

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD

27th March 2018

1. For 23 years I was an elected councillor for Tasman Council. Firstly as a Carnarvon ward councillor with no pay. Then payments were introduced which I believe was a financial incentive to stand for election with many councillors standing for the wrong reasons. I was also was a Deputy Mayor for several years and Mayor for three years.
2. My preference was for an amalgamation between Clarence, Sorell and Tasman as I firmly believe 29 councils in Tasmania is ridiculous but this was not to be!
3. Over the years I have watched the rates rise each year to the stage where I know that a lot of people struggle to pay them. As you are aware the median age for Tasman is 56+ but the reality is that will increase will as the year's progress. Unemployment, pensioners and low wages certainly affect the community and their ability to pay higher rates.
4. The AAV is a joke as when valuations are done (I think every 4 years) they have in the past been carried out by Interstate valuers getting their information off computers and not visiting the properties. I haven't seen or spoken to a valuer in 42 years. Every time we are revalued via AAV their assessment is way above what I could receive as rent which means a debate with the valuation each time.
5. Tasman Council owned roads are six times that of Sorell yet our rates are on par to Sorell. So unless amalgamate we are in serious trouble. I suspect that the cost of road works in Tasman will increase so there can be no reductions in the works crew but certainly there must be savings in our office staff.
6. The Peninsula now stretches nearly to the canal in Dunalley and the most central spot for the works crew and a small office is obviously Taranna. The Council owned Tasman Peninsula Community Centre is located there on 52 acres and is underutilised at present and has suffered this fate for many years due to parochialism.

7. In terms of the number of councillors for Tasman I strongly support the ward system as it gives fair representation to all areas of the Peninsulas. Because we now include Murdunna I think there would need to be 4 councillors elected.
8. From discussions with the Mayor I get the feeling that the rates we now pay will continue to increase every year at least with CPI. It sort of makes a mockery of amalgamation as what the community wants is savings and in particular less rate increases.
9. Am I correct in asking the Board that regardless of your findings in relation to this proposed amalgamation that the present Council members can vote against an amalgamation going ahead?

Peter Wilson