  - Waste Management Services
    - Kerbside Bin Collections

- Hard Waste
- Resource Recovery Centre
- FOGO – Green Waste
- Landfill

- Common Services

  Common Services delivery model would involve the councils coming together as stakeholders, looking within the councils for opportunities to undertake shared initiatives at a whole-of-region or sub-regional level.

  A common services model would provide participants with the ability and resources to enable quality equitable service provision, as well as generate economic efficiencies and increased viability to participating councils in the region.

  The model enables participants to meet legislative requirements, increase consistency of processes between municipalities and develop the reputation and professionalisation of the councils.

  - Engineering
  - Environmental Health
  - Planning/Building
  - Building Surveyor

Planning Authority

- Internal and Independent Planning Authorities

  There is recognition of the importance of planning to the economy in general, and particularly in housing supply, and hence the importance of improving the efficiency of the development application process.

  A local authority may be staffed by officers and/or councillors, and an independent authority comprises of external experts and community representatives.

  These collaborative approaches provide increased transparency, integrity and rigour in the development assessment process. The authorities can be used to provide advice to the applicants, objectors, council officers and councillors on individual DAs at various stages during the assessment process and/or to determine the development application. For example, authorities can be established:

  - To provide advice to the applicant at the pre-lodgement stage including on design matters
  - To provide advice upon lodgement or once the submissions have been received
  - To provide advice on the design of the development at the pre-lodgement stage or during the assessment process
  - To peer review the officers' assessment and recommendations
  - To make the determination or to provide advice to those making the determination
  - To review decisions as part of the post determination mediation/conciliation stage
  - To provide advice to the councillors on senior officers on policy and practice matters.

  An independent authority may be considered to be a council's body, they can be seen as a partner in the council's processes. This partnership can assist in removing the conflict associated with the multiple roles of councillors as decision maker and advocate, particularly when the authority takes over the decision-making role.

**12 ATTACHMENTS**

1. NMC Media Release - Submission to Local Government Review - 10 May 2022 [**9.2.1** - 1 page]
2. State Government Local Government Review - DRAFT SUBMISSION [**9.2.2** - 11 pages]

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council endorse the Local Government Board Review Submission.

**MINUTE NO. 22/153**

DECISION
Cr Adams/Cr Polley
That Council endorse the Local Government Board Review Submission.

Carried Unanimously

Voting for the Motion:
Mayor Knowles, Deputy Mayor Goss, Cr Adams, Cr Brooks, Cr Calvert, Cr Davis, Cr Goninon, Cr Lambert and Cr Polley

Voting Against the Motion:
Nil

**MINUTE NO. 22/154**

DECISION
Cr Polley/Cr Goninon
That Council prepare a comparison of rates and services provided to the outer urban areas by Launceston City Council (incl. Lilydale) and the Northern Midlands Council towns of Perth, Evandale and Longford; as well as an analysis of income and outflows for urban and rural services provided.

Carried Unanimously

Voting for the Motion:
Mayor Knowles, Deputy Mayor Goss, Cr Adams, Cr Brooks, Cr Calvert, Cr Davis, Cr Goninon, Cr Lambert and Cr Polley

Voting Against the Motion:
Nil

**Advantages and Disadvantages of Community Catchment proposals**

| Central and Midlands Community Catchment | | |
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| | **Advantages** | **Disadvantages** |
| **Scenario 1**<br><br>*Establishing two separate councils to the north and south.*<br><br> <br> | • Benefit the community by increasing the scale and capability of the two councils<br>• Council B an approximate population of 15,500<br>• Each of the new councils would have larger workforces enhancing recruitment opportunities and enabling career development/progression<br>• Strong correlation between council boundaries with communities of interest and geography of the region<br>• Includes dispersed rural communities connected with significant regional centres, which should help with operational sustainability<br>• improve the streamlining whole-of-region cooperation and service sharing as well as collaborations with other tiers of government.<br>• 74% of residents in Council B would be within a 30-minute drive of the larger service and administrative hubs of Westbury and Bothwell<br>• Maintaining these services hubs would ensure good access to services in what are geographically large councils while also highlighting the need to invest in digital services and other outreach and engagement strategies (especially in Council B)<br>• scope to retain council administrative and operations hubs in New Norfolk, Hamilton, Old Beach, Oatlands and Kempton, Westbury and Bothwell, thereby maintaining local employment while also supporting local engagement and service delivery<br>• integration of centralised or standardised corporate 'back-office' | • Current NMC areas of Longford, Evandale and Perth would be allocated to the Tamar Valley Catchment. Communities will also need to consider whether it is appropriate to allocate Perth, Evandale, Carrick, Hadspen, and Longford (combined population of approximately 7,000) to the Tamar Valley Community Catchment, given the impact it has on the population and rate base of Council B.<br>• Council B will have an older population mostly in smaller towns, with more working outside the area<br>• Proposed council hubs in "Council B" are in Westbury and Bothwell<br>• Due to its smaller size, Council B would need to continue to rely on external service sharing arrangements for some of its technical and regulatory services<br>• Notes a continued reliance on grant funding given their scale and the road networks and other infrastructure they would have to manage<br>• Rates approaches vary in the catchment and would need to be considered in any transition - Central Highlands Council apply higher residential rates per capita than the other Councils in the Catchment.<br>• Multiple rating systems proposed to enhance sustainability of both Councils, |

