

Appendix D

Public feedback

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK THEME	SUBMISSIONS OUTLINING THEME	PANEL RESPONSE
There will be savings from Governance costs (Mayors and Councillors salaries and allowances) and the costs of Senior Executives and administration.	EM1; EM2; EM7; EM16; EM18; EM20; EM21; EM23; EM25; EM40; EM48; EM49; EM50; EM54; EM61; EM62; EM70; EM80; EM81; EM89; EM91; EM118; EM 127; EM154; EM163; L18;	Agreed. However this should not be sole motivation for change.
There will be a reduction in rates from mergers	EM1; EM4;EM16; EM25; EM64; EM91; EM134; EM160; L18;	Possibly. However, the use to which any cost savings should be directed could be improved services, key projects, assets or reduced rates.
There should be efficiencies and cost savings from mergers including: vehicles, infrastructure, asset maintenance, procurement, common policies, common planning, customer contact, service standards and service delivery. Merged Councils should lead to more effective use of resources.	EM1; EM4; EM5; EM12; EM15; EM18; EM20; EM21; EM23; EM25; EM26; EM29; EM32; EM34; EM35; EM40; EM42; EM43; EM44; EM48; EM49; EM59; EM62; EM63; EM64; EM67; EM70; EM76; EM78; EM79; EM88; EM89; EM91; EM93; EM94; EM97; EM98; EM104; EM105; EM110; EM113; EM114; EM115; EM117; EM118; EM122; EM124; EM127; EM131; EM134; EM135; EM136; EM140; EM141; EM144; EM146; EM147; EM150; EM152; EM153; EM154; EM163; EM164; EM172; EM184; EM189; EM200; EM202;EM213;EM214;EM219;EM222;EM229 L1; L4; L10; L13; L16; L18; L20;L26;L29;L33	Agreed.
Resource sharing will require extra layers of bureaucracy. It has not worked in the past. If resource sharing is left as an “opt in” approach it will not work.	EM35; EM41;EM44; EM46; EM52; EM56; EM64; EM75; EM194; L12;	Agreed.
There is a problem for efficient Councils which have to merge with inefficient ones.	EM51;EM223	Whilst that might happen the chances are that the more efficient ways of working will be adopted by the merged entity.

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In any merger the highest rate should not be adopted. There should be financial caveats imposed on merging Councils. Debt within existing municipalities that merge should be retired prior to any merger.	EM109; EM 148; EM154; EM186; L6;	These are important questions that will need to be considered by the Transition Committees established in accordance with this Report's recommendations
Merging Councils would lead to redundant positions in the workforces of the affected Councils which would need to be managed carefully.	EM151; EM175;	Agreed.
No organisation can run services as efficiently as the well run Councils in Southern Tasmania.	EM169;	This is very unlikely, and the Panel considers that there's potentially room for improvement.
Mergers can create disbenefits such as an increase in rates and no improvement in services.	EM 185; EM187; L28;	These disbenefits are unlikely and can be avoided through good management.
Southern Tasmania needs change so that we can move ahead confidently, provide a solid climate for investment; and become more efficient as a region and State.	EM1; EM9; EM18; EM21; EM24; EM29; EM31; EM50; EM67; EM111; EM113; EM119; EM122;EM212;EM214;EM222 L5;	Agreed.
There could be improved co-ordination between existing policies, such as in the Arts, and in infrastructure assets, such as cycling paths and tourism trails, that are currently not well co-ordinated, if Councils were merged.	EM4; EM33; EM115;EM212	Agreed.
The main objective should be improved land use, transport and resource planning at the regional level.	EM20; EM212;EM219 L27;L26;L35	Agreed it should be one of the objectives.
There is duplication of effort , parochialism and bickering between the Councils.	EM23; EM25; EM44; EM49; EM69; EM145;	There is some evidence of a lack of consistent, co-ordinated planning across metropolitan Hobart.
Local Government has little clout currently.	EM12;	Agreed.

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There are too many Councils for such a relatively small State and area. Southern Tasmania is over-governed.	EM2; EM4;EM16; EM21; EM26; EM29; EM31; EM32; EM40; EM44; EM50; EM62; EM70; EM73; EM78; EM85; EM91; EM92; EM93; EM100; EM101; EM102; EM110; EM113; EM118; EM119; EM125; EM139; EM140; EM143; EM155; EM170; EM173; EM182; EM184; EM189; EM193; EM194; EM202; L1; L24;	Agreed. The Councils are doing a good job now; but improvements could be made through structural change.
Geographical distances could be solved through skype, video-conferencing and regional offices. Technology can be used to support merged communities.	EM3; EM31; EM35; EM46; EM65; EM84; EM140; EM145; L15;	Mostly agreed. Keeping the local in local government is however important, particularly with representative democracy. The Panel accepts that some issues of distance can be solved with modern technology.
There needs to be improved and new ways of Councils engaging with communities. Under any merger options local voices need to be retained.	EM5; EM42; EM115;EM214;EM215;EM224;EM228 L35	Agreed.
Local Government needs to be more transparent and accountable. It needs to make decisions on a less parochial basis.	EM14; EM21; EM22; EM26; EM47; EM104; EM150;EM200; L20;	Agreed and the Southern Tasmanian Regional Strategy Plan is an excellent initiative that will help the Councils make decisions within the larger regional context.
Larger Councils can be cumbersome and unresponsive to local needs. In some cases communities might lose their capacity to be self-reliant.	EM14; EM21; EM22; EM26; EM47; EM104; EM150; EM166;EM223;EM226 L29	Disagree. Larger Councils can be responsive if there are good customer service systems and community engagement in place.
Mergers could lead to an improvement in the quality of representation, calibre of Councillor candidates and where Council candidates when elected are not beholden to minor, special interest groups.	EM16; EM18; EM20; EM26; EM49; EM109; EM144; EM150; L20;	Agreed that this is an argument for larger Councils.
Councils should have a single Councillor per ward so that voters can contact them with confidence.	EM38;EM217;EM229; L33	This issue is one that needs to be thought through. Certainly all Councils could benefit from improved customer service systems and community engagement.
Support for mandatory voting in Council elections	EM70;	Agreed.

