

# **Submission to the Review of Tasmania's Local Government Legislation Framework**

## Introduction

As part of its review of Tasmania's local government legislation framework, the Tasmanian Government has invited public submissions in relation to a number of proposed reforms outlined in its Reform Directions Paper.

The purpose of this submission is to ensure that any changes, especially in relation to reforms 47<sup>1</sup> and 48<sup>2</sup>, support and build on the good work already being done by CCA for and with our Member Councils. This is particularly pertinent given CCA's new direction which is outlined below.

## Background

CCA is jointly owned by the nine councils of north-west and western Tasmania<sup>3</sup> and is established as a Joint Authority under the Local Government Act (1993). Member Councils collectively provide approximately \$900K p.a of funding to CCA, which accounts for approximately one third of CCA's total revenue. The balance of funds come from State and Federal Government programs, with a significant portion relating to Natural Resource Management delivery.

Sixteen staff report to a CEO, who in turn reports to a Board of Directors. The CCA Representatives – usually the Mayor and General Manager of each Member Council – meet at least four times a year and play a vital role in setting the budget and strategic direction, as well as appointing the Board.

### *A new direction*

The past six months has seen CCA and our Member Councils commit to and implement a number of major changes that have resulted in an even leaner, more capable organisation with a clearer focus and commitment to strong local government. Our fresh Vision, Purpose and Values (see Appendix 1) have been reflected in everything that we have done since the change of CEO last December, and our success is evidenced by significant investment from state and federal government alongside numerous examples of Member Councils cooperating with CCA and with each other (see Appendix 2). Most notable in this regard, is the signing of an MOU which sees economic development staff from all Member Councils seconded to CCA on a part time basis, to work on regional projects as part of the Regional Futures Plan. The Futures Plan is an ambitious new approach to regional economic development being led by CCA and our Member Councils which has received strong support from the Tasmanian and Australian Governments and the university sector.

Another significant change has been the creation of a Strategic Services function within our business, designed specifically to ensure that CCA has the capacity to play a leadership and coordinating role in shared services and other measures that support strong, efficient local government. This approach was endorsed by the CCA Representatives when they approved CCA's Annual Plan and Budget in June this year.

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<sup>1</sup> Reform 47: "Introduce provisions that support efficient and high-quality council operations and collaborative shared service opportunities".

<sup>2</sup> Reform 48: "Introduce the option to create regional councils" (whereby an elected council comprising a Mayor and Councillors would remain in each municipality but administrative and operational functions, including a shared General Manager, would be centralised).

<sup>3</sup> Burnie City Council, Central Coast Council, Circular Head Council, Devonport City Council, Kentish Council, King Island Council, Latrobe Council, Waratah-Wynyard Council and West Coast Council.

## **Issues that we would like the Government to consider as it progresses its reform agenda**

We respectfully urge the Government to consider the following requests as it progresses its reform agenda:

1. That any legislative change does not limit the scope of activities currently available for CCA to pursue as a Joint Authority. This includes the provision of shared administrative and operational services to Member Councils and other organisations.
2. That there is adequate flexibility around the governance requirements and structure of regional councils so that CCA could become a regional council with minimal disruption to our current business, should our Member Councils see a benefit in us doing so.
3. That the Government considers CCA as the regional council which would logically service our area if one were established, and with that in mind, consults CCA closely throughout the remainder of the reform process.

## **Conclusion**

CCA does not yet have a view on whether the concept of a regional council is in the best interest of our Member Councils. We do, however, feel that local government must work more collaboratively in order to achieve efficiencies and deliver better regional outcomes, and we have recently started playing an even stronger leadership role in that. To that end, we believe that there is clear alignment between the Government's objectives and our own, and we see many benefits in working together.

## **Appendices**

1. Summary of our 2019-20 Annual Plan
2. Summary of shared services currently being undertaken by CCA and our Member Councils

## **Enquiries**

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## Appendix 1: Summary of our 2019-20 Annual Plan

### Our Vision, Purpose and Values

**Our Vision:** A region that is prospering as a result of strong councils working together; where ratepayers, industry and government see the benefits of investing in the CCA model. In short, 'stronger councils, stronger region'.

**Our Purpose:** To help councils achieve regional outcomes and maintain strong local government, by working together.

**Our Values:** We are agile, collaborative, optimistic, and lean. We take our responsibility as public administration professionals seriously and have a growth mindset.

### The basics

- Established in 1999.
- Jointly owned by the nine councils of western and north-western Tasmania.
- A Joint Authority under the Local Government Act (1993).
- Core funding comes from Council contributions, traditionally however, the majority of annual revenue has been obtained from State and Federal Government programs.
- Located in Burnie, currently employing 16 staff.