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| | systems or services for council finance and administration may reduce staff time spent on administrative tasks, allowing them to focus on improving services to council staff and communities<br>• integration of centralised or standardised corporate 'back-office' systems or services for council finance and administration may reduce staff time spent on administrative tasks, allowing them to focus on improving services to council staff and communities<br>• consolidated councils could lead to greater sharing of road maintenance teams and equipment, there would still be a need to maintain regional depots across the council area. Larger regulatory services teams should provide greater capacity to manage workloads, allow for business continuity during periods of leave, and help to attract and retain specialist staff – all of which currently present challenges to existing councils in this area<br>• Enhanced capacity to invest in new and more systematic approaches to community engagement – introduction of community advisory panels<br>• Operations hubs could be used for regional council meetings in different locations<br>• In 2021 dollars, total rates revenue for Council B is estimated at $12.7m. establishing new funding models would be easier. | establish an alternative governance and funding model for the remote and sparsely populated highland communities<br>• consider how services provided by the Northern Tasmania Development Corporation and the Southern Tasmanian Councils Authority, both to member councils and other councils across the broader region, would be undertaken under the new arrangements<br>• future status of the significant number of shared or joint arrangements would need to be considered<br>• consideration of Councils net financial assets to be considered in transitional plan<br>• Council B would have a smaller rates and population base, as well as significant areas of low growth or population decline. It is more likely to need to rely more on external shared service arrangements for some specialist functions<br>• |
| **Scenario 2**<br><br>*Establishing a single Central and Midlands Council.* | • Maximises potential scale and capability<br>• Supports higher and more consistent service delivery across central parts of rural Tasmania and deliver a more financially sustainable model of government<br>• Continuation of the number of customer service and administration centres with supporting works hubs in other areas to | • large geographic area and dispersed community to service<br>• Current NMC areas of Longford, Evandale and Perth would be allocated to the Tamar Valley Catchment.<br>• Primary challenge given the size is ensuring local voices are heard with equal representation and engagement |

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| | maintain regional employment opportunities.<br>• Hypothetical revenue of $34.7m and population of 53,000 – ongoing growth giving capacity to serve its community<br>• represents a significant portion of rural Tasmania and lessen the need for many regional organisations and structures to promote collaboration across councils<br>• consolidated council would have the resources to invest in community engagement and establishing administrative and service delivery hubs across the community<br>• better resources and capabilities to respond to emerging community needs<br>• if existing council offices across the Community Catchment were maintained as a part of a network model, then 85% of residents would be within a 30-minute drive of the major service and administrative hubs<br>• less need for regional shared services arrangements.<br>• well placed to advocate for the Central and Midlands community and rural interests more generally and enter strategic partnerships with other spheres of government<br>• deliver effective land use and strategic planning<br>• scale benefits including the ability to attract and retain specialist staff and invest in productivity-enhancing equipment and 'back-office' systems.<br>• Responsible for 3,500km roads - greater sharing of road maintenance teams and equipment – maintain several regional depots<br>• larger regulatory services team would likewise provide greater capacity to manage workloads, allow for business continuity during | • ensuring local representation, employment and service delivery across the entire area<br>• investment in strong management systems to ensure community priorities are being delivered<br>• balancing the needs or the fast-growing urban communities in the south of the Catchment with rural communities further north<br>• In the north, given commuter links between Launceston and Perth, Evandale, Carrick, Hadspen and Longford, consideration should be given to whether these communities are more oriented towards the more urban areas, or do they identify more strongly and perform as service hubs for their rural hinterlands?<br>• whether a single council model is the most effective and sustainable model for providing local representation and services across the Central and Midlands<br>• significant urban growth in the region and major infrastructure projects (wind farms and irrigation) will require further and increased strategic planning and infrastructure<br>• necessity of reconsidering the Southern Tasmanian Councils Authority<br>• a need for a clear strategy of retaining jobs and teams across the region to maintain local employment and knowledge and provide community members with ready access to council services<br>• continue to rely on grant income to maintain its large road network and other infrastructure |

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| | periods of leave, and help to attract and retain specialist staff<br>• significant scale, capacity and purchasing power.<br>• Benefits of centrally sourcing some basic common services, such as cloud-based ICT systems, to support council finance and administration and enable employees to access systems from across this large LGA<br>• capacity to invest in new and more systematic approaches to community engagement to ensure all communities within the larger council areas are heard and represented<br>• introduce community advisory panels<br>• a significant rate base drawn from a mix of residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural land | • current rating systems (various in Catchment) would need to be considered<br>• consider the need for existing regional structures for resources and how to best adapt and integrate systems across six existing councils<br>• treatment of debts and surpluses held by all councils (specific details not provided) |
| **Scenario 3**<br><br>*Establishing three councils – a northern council encompassing the Meander Valley and Northern Midlands, a southern council encompassing Brighton and the Southern Midlands, and a western council encompassing the Derwent Valley and the Central Highlands*<br><br> <br> | • aligns communities of interest with significant regional towns as service hubs<br>• enhances possible scale capabilities and scope for cohesive coordination, but to lesser extent than scenarios 1 and 2.<br>• Host several administrative and service centres and works hubs to maintain employment opportunities<br>• Comprises of two existing LGAs in proposed councils which almost entirely follow existing boundaries<br>• Larger workforces enhancing recruitment opportunities and enabling career development and progression<br>• Longford and Westbury retained as administrative, customer service and works hubs<br>• Coordinate development and services<br>• Connection to at lease one significant regional town connected to surrounding rural and highland communities<br>• if existing council offices across the Community Catchment were | • Continued reliance on shared services and partnership agreements<br>• Require greater regional coordination and cooperation<br>• whether a three-council model is the most effective and sustainable model for providing local representation and services to the Central and Midlands region<br>• increased strategic planning and infrastructure required for urban growth areas and major infrastructure projects (wind energy and irrigation)<br>• whether a three-council model is the most effective and sustainable model for providing local representation and services to the Central and Midlands region.<br>• these councils would likely still need to share services on a |

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| | maintained as a part of a network model, then between 87 and 97% of residents would be within a 30-minute drive of the major service and administrative hubs<br>• economic and demographic diversity which should help ensure financial sustainability<br>• significant scope to retain multiple existing council administrative centres and operations hubs in the different councils to maintain local employment and to support local engagement and service delivery<br>• integration of centralised or standardised corporate 'back-office' systems or services for council finance and administration may reduce staff time spent on administrative tasks, allowing councils to reallocate resources towards improving the scope and quality of service provision<br>• enhanced capacity to invest in new and more systematic approaches to community engagement, ensuring that all communities within the larger council areas are heard and represented<br>• scope to introduce community advisory panels<br>• Operations hubs could also be used for a program of scheduled regional council meetings in different areas of the municipality<br>• Rates for Council A in 2021 dollars is estimated $21.7m<br>• Establishing new funding models easier<br>• this scenario involves less change to council structures than other scenarios, the transition costs would be expected to be lower.<br>• Councils A and B would have relatively large rates and population bases that should give them the capacity to service their communities. | local or regional scale. For example, all three councils would have to cooperate to support existing or expanded shared services and regional emergency management committees<br>• need for advocacy to other spheres of government for the communities<br>• collaboration between the three councils to deliver effective land use and strategic planning<br>• all three councils would continue to rely on grant funding for a significant proportion of their revenue<br>• Careful consideration would need to be given to the status of shared services arrangements, including any financial and staff commitments made to other councils<br>• variations in the financial assets held by councils would need to be considered as part of the transition arrangements when establishing new councils |

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| **Scenario 4**<br><br>*Establishing three councils: a northern council capturing the Meander Valley, Northern Midlands and the northern Central Plateau region; a south-western council incorporating the Derwent Valley and south-west of the Central Highlands; and a south-eastern council reaching into the Central Highlands.*<br><br> <br> | • Benefit the community by increasing the scale and capability of the three councils<br>• Each of the new councils would have larger workforces enhancing recruitment opportunities and enabling career development/progression<br>• Most administrative, customer service, administration and works hubs could be maintained to service the Catchment<br>• Improvement to current council scale (and therefore capability) relative to status quo.<br>• 76% of residents would be within a 30-minute drive of key service an administrative hubs for Council A.<br>• Demographic and economic diversity which should help support financial sustainability<br>• Shared specialist and technical staff with neighbouring councils at a regional level. Regulatory services (building, environmental health, plumbing) and asset construction and maintenance being prime candidates.<br>• Centralised/standardized corporate 'back office' systems or services for finance and administration may reduce time spent on repetitive transactional tasks, allowing resources to be reallocated to improve scope and quality of service provision<br>• Enhanced capacity to invest in new and more systematic approaches to community engagement – introduction of community advisory panels<br>• In 2021 dollars, total rates revenue for Council A is estimated at $12.5m. establishing new funding models would be easier. Notes a continued reliance on grant funding | • Current NMC areas of Longford, Evandale and Perth would be allocated to the Tamar Valley Catchment.<br>• Whether it is the most effective and sustainable model for providing local representation and services to the Catchment<br>• Further and increased strategic planning and infrastructure due to significant growth<br>• All three councils would need to cooperate to support existing or expanded shared services and regional emergency management committees. Coordination of regional strategy and economic development, currently undertaken by the Southern Tasmanian Councils Authority, would be an ongoing need.<br>• NMC currently has Local District Committees which appear to operate similarly to the proposed "community advisory panels"<br>• Careful consideration given to the status of shared services arrangements (existing), including financial and staff commitments<br>• Variations in financial assets held by councils would need consideration<br>• Consideration of the role of Southern Tasmanian Councils Authority<br>• Data used is based on ABS 2021 Consensus<br>• Under operational sustainability, it is noted Council A would have relatively smaller rates and population base and more likely to need to access external shared service arrangements for specialist functions |

| Tamar Valley Community Catchment | | |
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| | **Advantages** | **Disadvantages** |
| Scenario 3<br><br>*Establishing one council area comprising the existing West Tamar, George Town and Launceston LGAs, extended to include the commuting areas of Hadspen, Carrick, Longford, Perth, Evandale and immediate surrounds.*<br><br> | • Benefit the community by increasing the scale and capability of the council<br>• Population base of 122,000 – one of the largest in the Information Packs<br>• Alignment with communities of interest and geography of region<br>• Resources and capabilities to respond to emerging community needs<br>• if existing council offices across the Community Catchment were maintained as a part of a network model, then 95% of residents would be within a 30-minute drive of the major service and administrative hubs<br>• support enhanced scope capabilities in areas such as strategic planning, development and environmental health assessment, and could help manage issues such as urban consolidation and infrastructure planning<br>• whole of catchment land-use planning initiatives, such as the Northern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy (STRLUS), would be streamlined and supported<br>• significant scale, capacity and purchasing power<br>• benefits in it centrally sourcing some basic common services, such as cloud-based ICT systems, to support council finance and administration. This would reduce staff time on repetitive administrative tasks and system management, allowing them to focus on improving tailored local services to communities.<br>• well placed to support and share specialist staff with smaller rural councils, potentially acting as a hub for regional or state-wide shared service provision | • Current NMC areas of Longford, Evandale and Perth would be allocated to the Tamar Valley Catchment.<br>• there would have to be a clear strategy of retaining jobs and teams across the region to maintain local employment and knowledge<br>• ensuring that a single regional council is able not only to preserve but also enhance local voice, representation, and engagement.<br>• establishing an equitable and consistent approach to rating across the proposed council<br>• consider the need for existing regional structures and how best to adapt and integrate the systems across the existing councils<br>• Perhaps the most significant challenge from a sustainability perspective associated with this scenario would be the implications for any new council in the Central Midlands, given approximately 8,000 residents of Evandale, Perth and Longford would be included in the Tamar Valley council<br>• Many current service sharing agreements would become unnecessary<br>• |

