



28 October 2025

Hon Kerry Vincent MLC  
Minister for Local Government  
Department of Premier & Cabinet  
GPO Box 123  
HOBART TAS 7001

Email: [lgconsultation@dpac.tas.gov.au](mailto:lgconsultation@dpac.tas.gov.au)

Dear Minister Vincent

**DEVONPORT CITY COUNCIL SUBMISSION: DISCUSSION PAPER – REFORMS TO COUNCILLOR NUMBERS AND ALLOWANCES 2025 – APPROVED BY COUNCIL AT ITS MEETING OF 27 OCTOBER 2025 – RES NO. 25/198**

Devonport City Council (DCC) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed reforms to Councillor numbers and allowances. While we acknowledge the intent to improve governance and representation across Tasmania, we wish to highlight three significant concerns regarding the reform proposal:

**1. The Real Issue: Council Numbers, Not Councillor Numbers**

The reduction in Councillor numbers does not address the underlying structural challenge facing local government in Tasmania. As identified in the Future of Local Government Review (FLGR), Tasmania's 29 Councils represent an inefficient fragmentation of governance for a state of our size and population.

The Review states "Tasmania's council boundaries should be redrawn to create a new system of larger and more capable councils that better reflects, represents, and serves contemporary Tasmanian communities."

Devonport City Council strongly supports the FLGR findings and considers the real reform needed is a reduction in the number of councils, not simply a reduction in Councillor numbers within existing councils. Without addressing this, the proposed changes risk perpetuating, not improving, the improved governance and representation benefits suggested in the discussion paper.

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## **2. Inaccurate Scoring for Devonport City Council's Banding**

The scoring methodology used to determine Devonport's banding score appears flawed. The asset base value of \$274,691, attributed to Devonport in the discussion paper, is understated; our written down asset base value is significantly larger than the \$400,000 minimum threshold required for 3 points.

With this change, Devonport's total score would increase to a minimum of 11 points provided the 5-year average of development applications remains below \$100,000, however this is unlikely and could average either side of \$100,000 given the fluctuations with commercial development in an urban environment.

This discrepancy places DCC in between categories 1 and 2 and means the Council could swing between 7 and 9 Councillors each four-year election cycle. Such volatility undermines stability in representation and fails to reflect the true scale and complexity of our Council's responsibilities. We request the scoring data be updated and that mechanisms to prevent frequent changes in Councillor numbers due to short-term data variations be considered.

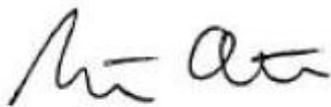
## **3. Impact on Diversity and Governance**

The discussion paper claims that reducing Councillor numbers will strengthen governance by attracting more diverse and skilled candidates. Devonport City Council strongly disagrees. Reducing the number of Councillors will likely have the opposite effect, narrowing the pool of representation and making it harder for diverse voices to be elected. Fewer positions mean increased competition and a higher barrier to entry, which can disadvantage underrepresented groups and diminish the breadth of perspectives around the Council table. Devonport currently has a diverse and engaged group of Councillors and does not consider any demographic will be represented to either a greater or lesser extent simply due to the quantum of the Councillor allowance.

## **Conclusion**

In summary, Devonport City Council calls on the Government to prioritise reforms that address the foundational issues facing local government in Tasmania. We believe that meaningful change hinges on reducing the number of councils to ensure that local government is more efficient, representative, and responsive to the needs of all Tasmanians. Devonport City Council remains ready to collaborate with the Government to drive reforms that will genuinely benefit our communities into the future.

Yours sincerely



Matthew Atkins  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER