

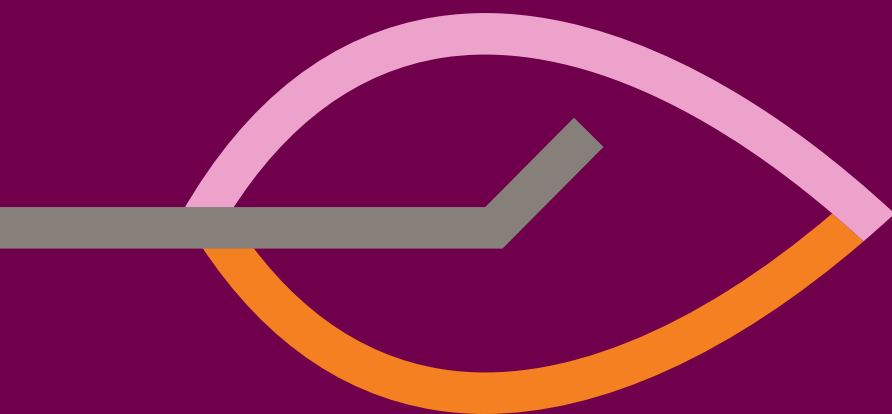
Interim Report
Section 3: Capability for the future:
Successful and sustainable councils

Review Stage 1 – June 2022

**The future
of local
government
review**



Let's All Shape the Future
of Local Government.



The Local Government Board is seeking submissions in response to the Consultation Questions on [page 8](#) of the Interim Report until the 25 August 2022.

Please visit www.engage.futurelocal.tas.gov.au to respond to the questions online.

Alternatively, you can provide a written submission to:

LGBoard@dpac.tas.gov.au or

Future of Local Government Review
GPO Box 123, HOBART, TASMANIA 7001

Section 3: Capability for the future: Successful and sustainable councils

The Review's central objective is *"...to create a more robust and capable system of local government that is ready for the challenges and opportunities of the future"*. That is a very broad and ambitious goal. No doubt, it will also mean different things to different people.

Capability and outcome aspirations

1. Role Clarity and Strategic Coordination

What does this mean?

Councils have responsibility, accountability, and autonomy for providing a clearly defined range of place-based functions and services. The community has a clear understanding of the role of local government, what their councils do, and why. Councils work in a smart, collaborative, and effective way – with one another, with business, with the community, and with other levels of government – to meet the needs of their individual local communities while having regard to the overall social, economic, and environmental wellbeing of all Tasmanians.

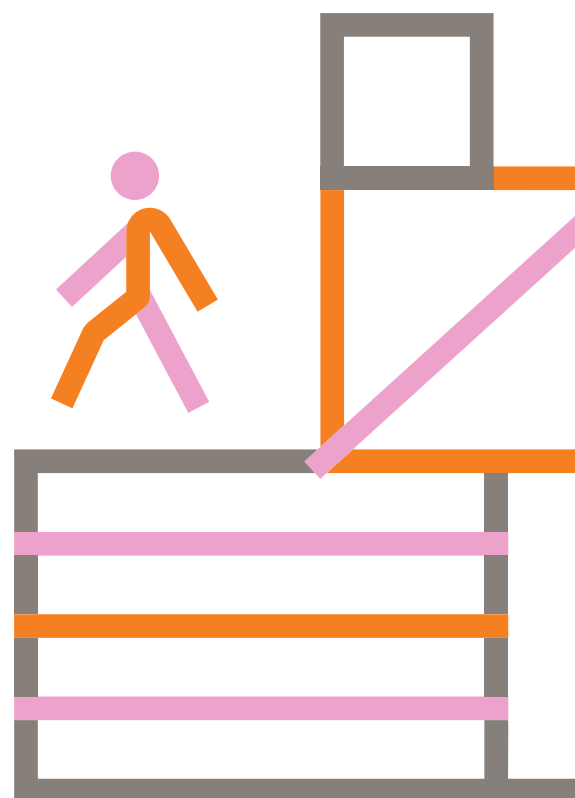
2. Strategic and Technical Capability

What does this mean?

Councils have ready and reliable access to a high quality, professional workforce, supported by knowledge, systems, and data. This allows them to make good decisions that deliver on clearly defined objectives informed by what their communities want and need. As an employer, councils attract and retain good people who have the right mix of skills to deliver for their communities.

That is why the Board has decided to provide a clear, overarching picture of what we believe we are ultimately trying to deliver when we talk about ‘capability’. In other words, “what will local government in Tasmania look like at the end of this process if we succeed?”

To help do this, the Board has developed a set of ‘capability and outcome aspirations’. Importantly, these aspirations make clear that our vision is holistic – it is about ensuring much more than sustainability in the sense of simple cost efficiencies. In broad terms, these are a set of statements that describe what we think should be the defining features of a successful and sustainable system of local government for Tasmania in the 21st century.



3. Financial Capacity

What does this mean?

Councils have the necessary financial resources to plan for, provide and maintain – on a sustainable basis – infrastructure and services to a clearly defined and consistent level, which meets the current and projected future needs of their communities. Funding models that support councils are equitable, transparent, consistent, and efficient.

4. Efficiency, Effectiveness, and Equity

What does this mean?

Councils deliver infrastructure and services that meet the needs and preferences of communities at the lowest possible economic, social, and environmental cost. Service standards and associated costs are transparent and applied in an equitable way so that all Tasmanians have access to a certain level of services, but which also reflects communities’ willingness and capacity to pay. Services where local differentiation is not necessary, or desirable, are delivered at a scale that maximises their overall value for money. Cost efficiencies achieved from increased scale economies are re-invested in locally tailored services that are valued by local communities and which support wellbeing.

5. Good Governance

What does this mean?

Councils are underpinned by a robust and trusted system of local democratic participation, representation, and accountability, where decision-makers (both elected members and council staff) act transparently and with integrity in the best interests of their communities. Elected members reflect and represent the diversity of the communities they serve and are competent stewards of resources, people, and place. Because of this, local communities have confidence in their council’s elected members and staff, actively engage and participate in council decision-making, and know they will be listened to on the issues that matter to them.



The aspirations act as a ‘vision statement’. But they also serve a clear and practical purpose in guiding the work of the Review over the next 12 months. We think they help in three main ways:

1. They have helped us shape the development of more specific ‘future visions’ for each of the Review theme areas (we talk about these more in [Section 4](#)). They also form the basis for our Priority Reform Areas;
2. They will help us develop a set of clear measures and indicators for assessing how well the sector is performing now. By doing this, we will be able to identify areas of strength and where there are potential weaknesses, to guide identification and prioritisation of potential reform opportunities; and

3. They will help us to test reform options. In this way, the aspirational statements, and the measures that sit beneath them, will act as reform ‘assessment criteria’. This will help clearly identify and prioritise specific reform recommendations that the Board believes have the best prospects of delivering a more robust and capable sector in the future.

It is important to note that the capability and outcomes aspiration statements deliberately describe system characteristics and their associated benefits. These characteristics are important and relevant irrespective of the future roles, functions, or design of Tasmanian councils. They purposely leave open the possibility for a range of potential solutions to deliver on the aspirations, including different pathways to service consolidation, as discussed earlier.



We think these characteristics are essential, but we also acknowledge they are not enough on their own to tell us how the community sees the role of local councils in supporting broader objectives like improved community wellbeing, economic prosperity, and environmental sustainability.

It is important that, as we move forward into Stage 2, we are confident there is broad community support for our broad vision of what success looks like. We will not be able to have the right kind of discussions about reform options unless we have this common ground.

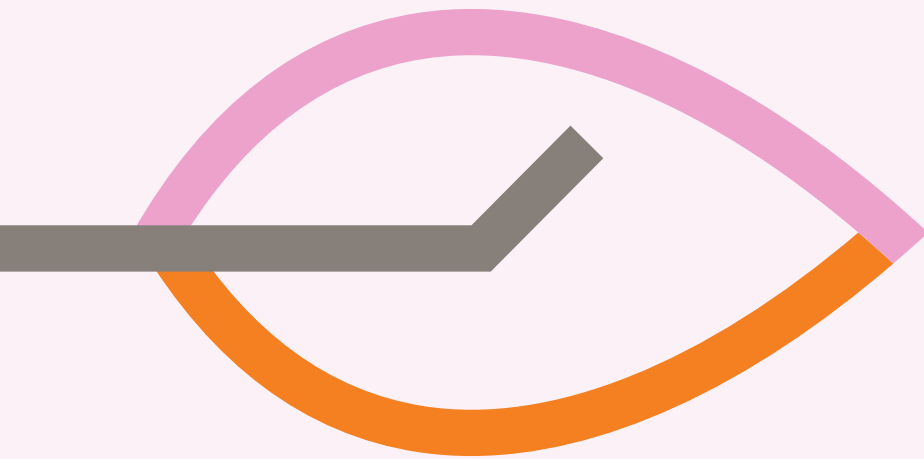
The Board has developed the aspiration statements based on what we have heard during consultation, what we have learned from the research and analysis that we have commissioned in Stage 1,

and our own ideas and experience. Now we want to hear what the community thinks.

Consultation questions:

- *What do you think about the Capability and Outcome Aspiration Statements? Are they useful?*
- *Do you agree with what they say? Is anything missing?*

The future of local government review



Tasmanian
Government

Department of
Premier and Cabinet

More information?

www.futurelocal.tas.gov.au

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