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| | • capacity to invest in new and more systematic approaches to community engagement to ensure all communities within the larger council areas are heard and represented, including those in the rural hinterland areas and segments<br>• scope to introduce community advisory panels<br>• Operations hubs could also be used for a program of scheduled regional council meetings in different parts of the council area<br>• In 2021 dollars, total rates revenue for is estimated at $101.2m.<br>• access to a significant rate base drawn from a mix of residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural lands | |

Local Government Association Tasmania

# General Meeting

# Agenda

## 30 June 2023

## Commencing at 12.00pm

**Lunch from 11.30am**

## Crowne Plaza, Hobart

326 Macquarie Street,
GPO Box 1521, Hobart, Tas 7000
Phone: (03) 6146 3740
Email: admin@lgat.tas.gov.au
Home Page: http://www.lgat.tas.gov.au

**PROCEDURAL MATTERS.**
**RULES REGARDING CONDUCT OF MEETINGS**

**13. WHO MAY ATTEND A MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION**

(a) Subject to Rule 13(f), each Member shall be entitled to send a Voting Representative to any Meeting of the Association, such Voting Representative exercising the number of votes determined according to Rule 16(a).

(b) In addition to the requirements set out in Rule 13(f), after each ordinary Council Election, the Chief Executive Officer shall request each Member to advise the name of its Voting Representative and the proxy for the Voting Representative for Meetings of the Association until the next ordinary Council Elections.

(c) Subject to Rule 13(f), Members may change their Voting Representative or proxy at any time by advising the Chief Executive Officer in writing of the Voting Representative prior to that representative taking his or her position at a Meeting of the Association.

(d) A list of Voting Representatives will be made available at the commencement of any Meeting of the Association.

(e) Members may send other elected members or Council officers as observers to any Meeting of the Association.

(f) Each Member must provide the Association with written notice of the details of the Voting Representative who was by a resolution of the Member lawfully appointed as the Voting Representative of the Member at a Meeting of the Association.

**14. PROXIES AT MEETINGS**

(a) Up to 1 hour prior to any Meeting of the Association, a Member may appoint another Member as its proxy.

(b) The form of the proxy is to be provided by the Chief Executive Officer and is to be signed by either the Mayor or General Manager of the Council appointing the proxy.

(c) The Chair of the meeting is not entitled to inquire as to whether the proxy has cast any vote in accordance with the wishes of the Member appointing the proxy.

(d) Proxies count for the purposes of voting and quorum at any meeting.

**15. QUORUM AT MEETINGS**

(a) At any Meeting of the Association, a majority of the Member Councils shall constitute a quorum.

(b) If a quorum is not present within one hour after the time appointed for the commencement of a Meeting of the Association, the meeting is to be adjourned to a time and date specified by the Chair.

**16. VOTING AT MEETINGS**

(a) Voting at any Meeting of the Association shall be upon the basis of each Voting Representative being provided with, immediately prior to the meeting, an electronic voting button or placard which is to be used for the purpose of voting at the meeting. The placard will be coloured according voting entitlement and the voting buttons will be coded according to voting entitlement:

| Population of the Council Area | Number of votes entitled to be exercised by the voting delegate | Colour placard to be raised by the voting delegate when voting |
|---|---|---|
| Under 10,000 | 1 | Red |
| 10,000 – 19,999 | 2 | White |
| 20,000 – 39,999 | 3 | Blue |
| 40,000 and above | 4 | Green |

(b) Electronic voting buttons will be the first choice for voting on all decisions, with placards only to be used if the technology fails.

(c) Voting buttons allow councils to vote for or against a motion or formally abstain from voting. An abstain is not to be taken as a negative vote.

(d) The Chair of the meeting shall be entitled to rely upon the electronic vote or the raising of a coloured placard as the recording of the vote for the Member and as evidence of the number of votes being cast.

(e) Except as provided in sub-rule (f), each question, matter or resolution shall be decided by a majority of the votes for a motion. If there is an equal number of votes upon any question, it shall be declared not carried.

(f)

(i) When a vote is being taken to amend a Policy of the Association, the resolution must be carried by a majority of the votes capable of being cast by Members present at the meeting.

(ii) When a vote is being taken for the Association to sign a protocol, memorandum of understanding or partnership agreement, the resolution must be carried by a majority of votes capable of being cast by Members and by a majority of Members, whether present at the meeting or not.

(iii) When a vote is being taken to amend these Rules of the Association, the resolution must be carried by at least two-thirds of the votes capable of being cast by Members, whether present at the meeting or not.

