



Hon Kerry Vincent MLC
Tasmanian Minister for Local Government

Parliament House - DPAC
HOBART TAS 7000

[submitted via: Office of Local Government - lg.consultation@dpac.tas.gov.au]

22 October 2025

Dear Minister,

KING ISLAND COUNCIL RESPONSE TO PROPOSED REFORM OF COUNCILLOR NUMBERS AND ALLOWANCES

Thank you for the Discussion Paper and the opportunity for all Tasmanian Councils to respond to these proposed reforms. King Island Council is now 118 years old, one of the oldest in Tasmania and as an unchanged isolated jurisdiction [that has never been part of any other amalgamated or divided local government jurisdiction] has developed significant autonomy and self-sufficiency. To that end, harvesting our hard-fought history we of course have a very intuitive feel for how we need to be structured for the future. Similarly, because of this isolation our Council has historically always been required to punch above our weight and take on additional responsibilities, advocacy and complexity [such as owning and operating our own major Airport] creating additional workload and committee responsibility for elected Councillors. The statistical analysis presented in the discussion paper does not fully portray the complexity of our Council jurisdiction or our driving ambition for ongoing development and population growth.

BOTTOM LINE UP FRONT [BLUF] After careful consideration King Island Council recommends the following future makeup of our elected Councillors.

Future Number of Elected Councillors: 7 [including a popularly elected Mayor & Deputy Mayor]. Reduced from the current 9. King Island Council requires additional redundancy given our isolation and as a small country community we also experience many local conflicts of interest where Councillors recuse themselves from specific meeting agenda items. Furthermore, Councillors are frequently required to travel off King Island for professional / medical / legal and carer requirements and even though remote attendance may soon be approved, additional redundancy is desirable. Therefore, to ensure ongoing quorum numbers, diversity of representation and redundancy we consider 7 x elected Councillors for King Island to be the ideal future structure that will also deliver an efficiency. For all the reasons above, we consider the Discussion Paper 5 x Councillors proposal to be manifestly inadequate.

Remuneration Increases: Savings made from the reduction of 2 x elected Councillors proportionately increase the allowances for the future elected 7 x Councillors. This will better compensate Councillors for their time and commitment, as well as encourage more to consider running for office.



Professionalising the Remuneration Package for Councillors. As a Councillor allowance is essentially an untaxed gross secondary income and these proposed reforms will increase that income, then perhaps it is also time to professionalise the remuneration package with pay as you go income tax deductions [perhaps incorporated into the normal Council payroll]. Superannuation contributions should be voluntary at the discretion of each elected Councillor, dependent upon their own financial circumstances.

As Mayor on behalf of our elected Councillors I wish to state for the record that all of us serve our community wholeheartedly and none of us do it for the income. To serve is to make sacrifices and being elected to Council by our constituents is a noble and humbling experience. That being said however, all Councillors have to campaign to be popularly elected and if successful take on jurisdictional responsibility and authority, so should be better compensated for their service and sacrifices.

King Island greatly appreciates your consideration, Minister. We welcome the next opportunity to contribute to these proposed reforms.

Your sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marcus A. Blackie". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Marcus Blackie
Mayor