## 2019/20 Annual Plan actions

### 1. Regional Economic Development - Making our region an even better place to work, visit, learn and invest.

Annual Plan Action	Long-term outcome	Key Deliverable
<p><b>1.1 Support the implementation of the Regional Futures Plan (RFP)</b></p>	<p><i>More jobs, better jobs.</i></p> <p>Regional Futures Plan is established as an effective overarching economic development framework for the region.</p>	<p>Establish overarching governance framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Execute MoU with key agencies</li> <li>• Execute Shared Service Agreement</li> <li>• Establish 'Core Team' working arrangements</li> </ul> <hr/> <p>Establish Economic Development Steering Group</p> <hr/> <p>Establish working groups, estimated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education and Training</li> <li>• Renewable Energy</li> <li>• Business Association Network</li> <li>• Choose Cradle Coast (Retention &amp; Attraction)</li> <li>• Regional Events</li> <li>• Arts</li> </ul> <hr/> <p>Develop Regional Investment Framework</p> <hr/> <p>Map the entrepreneurial ecosystem including the identification of gaps and opportunities (Swinburne PhD initiative)</p> <hr/> <p>Establish food producers' network</p> <hr/> <p>Initiate other Regional Futures Plan projects</p>
<p><b>1.2 Build the Coastal Pathway improvements</b></p>	<p>Improved community health and wellbeing and connectedness across the region supporting future cycling related economic development opportunities.</p>	<p>Complete detailed designs and obtain development application approvals for all sections</p> <hr/> <p>Commence and manage construction</p> <hr/> <p>Execute Deed with State Government</p>

Annual Plan Action	Long-term outcome	Key Deliverable
1.3 <b>Manage the establishment of farm vehicle washdown facilities</b>	Improved biosecurity, amenity and animal welfare.	Complete RFI and secure funding
1.4 <b>Assist with hosting the Australian Regional Tourism Convention</b>	Increased capacity and capabilities of stakeholders and greater regional profile.	Host Australian Regional Tourism Convention in October 2019 in collaboration with Devonport City Council, Department of State Growth and Business Events Tasmania
1.5 <b>Complete Award-Winning Tasmania television series</b>	Increased regional exposure as a food tourism destination.	Manage contract delivery

## 2. Natural Resource Management - Maintaining our clean, green environment and supporting sustainable agriculture.

Annual Plan Action	Long-term outcome	Key Deliverable
<b>2.1 Undertake regional NRM planning</b>	Stakeholders are engaged with the Regional NRM Strategy and Investment Prospectus which supports a collaborative approach to addressing regional NRM priorities.	Establish a Stakeholder Advisory Group to guide strategic decision making and advocate for Regional NRM
		Review 2015-20 Regional NRM Strategy, including identification of synergies with RFP and opportunities to collaborate with councils
		Develop a Regional NRM Investment Prospectus
<b>2.2 Deliver Regional Land Partnership (RLP) services</b>	RLP projects successfully engage the community and deliver stated project outcomes.	Establish a Project Reference Group
		Develop Community Participation and Communication Plans
		Deliver RLP and Regional Agricultural Landcare facilitator projects
<b>2.3 Deliver on-ground NRM projects</b>	Effective partnerships and diversified funding streams deliver successful regional NRM priority projects.	Deliver projects as determined by funding partners to address regional NRM priorities
<b>2.4 Implement the Tasmanian Cat Management Plan (TCMP)</b>	The Tasmanian community is well-informed on cat management issues leading to more responsible cat ownership and management.	Engage key stakeholders and establish strategic partnerships to facilitate collaborative cat management
		Develop and implement awareness and education programs
		Assist councils to develop policies and compliance programs in accordance with the TCMP
		Conduct first annual review of strategic plan in conjunction with the state-wide TCMP team and adapt where necessary

### 3. Strategic Services - Pursuing opportunities for our business, our owners and our region.

Annual Plan Action	Long-term outcome	Key Deliverable
<b>3.1 Attract, influence and manage private and public sector funding to achieve better regional outcomes</b>	Improved long-term financial sustainability leading to increased value of CCA model to owners.	Develop and implement a stakeholder engagement plan to complement project level planning Advocate for regional projects to attract private and/or public investment in the region Secure funding for relevant projects and strategic services initiatives
<b>3.2 Plan, coordinate, facilitate, advocate and otherwise act on behalf of councils, when required</b>	Greater capacity to deliver and support councils, increasing value of CCA model to owners.	Evaluate requests and opportunities and act on behalf of councils (to be determined based on needs) where strategic alignment is achieved
<b>3.3 Assist with the implementation of additional shared services and collaborative working arrangements</b>	Increased rate payer and government confidence in councils - <i>Stronger Councils, Stronger Region.</i>	Develop an Internal Audit Program for Member Council consideration Establish program of events for local government networking Deliver regional events calendar through the regional events working group Develop a shared services plan to be endorsed by the Representatives
<b>3.4 Promote local government careers and help councils with workforce development</b>	Councils have the right people in the right roles to meet service delivery needs.	Deliver Regional Employment Trials Project
<b>3.5 Increase Member Council and external stakeholder communication</b>	Increased stakeholder confidence.	Biannual attendance at council workshops Maintain monthly newsletter and social media Continued radio, television and newspaper coverage Public presentations Regular, transparent and meaningful reporting to our owners and external stakeholders Develop learning and development plans for all staff

**Annual Plan Action**

**Long-term outcome**

**Key Deliverable**

**3.6 Increase organisational performance (staff morale and capabilities)**

Increased confidence in CCA's capability and capacity to deliver – CCA has the right people and right skills to achieve its purpose.

Embed project management framework into business practices

Review Strategic Plan (2017-20 Corporate Plan)

Establish clear financial goals and continue to enhance and streamline financial reporting

## Appendix 2: Shared services currently being undertaken by CCA and our Member Councils

Council / Authority	Shared Service With	Purpose	Comments
Cradle Coast Authority	Devonport, Central Coast, Latrobe, Kentish, Burnie, Waratah-Wynyard Circular Head, West Coast & King Island	Joint Authority	All councils in the region are active participants in the Cradle Coast Authority.  All Councils have recently committed to having economic development staff seconded to CCA to work on regional economic development projects. Large Councils have committed to resourcing of 0.2 FTEs and small Councils have committed to 0.1 FTEs.
Dulverton Waste Management	Devonport, Central Coast, Latrobe & Kentish	Waste Management Landfill	A Joint Authority to provide the landfill solution for the eastern end of the Coast. The Burnie City Council also uses the landfill site through a contract arrangement directly with the Joint Authority.
Cradle Coast Waste Management Group	Devonport, Central Coast, Latrobe, Kentish, Burnie, Waratah-Wynyard & Circular Head	Waste Management Activities	The member councils work together to progress improved waste management practices in the region. There is a voluntary levy on all waste delivered to landfill which is paid by the participating councils. These funds are used to progress initiatives including promotion of recycling and waste minimisation in the region.  This group has been formally considering the broader issue of waste management governance and will be further strengthening this aspect going forward by creating a sub-entity under the auspices of the Dulverton Waste Management Joint Authority.
Mersey/Leven Emergency Management	Devonport, Central Coast, Latrobe and Kentish	Emergency Services	A coordinated approach to the delivery of emergency services in the sub-region.
Western Emergency Management	Burnie, Waratah-Wynyard, Circular Head	Emergency Services	A coordinated approach to the delivery of emergency services in the sub-region.
Cradle Country Marketing Group	Devonport, Central Coast, Latrobe & Kentish	Tourism Promotion	The four councils work together to promote the sub region from a tourism perspective.
Devonport	Central Coast	Audit Panel	A shared audit panel between the two councils.

<b>Council / Authority</b>	<b>Shared Service With</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Waratah-Wynyard	Circular Head, King Island	Audit Panel	Shared audit panel members between the councils.
Devonport	Central Coast	Environmental Health	Central Coast Council provides an officer to Devonport two days per week to assist in completing environmental health obligations. The primary focus is on the activity of food shop inspections.
Devonport	Central Coast	Office 365 & SharePoint	Provision of guidance and support to Central Coast on the implementation of Office 365 and SharePoint for document management.
Devonport	Latrobe/Kentish	Human Resources	During a period when the Latrobe / Kentish Council was recruiting for a HR person, the Devonport Council provided assistance by an officer being available to assist with HR matters including recruitment. Following the appointment of a permanent HR Officer at Latrobe/ Kentish the service ceased.
Devonport	Burnie	Weed Management	Devonport provides its NRM Officer to Burnie 2 days per week to undertake weed management.
Waratah-Wynyard Council	Circular Head	Human Resources	18 staff shared across a variety of areas – some direct resource sharing and other functions as a shared service model. Includes joint procurement and strategic projects.
Waratah-Wynyard	Burnie	Economic Development	Burnie provides an ED officer to WWC 1 day per fortnight

<b>Council / Authority</b>	<b>Shared Service With</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Tas Communications Pty Ltd	Burnie, Latrobe, Waratah-Wynyard, Cradle Coast Authority	IT and communications services	Tas Communication is a wholly owned subsidiary of Burnie and provide IT and communications and managed services.
Burnie	Waratah-Wynyard, Circular Head and West Coast	Immunisation Services	Burnie provide support to the three council in the delivery of their immunisation's programs.
Burnie Airport Corporation	King Island	Airport Management	Burnie Airport is a joint venture 51% owner by Burnie and provides airport management services for King Island Airport.
Latrobe / Kentish		Shared Services	Both Councils have implemented a shared workforce strategy.
CAT (Contemporary Art Tasmania) Touring Committee	Devonport, Burnie, Launceston, Clarence. Plus TMAG, Salamanca Arts Centre, UTAS	Cultural Development	The Touring Committee work collaboratively to source and distribute visual art content throughout Tasmania.
Cradle Coast Authority	Devonport, Central Coast, Latrobe, Kentish, Burnie, Waratah-Wynyard Circular Head, West Coast & King Island	Regional Events Working Group	Jointly marketing a regional calendar of events on the CCA website and through a dedicated "Choose Cradle Coast" social media presence. Key objectives include attracting more people to visit the region and stay longer, as well as changing perceptions of our region. Phase two of this arrangement will see participants working together to attract new major events to the region.
Cradle Coast Authority	Devonport, Central Coast, Latrobe, Kentish, Burnie, Waratah-Wynyard, Circular Head, West Coast & King Island	Local government jobs website	Under a new initiative, Member Councils are able to create job listings on the CCA website, which Member Councils and CCA promote through their social media channels.