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Larger Councils could lead to political parties standing candidates for Councils.	EM181; EM210	Political parties are already standing candidates for Councils
Queensland councils are now de-merging	EM210;EM227	Not agreed. The Queensland merging of Councils has been overwhelmingly successful.
In mergers, urban should be merged with urban and rural with rural. Communities of interest should be a criterion as to which Councils merge. Rural interests are very different to urban ones. The need to preserve local identity is crucial.	EM5; EM16; EM28; EM30; EM46; EM52; EM53; EM61; EM86; EM133; EM149; EM178;	Agreed.
There is not much difference between Eastern and Western shores of Hobart. There is more that unites them than divides them. Many people live on one side of the Derwent and work on the other side. They work, shop, relax and live on both sides of the Derwent. Any tendency towards rivalry should not be embedded in an Eastern Shore /Western Shore Councils. In fact, social cohesion should be a goal of this review.	EM5; EM10; EM34; EM42; EM58; EM68; EM75; EM86; EM122; EM126; EM133; EM135; EM175; EM184; EM194; EM208;EM218;EM229 L3; L16; L25; L27;	Agreed.
Hobart should be marketed as one City. A Greater Hobart Council would have greater clout, more standing, city status and more significance on the national stage. It needs to be more unified.	EM32; EM36; EM40; EM41; EM71; EM83; EM99; EM119; EM120; EM122; EM166; EM179; L2; L3;L20; L25; L27;	Agreed.
People living in Greater Hobart but not in Hobart City Council area are likely to use their services, work in their area, make no contribution; have little to no say, but should. There is a common community of interest amongst the residents in Greater Hobart and should be greater co-operation.	EM35; EM42; EM65; EM71; EM94; EM99; EM122; L20;L25;	Agreed.
Under a Greater Hobart option Clarence would lose its voice to Hobart. Clarence Council has minimal debt and low rates.	EM158; EM181; EM204; L34	Disagree. A Greater Hobart Council would have to look out for the interests of all its communities. The Clarence Council has undoubted strengths but this does not contradict the strength of the case for a Greater Hobart Council.

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The Tasman Bridge collapse proved there is a divide between Eastern and Western shores of Hobart, based on the river.	EM52; EM190; EM192; L33;L34	Disagree. The Derwent River is an important catchment. There is an argument that favours municipalities being built on catchments not divided by the river that the catchment feeds.
There should be benefits to rural areas from the creation of a Greater Hobart Council. On the other hand the smaller Councils could be swamped by a larger Hobart Council, unless even handed treatment is mandated.	EM5; EM14; EM28; EM128; EM134; EM158; EM166;EM227 L5;L16;	Agreed but this would need to be legislated - resource sharing on a voluntary basis does not work well. The rural areas need their own distinct Councils. A Greater Hobart Council should be set up to benefit the smaller regional Councils
Not keen to see Southern Midlands cut in half because of work done to profile and brand it to date.	EM14;	Agreed.
Rural areas require some form of subsidisation under the single Council or Greater Hobart Council option.	EM16;	Agreed.
Rural areas can be run on a low cost model.	EM37;	Agreed.
A large Southern Tasmanian Regional Council would require regional offices and some form of local representation.	EM8; EM12; EM14; EM15; EM40; EM46; EM162;	Agreed and this then starts to re-create the Councils that the single Council was meant to abolish.
A large Southern Tasmanian Regional Council would provide real status and clout and plan and deliver major projects.	EM12; EM14;EM18; EM45; EM59; EM77; EM88; EM127; EM128; EM141; EM144; EM155; L26;	Agreed but would find itself not easily resolving needs between urban and rural constituencies.
A large Southern Tasmanian Regional Council is just too big and too ambitious at this stage. The issue of physical distance is a real one.	EM41; EM95; EM120; EM135; EM194;	Agreed.
The single Southern Tasmanian Council is too close in size to the State Government.	EM54; EM56; EM192;	Agreed.
One single Regional Council may mean rural interests being swamped by the urban interests on the Council. There could be animosity between town and country. it will destroy local representation as currently known.	EM81; EM95; EM96; EM120; EM174; EM180; EM181; L17; L23;	Agreed . A gerrymander would also be a problem, ie, in setting up the Councillor representation in a single, Regional council, deliberately going against the principle of one person one vote, in order to give the rural areas a real voice on such a Council.
A further option is to form just 3 Councils an eastern shore with eastern rural Councils, a central Tasmanian authority and a and a western shore with Southern Councils	EM19; EM209;EM217	Not agreed as it splits Hobart and merges very dissimilar communities.

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Another option is to combine each metro Hobart Council with its hinterland, thus combining weak and strong units of Local Government.	EM156;	The Panel's preference in looking at possible mergers is to combine communities of interest, that is, like with like. The approach outlined also undermines the sense of treating metropolitan Hobart as a whole capital city.
The State Government should be abolished and three Regional Councils should run Tasmania.	EM6; EM117;	Don't agree because Tasmania is a State. The Australian Constitution, community sentiment and the needs of the Tasmanian economy mean there must be a Tasmanian Government.
Council financial equalisation schemes should be reviewed to establish a sinking fund to help with emergencies.	EM108;	This is an interesting idea that could be pursued by new councils established in accordance with this report's recommendations