(g) A Voting Representative or his or her proxy in the name of the Member is entitled to vote on any matter considered at a Meeting of the Association.

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** Denotes Attachment*

Local Government Association Tasmania

# GENERAL MEETING SCHEDULE

| | |
|---|---|
| **11.30am** | **Lunch** |
| **12.00pm** | **Meeting Commences** |
| **1.45pm** | **Meeting concludes** |

Local Government Association Tasmania

# 1. GOVERNANCE

**Acknowledgement of Country**
The President will acknowledge and pay respect to the Tasmanian Aboriginal community as the traditional and original owners and continuing custodians of this land.

**Welcome and Apologies**

## 1.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES *

**Decision Sought**

**That the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2023, as circulated, be confirmed.**

**Background:**
The Minutes of the General Meeting held on 17 March 2023, as circulated, are submitted for confirmation and are at **Attachment to Item 1.1.**

## 1.2 BUSINESS ARISING *

**Decision Sought**

**That Members note the information.**

**Background:**
At **Attachment to Item 1.2** is a schedule of business considered at the previous meeting and its status.

## 1.3 CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA

**Decision Sought**

**That consideration be given to the Agenda items and the order of business.**

**Background:**
Delegates will be invited to confirm the Agenda for the meeting and the order of business.

## 1.4 FOLLOW UP OF MOTIONS *

**Decision Sought**

**That Members note the following report.**

**Background:**
A table detailing action taken to date in relation to motions passed at previous meetings is at **Attachment to Item 1.4.**

## 1.5 PRESIDENT'S REPORT

**Decision Sought**

**That Members note the report on the President's activity from 28 February 2023 until 9 June 2023.**

**Meetings and events**

- March General Meeting and GMC meeting
- Mayor's workshop March
- Elected Reps Planning Authority Training April; and May
- May GMC Meeting
- ALGA Board Meetings
- Presentation to the LGA South Australia on compulsory voting and reform
- Minister Street on Elected Representative behaviour

**Media and correspondence**

- LGAT News – April

- Local government review
  - Radio interviews
    - LAFM – Tasmania Talks, 2 March
    - ABC Hobart – Breakfast, 15 March
    - 7HOFM – News, 29 March
    - ABC Hobart – Mornings, 17 April
    - ABC Hobart – Drive, 20 April
    - ABC Hobart – News, 20 May
    - ABC Hobart – Breakfast, 31 May
  - TV interview (WIN TV)
  - Media release (20 April)
  - Article (The Mercury)
  - Media release – Timeframe extension (19 May)
  - Articles - Timeframe extension (The Mercury, The Examiner, King Island Courier, Kingborough Chronicle, Kentish Voice, Kingston Classified, Circular Head Chronicle, Derwent Valley Gazette and Southern Midlands Regional News)

**LGAT President nominations**

- Article (The Mercury)

**Visa processing delays**

- Newspaper articles (Tasman Gazette)
- Newspaper articles (Derwent Valley Gazette, Tasman Gazette)

**LRCI Federal Funding Announcement**

- Media release

**Resignation of Danny Gibson as Mayor**

- Radio interview (LAFM)

**Dorothies Awards**

- Media release

## 1.6 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

**Contact officer: Dion Lester**

**Decision Sought**

**That Members note the report on the CEO's activity from 27 February 2023 until 9 June 2023.**

**Advocacy**

In the period since my last report our advocacy activity remained high across our key priorities of planning and housing, elected member workplace health and safety, climate change and the Future of Local Government Review.

Some of the activities included:

- Submissions on the Tasmania's Population Strategy and Regional Planning Framework Consultation Papers - full copies of our submissions can be viewed on the LGAT website at: https://www.lgat.tas.gov.au/lgat-advocacy/reports-and-submissions
- A meeting with Central Coast Council and Minister Barnett on housing.
- A meeting with the new CEO of Homes Tasmania, Eleri Morgan-Thomas, who also recently presented at the May General Manager's Workshop.
- Discussions have commenced with the Minister's Office on the MOU for housing.
- Ongoing work with the Office of Local Government on managing interests, GM recruitment and performance management, the Code of Conduct.
- A meeting with Minister Street on Elected Representative behaviour.
- A meeting with Minister Jaensch, with regional groups, to discuss climate change funding for local government. This work subsequently resulted in $500,000 funding for local government climate change activities.
- Participation in the first meeting of the Climate Change Reference Group, tasked with providing the Tasmanian Government with advice and feedback on strategic priorities and emerging opportunities in climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- Negotiating a six-week extension to the Future of Local Government Review consultation period and also funding for independent facilitators to gather sector feedback on the scenarios presented by the Board.

**Sector Services**

LGAT Procurement's support for the sector continues to grow, with work on the key initiatives in our business plan all progressing better than our expectations. The procurement update in this agenda provides further details.

In April we delivered two workshops on councillors role as a Planning Authority and Managing Growth. Both sessions received positive feedback, with the format (morning capability session and afternoon policy session) likely to be repeated in future professional development activities.

There has been significant resource efforts in pulling together 36 Future of Local Government Review engagement sessions with the sector – all occurring in June. These constitute 21 face to face sessions and 15 online sessions.

**Governance and operations**

LGAT operations have focussed on the introduction of the Customer Relationship Management software, office upgrades (new furniture, heating, and lighting) and supporting the induction of new staff members.

**Media**

Integrity Commission recruitment investigation

- Media query (The Mercury)
- Newspaper article (The Mercury)

Shopping trolleys

- Media query (News Corp)

Conflict of interest register

- Media query (The Examiner, ABC)
- Articles (The Examiner, ABC)

The Voice

- Media query (ABC)

Development applications

- Media query (The Examiner)

Local government review

- Media query (The Examiner)
- Articles (The Examiner, The Advocate, The Mercury)

Skills shortages in local government

- Media query (The Mercury)
- Article (The Mercury)

Tiny Homes

- Media query (ABC)

Population growth

- Article (The Advocate)

Elected Representative mental health support

- Media query (The Examiner)
- Article (The Examiner)

### 1.7 COUNCIL ROUND UPS

**Decision Sought**

**That Members note there will not be a council round up this meeting.**

**Background**

The session also allows time for questions and provides an opportunity to briefly share and highlight problems or opportunities facing councils and is better suited to a face-to-face meeting.

# 2. ITEMS FOR DECISION

### 2.1 MOTION - RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS ON USE OF LAND AND PROPERTY

**Council – Clarence City Council**

**Decision Sought**

**That LGAT lobby the State Government urging legislative change to outlaw the creation of covenants which place restrictions on the use of land and property for:**

**a. public, social or affordable housing; or**

**b. tenants or occupants based on their source of income, or social or financial circumstances.**

**Background**

It was reported on ABC News Tasmania and ABC Radio's PM Program on Monday 20 February 2023 that restrictive covenants were being applied to housing estates in Tasmania disallowing the use of properties for public housing or to lease to tenants in receipt of government payments.

Some people including welfare agencies have expressed concern that allowing such covenants makes it more difficult for Tasmanians who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to secure affordable accommodation.

While the regulation of covenants is a matter for the Tasmanian Government and Parliament, it is appropriate for local government to adopt a position on this issue as advocates for the rights of people to access affordable housing. Such restrictive covenants also have the potential to curtail efforts by local government to improve the supply of affordable housing through the instruments available to us.

There appears to be little, if any, legislative restriction on using covenants in this way in either the *Land Titles Act 1980* or other legislation relevant to the administration of land rights. There is also no restriction on covenants being in this way in the *Anti Discrimination Act 1998* because economic circumstances are not a prescribed attribute. It would be prudent of the Attorney-General to consider whether amendments to both legislative instruments are required.

**LGAT comment**
LGAT does not have an existing resolution similar to the motion proposed.

The two primary tools for local government to manage the use of land within its municipality is the *Local Government Act 1993* and the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993*. These establish the primary role of councils to plan their municipalities now and into the future to provide for the health, safety, and welfare (amongst other things) for their communities. There is a range of other legislation that operates outside this framework that constrains or encourages different land uses.

## 2.2 Motion – Council Leave of Absence Provisions

**Council – Clarence City Council**

**Decision Sought**

**That LGAT and Member Councils support Clarence City Council's position which:**

**A. Recognises that the current process for requests for leave of absence by councillors is inappropriate as it does not reflect the rights and responsibilities applicable in contemporary work environments.**

**B Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to write to the Minister for Local Government on behalf of Council to request the Tasmanian Government to introduce updated regulations as soon as practicable to provide for the following:**

**i. That a councillor be able to advise the relevant council of a leave of absence 'as of right', subject to conditions being met (as set out below).**