

5th November 2025

The Hon Kerry Vincent MLC
Minister for Local Government
Level 10, 15 Murray Street
Hobart TAS 7000
E: Minister.Vincent@dpac.tas.gov.au

Dear Minister Vincent,

Re – Submission - Reforms to Councillor Numbers and Allowances

I refer to the recent Discussion paper circulated to West Coast Council from the Office of Local Government and the Department of Premier and Cabinet on the reforms to Councillor Numbers and Allowances. West Coast Council thanks you for the opportunity to consider the detailed analysis of the presented reforms proposed.

West Coast Council is generally supportive of the reform processes and understands the merit of the analysis undertaken in preparing the consultation documents and the process of engagement with the sector.

Through a detailed consideration and reflection on the proposed changes to the reforms on Councillor Numbers and Allowances the following aspects of the changes were identified as being challenging and potentially unworkable for the West Coast Council and other smaller category three Councils.

On this basis West Coast Council would seek your support for an embodiment of the following points in any proposed changes in reducing the number of elected members to seven members for the West Coast Council, not the recommended five as proposed.

1. Less representation from smaller communities and elevated risk of skewed representation isolating smaller communities through lack of democratic voice.
2. Lack of democratic representation of all communities across the local government area.
3. Reduced capacity for unique smaller communities to be represented through reduced members is not desirable and undemocratic.

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4. Meeting quorum resilience will be diminished not enabling the business of council to be undertaken. This places higher pressure on fewer members making the desirability of community service participation less likely. This is in direct contrast to the motivations of the reform process being considered.
5. Meeting quorum for the determination of planning matters for smaller communities undermining procedural and process effectiveness.
6. In smaller community's conflicts of interest can have greater impacts on the meeting quorum through the implementation of transparent governance processes requiring a solid level of resilience.
7. West Coast residents and including Councillors often travel out of region for employment / professional / training / medical / legal and carer requirements and even though remote attendance may soon be considered, additional redundancy is highly desirable to provide resilience to the operations of West Coast Council.
8. The five Councillors proposal for the West Coast Council is manifestly inadequate for the West Coast local government area with a wide range of smaller localities seeking to have a strong democratic voice.

West Coast Council thanks you for the opportunity to contribute to the reform process and looks forward to your advice confirming the requested level of resilience in serving the residents of the West Coast.

Yours faithfully



Shane Pitt
Mayor



Scott Riley
General Manager

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